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Sideboard in Lafayette at lunch time.

Photo Emma Wong

## Taste of summer in quaint downtown Lafayette

By Emma Wong

Warm sun, good friends, and great food: the recipe for a perfect summertime lunch. And what better place to dine than at Lafayette's picturesque restaurants?

Laughter spreads across the outdoor wooden tables of Sideboard, the charming, snug café on Plaza Way. With red umbrellas and string lights, Sideboard is ideal for family and friend gatherings, attracting both locals and visitors. Before the back-to-school rush, friends Olivia Barakeh and Olivia Park caught up over their summers with a delicious lunch. "It's the perfect place to hang out, talk a little bit, and enjoy the weekend," Barakeh said. Park then pointed to her shrimp ceviche, exclaiming,

"This is my holy grail!"

Down Mount Diablo Blvd. is Social Bird, the hip bar offering refined American classics, from oysters to artisanal cheeses. Social Bird is conveniently seated near many shops, from endearing boutiques like Luck to larger storefronts like Venture Quality Goods. "Social Bird is our favorite — sitting outside is lovely, and the sounds of the fountain provide a nice background," resident Sonya Grover said. "Lafayette is relaxing and you can walk to little shops after eating."

Lafayette's culinary scene is constantly evolving. A new restaurant — the Breakfast Club at Midtown — recently opened near Social Bird, dishing

out fragrant pancakes, delectable omelets, hash browns, and more. Students Tatum Schmedding and Kavina Harabakanda chatted here over crepes and burgers as a send-off before Harabakanda left for a trip. "We come here all the time: the food is always so good, with big portions and great customer service," Schmedding said. "They have a giant menu and make really good club fries with ranch."

Under shining summer rays, downtown Lafayette leaves bellies full and faces grinning. With the city's slogan being "Shop, Dine, and Gather," lunchtime here truly lives up to this motto and more.

Advertising

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## Nominations are now open for the November General Election

By Sora O'Doherty

The window for nominating candidates for the general election to be held in November opened on July 15 and will run until Aug. 9. However, in races when an incumbent does not file by the nomination deadline of Aug. 9, nominations for the seat will be extended by five calendar days to Aug. 14, 2024. Only non-incumbents may be nominated during the extension. There is no extension period for vacant positions or term-limited offices.

In Lamorinda, the following seats are up for election:

The city of Lafayette will have the largest number of City Council slots to fill during the November election in Lamorinda, including three Council members for full four-year terms and one council member for a two-year term.

The Town of Moraga will be

electing three council members. Incumbent council member Renata Sos is seeking reelection, but two others whose terms are ending, Mayor Teresa Onoda and council member David Shapiro, are not seeking reelection.

The City of Orinda has two council member positions open. Mayor Darlene Gee is seeking reelection but council member Inga Miller has announced that she is not.

There will be a total of eight places up for election on the local school boards. Two governing board members will be elected for the following school districts: Acalanes Union High School District, Lafayette School District, Moraga School District, and Orinda Union School District. ... continued on Page 8

## Orinda considers pickleball courts and a dog park

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda City Council conducted a wide ranging discussion about the possibility of adding two amenities to the community — pickleball courts and a dog park — at their July 16 meeting. The matters were on the agenda for discussion only, and not for action as the city currently lacks funding for either option.

As potential costs of nearly \$2 million were presented to the council, even the City Manager David Biggs noted that they were shocking, and council member Brandyn Iverson pronounced the costs "dead on arrival."

Council members viewed a Powerpoint from Callander Associates regarding conceptual designs and estimated construction costs for a designated off-leash dog park and pickleball courts in Orinda. The question has also been considered by an ad hoc committee of the Parks and Rec Commission.

Two sites were looked at as being



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potentially suitable for the court and dog park. Orinda does not have a lot of undeveloped land available, so these two sites were considered the best of the available sites.

Orinda Oaks Park is a park that runs uphill from Moraga Way to Donald Drive. There is currently a largely unused portion that used to be used for horsehoes or bocce ball. This area was suggested for the dog park.

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See public meetings schedule on these pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements  
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**Chamber of Commerce:**  
[www.lafayettechamber.org](http://www.lafayettechamber.org)

**Lafayette Public Meetings**

**City Council**  
 Regular Meeting: Monday, Aug. 12, 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall  
**Planning Commission Meeting**  
 Monday, Aug. 5 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall  
**Design Review**  
 Monday, Aug. 12, 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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**Lafayette places sales tax measure on November ballot**

Lafayette, CA: On July 22, the Lafayette City Council placed a funding measure on the November 2024 ballot, asking Lafayette voters to authorize a local sales tax increase of 1/2 cent (half a penny for every \$1 spent locally) for seven years to maintain the current level of City services. This measure will require a 50% +1 vote to pass. At a previous City Council meeting, City Manager, Niroop K. Srivatsa, explained that due to inflation, prices on everything from materials, to insurance, to labor have continued to increase. Furthermore, the State continues to impose a number of unfunded mandates. As a result, the City is facing a structural

deficit of more than \$2M annually, beginning in fiscal year July 2024-25. If approved by voters in November, all the revenue from the sales tax would go directly into the City's General Fund; The General Fund provides funding for City services and facilities. Lafayette's current sales tax rate is 8.75%. If voters approve a 1/2 cent sales tax measure, Lafayette's rate will increase to 9.25%, equal with the rate in Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek and lower than Orinda, Moraga, and Concord. The new rate would go into effect starting April 1, 2025 for seven years. "The half cent increase, if approved by Lafayette voters, would

generate approximately \$2.4 million annually, which, according to current projections, is enough to maintain the level of service presently being provided. If the voters do not pass the measure, the Council will have to make difficult decisions about which programs and services to reduce or eliminate," said Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson. "Filling a \$2M annual deficit is approximately 10% of the City's General Fund, and it would require cuts across all City departments, including police, public works, planning, engineering, parks and recreation, and administration," Robinson added. "One reason the City

Council chose to place a sales tax measure on the ballot is because sales tax is paid by visitors who dine and shop in Lafayette, so funds would be brought into the community from people who reside outside the community but who utilize our public infrastructure and services," explained Vice Mayor Wei-Tai Kwok. More information about the City's financial situation and the funding measure is available on the City of Lafayette's website at [www.lovelafayette.org/FiscalSustainability](http://www.lovelafayette.org/FiscalSustainability)  
 Provided by: Suzanne Iarla, Communications Analyst/Public Information Officer City of Lafayette

**Local music teacher loving her third career**

By Diane Claytor

For thousands of families throughout Lamorinda – and beyond – the soft-spoken woman with the delightful English accent is known simply as Miss Julia, their beloved Music Together teacher. "Miss" Julia McLeod dances, prances, sings, and plays her ukulele and violin, sharing her love of music in every one of her very popular classes.

McLeod began teaching Music Together classes 22 years ago. With a musical background – she sang in choruses and played the violin as a child growing up in England – and a fondness for little kids, it was the perfect job while her own children were in school. "I thought I would do this for a little while and then get back into something else," McLeod says. "It's a lovely job so I've just carried on." Referring to Music Together as her "second career," she currently teaches two days a week in Lafayette; she also



Photo provided

Julia McLeod, local Music Together teacher and award-winning quilt maker, with some of the many beautiful quilts she has made.

teaches music at a Lafayette preschool and works in the Lafayette School District's music program.

With a degree in textile design for the apparel industry, McLeod started her first career as a textile designer in the woolen and worsted mills of Yorkshire and Scotland. While attending a large menswear show in Paris, she was advised that the textile industry in New York was "full of Brits," she recalls. She and her British husband, an IT professional, were ready for adventure, so they packed up and relocated to New York, where McLeod continued working as a designer for a menswear company.

After several other moves, and with two young children, it was decided the family needed to put down roots. Walnut Creek is where they chose to settle.

Once her girls grew up and left home, McLeod found her third career – quilt making – admitting that it's more than a job, "it has become an obsession."

... continued on Page 3

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# Lafayette nurse practitioner volunteers his services in Ukraine

By Vera Kochan



Photo courtesy Ryan Anson

**Nurse practitioner Ryan Anson records a patient's medical history with the help of an interpreter/medical resident at a community health center in Kropivna, Ukraine**

When Global Care Force was seeking medical volunteers for service in war-torn Ukraine, Lafayette resident Ryan Anson answered the call.

Having been a nurse practitioner for nearly 10 years, he was eager to make a difference in the lives of many whose medical care had been

abruptly altered. Based in Olathe, Kansas, Covid Care Force was founded in March 2020, as a response to the growing Covid-19 pandemic. Its purpose was to mobilize health care professionals and send them to areas with critical healthcare staffing shortages. In 2022, the name evolved to Global Care Force, with the same premise of sending volunteers to underserved locations.

Anson volunteered between May 6 to 19 in various areas of Ukraine. "This was my first trip," he explained. "I first heard about them [Global Care Force] in March. I volunteered for a variety of reasons. I studied photo journalism in school and watched Putin's rise to power in Chechnya. After becoming a healthcare worker, I gained a new skill set that if partnered with the right organization, I could help.

... continued on Page 4

# Local music teacher

... continued from Page 2

McLeod grew up sewing, making many of her own clothes. She discovered quilt making while traveling through small Amish towns in Pennsylvania and started making her own. "Some of the first quilts I made were for my own kids," she states.

As she became more interested in quilt making, McLeod discovered there were several quilt guilds in the area and there was a circuit of speakers and teachers. "I thought I could do that, too," she says. To do so, she realized, she would need to build an inventory of quilts. "So I kept on making them, learning new things with each one I made.

"It's funny how things come full circle," McLeod continues. "Before having kids, I was all about fabric and textiles and I loved it. All these years later, I'm back into fabric and textiles and I still love it."

Trying to live as green as possible, McLeod specializes in making quilts from recycled fabrics, focusing on silk. "Textile waste is a huge issue," she re-

ports. "And I think it's really neat to cut up old clothes, curtains or tablecloths, old neckties. I just find old fabrics super interesting."

With the large influence of Asian and Indian communities, it's easy for McLeod to find beautiful silks, kimonos, and saris in local thrift shops. She says, "There's nothing I like more than incorporating old and neglected materials into new quilts." She teaches classes on how to make quilts from recycled fabrics "rather than cotton you buy by the yard at a fabric store."

McLeod notes that she has about 20 quilts in closets at home. She also has some on beds and hanging on her walls. "There is a limit," she admits laughingly. "My husband doesn't want to see them in every room."

A well-respected lecturer and teacher, McLeod is invited to various quilt guilds around the country, sharing her knowledge with humor and showcasing her beautiful, colorful, intricate quilts. "When I go to a guild to lecture, the audience wants to see what I'm talking about. I travel with about 12

quilts and huge suitcases," she notes with a twinkle in her eye. "I am trying to learn to make smaller quilts."

She also makes quilts on commission, describing one she made from old neckties that belonged to three generations of men. "It's a wonderful way to celebrate someone's life," she states.

Needless to say, it takes a considerable amount of time to make a quilt - "often 30 to 40 hours," she reports. McLeod creates her own designs, but uses traditional blocks, often using centuries old combinations of shapes.

McLeod recently completed her first book, "Patchwork Luxe. Quilts from Neckties, Kimonos and Saris," scheduled to be released in September.

Noting that the average quilter is typically a retired, older female, McLeod smiles and says that's another reason she loves this industry. "I won't age out and won't experience sexism. Women are so underestimated," she concludes. "They are a wealth of wisdom and experience and really know how to get things done!"

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**Planning Commission:**  
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**Parks and Recreation Commission:**  
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LINDA EHRICH



## Saint Mary's College's commitment to sustainability earns recognition as "Green College"

By Vera Kochan

Saint Mary's College has consistently climbed the ranks in the Princeton Review Guide's Green College ratings. In 2014, SMC received a bronze rating. By 2016, the rating was silver, followed by a consistent gold since 2020. What this means is that just about everyone on campus can take advantage and participate in the many programs and initiatives offered by its sustainability programs. The high ratings

aren't just handed to a university. According to the school's Director of Sustainability Ann Drevno, "You have to submit your statistics every three years. It includes waste, greenhouse gas emissions, transportation, heating, how much food is produced in the Legacy Garden, composting, and the Free Store."

Dozens of students intern with the program, and when each school year ends, all students leaving the dorms are encouraged to pile all of their re-usable items in designated collection areas throughout campus. Drevno estimates that for the 2023-24 school year, the move-out collected 6.7 tons of donations that were picked up by partners such as Recycle Smart and Mt Diablo Resource Recovery. Items that are not furniture-related, such as clothing, have another chance at a useful life by making it to the Free Store where other students can have their pick. The tiny "store" – no bigger than a utility closet – by year's end brims with items that for lack of sufficient space have spilled out into the hallway.

The campus Legacy Garden has been tended

by students since 2009. Currently, students who are food insecure get first pick from the garden's fruits and vegetables. Second pick goes to the volunteers. "As of June 12," stated Drevno, "we began operating a farm stand."

SMC Chef Gustavo Vega plans menus with Good Eating Company – the new food source for the college. "Partnering with Good Eating Company has allowed Saint Mary's to elevate and accelerate our campus sustainability efforts," Drevno explained. "Just two years into this partnership, Saint Mary's has been nationally recognized for its increased sustainably-sourced food, decreased food waste, and donation of more unused food than ever previously."

Good Eating's Director of Sustainability Clare Turner works with Drevno on sustainable food sourcing data, food recovery and donations, reusable to-go containers, and a new program called "Green by Default", which encourages people to choose to eat more sustainably.

SMC is also a Fair Trade College that sources coffee, tea, chocolate, and other products from growers



Photo Vera Kochan

**SMC Director of Sustainability Ann Drevno encourages students to donate reusable items.**

who practice safe working conditions and fair wages.

"Our number one sustainability priority for the coming years, is our Climate Action Plan," said Drevno. "A big achievement this year, for 2023 - 2024, was to get our Saint Mary's Greenhouse Gas Emissions profile back up-to-date after a pause in greenhouse gas emissions data collection during the pandemic. While our emissions profile shows a positive downward trend, we still have plenty to do to achieve our carbon neutrality goal for Scopes 1 and 2 by 2030, and carbon neutrality for all scopes by 2050. This

data will continue to be incorporated into the College Strategic Plan, which has a dedicated section to Climate Action, demonstrating the college's commitment to sustainability."

Another big project that Drevno has spent five years working on is a 1.3 MW Photovoltaic Solar System to be installed over SMC's front parking lot and recreation center. The project is expected to generate over 20% of the campus' electricity with a payback of \$20 million over 20 years. Currently in the geotechnical and interconnectivity analysis phases, Drevno hopes to see it installed by the summer of 2025.



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## Lafayette nurse practitioner in Ukraine



Photo Ryan Anson

**Cemetery two hours south of Kyiv. Graves with Ukrainian flags are identified as soldiers who died recently.**

... continued from Page 3

When Russia violated Ukraine's self-determination and began bombing its cities, the brave response of Ukrainian leaders and everyday citizens was inspirational.

On the day of the invasion Anson wanted to go to Ukraine, but his son was experiencing some health issues, and Anson didn't want to leave until he was stable. "Around the second year, with the siege of Mariupol, I felt the urge all over again. Putin wasn't going to stop. I couldn't stand by and do nothing. As a healthcare provider, I can't do anything about bombs and bullets, but I can play a small role in providing medical care to displaced, wounded, and traumatized communities. That is why I volun-

teered with Global Care Force and its Mobile Medical Team in May, to help maintain continuity of care in war-affected regions of the country. Two weeks of clinical service was a drop in the bucket compared to existing needs. It's something though."

Global Care Force Director of Marketing and Communications Brenda Poor explained that medical volunteers were "deployed monthly to the same nine to 11 villages throughout eastern and southwestern Ukraine with no access to a doctor, nurse, or medicine. The clinics provide continuity of care and free medications for residents in these locations and are often their only source of healthcare."

Poor added, "Several clinics are held in vil-

lages where refugees fled to escape the war. Patients tell heartbreaking stories of the atrocities they experienced, including being tortured or starved, and the heavy toll the war continues to take on them. Many live in homes still without water or electricity."

Three other volunteers from the United States joined Anson in Ukraine: William Markle, MD from Pennsylvania; Chris May, MD from Arizona; and Alex Gamez, RN from Los Angeles. Thomas Day, a paramedic, joined them from London, England.

The volunteers did not speak Ukrainian, but interpreters, such as Yevhenii Onofriichuk, were provided and pitched in to help. "Our Ukrainian team leader was Svetlana Kleshchar, and Luibov Halisevych, a pharmacist, handled our 2,000 meds for two weeks. I had the same roll as a physician," said Anson. "I worked in established health clinics and provided basic EMT needs. We would come with medical supplies and set up in the clinics. Bill would even do some home visits for those patients whose health was an end-of-days issue."

"Patients receive treatment for common but life-threatening health issues such as hypertension, diabetes, di-

gestive, and cardiac disorders," stated Poor. "Other serious health issues such as cancer have also been diagnosed. To date, Global Care Force medical teams have provided medical care to over 5,900 patients and over \$100,000 in free medications thanks to volunteers like Ryan Anson."

When asked how Ukrainians responded to their efforts, Anson replied, "The gratitude was incredible. They were extremely grateful."

There was an occasion while traveling when a missile struck a nearby car dealership. "There was the unpredictability of missiles coming down left and right. Several roads had signs that warned of landmines. Once the war stabilizes, I'd like to return."

Anson added, "I grew up in Kenya and lived in the Philippines. I've been to 30 countries, and when I was a photo journalist I worked in countries with dangerous situations, but this was my first medical journey. I hope that the American public continues to pay attention to the needs of Ukraine and Europe, and have everyone's interests at heart, and continue to be a leader in smart and strategic ways."

For more information visit: [globalcareforce.org](http://globalcareforce.org).

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# Moraga Valley Kiwanis celebrates 50 years in the community

By Vera Kochan



Photos courtesy Stan Holcenberg

Bottom Row from left: Ashley Coates, Tim Freeman, Tom Westhoff, Cherie Grant, Graig Crossley, Larry Jacobs, Larry Beans, Kirpal Khanna, Leslie Engler, Rich Holden; back Row from left: Stan Holcenberg, Mike Metcalf, Scott Mitnick, John Burgess, John Lee, Barry Behr, Ed Beatson, Dick Olsen, Lee Hays, Ferenc Kovac, Lyla Lauren, Jon King, Sam Sperry, Sonny Tsuboi, Stan Oberg, Steve Woehleke; not pictured: Marty Aufhauser, Peggy Brown-Salazar, Bob Burnett, Ian Cook, Dick Courtney, Karl Davis, Linda Deschambault, Brian Dolan, Mike Donovan, Jose Guillan Avalar, John Haffner, Bruce Kornmiller, Chris McGuffin, Judy Murphy, Jim O'Brien, Claire Roth and Renata Sos

As the Town of Moraga celebrates its 50th anniversary, so does the Moraga Valley Kiwanis. Chartered on May 16, 1974, the Kiwanis Club is technically older than the incorporated town (Nov. 12) by almost six months.

To commemorate the occasion, the Club held a picnic at Moraga Commons Park that was attended by County Supervisor Candace Andersen who, along with other dignitary reps, bestowed proclamations to note the milestone anniversary. Many members have been with the organization for decades, including Mike Donovan and current Club President Graig Crossley, who have been with the Kiwanis for 45 years.

According to members Steve Woehleke and Stan Holcenberg, the Club initially met for meetings at Roncalli Hall on the Saint Mary's College campus, and now meets weekly at the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. "These meetings provide excellent opportunities for social interaction and camaraderie among members, planning for club activities, and to partake

in stimulating presentations."

Moraga's Kiwanis is a local chapter of a much bigger picture that is known as Kiwanis International, which was formed in 1915, and has spread to over 80 countries. "The name "Kiwanis" derives from an American Indian expression that may be interpreted as "we build" or "to make oneself known," stated Holcenberg. "The Kiwanis mission is to improve the world one child and one community at a time."

Kiwanis prides itself on the many fundraising activities and services it consistently provides to the Town. Residents have benefited from their many yearly undertakings that the community has grown accustomed to, such as staffing the jumpees and assisting with food sales for July 4 and Pear Festivals; planting daffodils along Moraga's main roads; participating in Moraga Community Service Day; helping out at Moraga Library book sales; construction of the Rancho Laguna Park and Los Perales Elementary School playground structures; painting the Ha-

cienda de las Flores interior; rebuilding the Commons band shell; the annual holiday See's Candy sales; and more.

Their benevolent reach extends beyond the scope of Moraga to include distributing food at the Monument Crisis Center; harvesting pears for the Food Bank; winter and spring clean up at Orinda's Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center; pumpkin carving at Hope Solutions; and building a rodent barrier around John Muir Land Trust's Family Harvest Farm.

"Many donations are provided each year for educational groups and individuals, for children and family services groups, and for the Town," added Holcenberg. He noted some recent contributions, which include providing scholarships to outstanding local high school graduates; providing backpacks and diapers for East Bay nonprofits; supporting SMC's High Potential Program; providing gifts for foster kids; and supporting the Moraga Park Foundation and Moraga Community Foundation.

"Club members indi-

vidually and collectively participate directly in the operation of many of the organizations," Holcenberg explained. "Looking forward, the Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club is committed to continuing as a strong contributing member of the Lamorinda and surrounding communities."



Planting daffodils along Moraga Road



Members are working on the band shell in Commons Park

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www.cityoforinda.org  
Phone (925) 253-4200  
**Chamber of Commerce:**  
www.orindachamber.org  
**The Orinda Association:**  
www.orindaassociation.org

**City Council Regular Meeting:**  
Tuesday, Aug. 20, 7 p.m.  
Orinda Library Auditorium  
**Planning Commission**  
Tuesday, Aug. 23, 7 p.m.  
Orinda Library Auditorium  
**Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission**  
Wednesday, Aug. 14, 6:30 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way



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9 Berrybrook Hollow, Orinda  
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**Chris Swim**  
**Tracy Keaton**

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Chris@ChrisSwim.com  
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**COMPASS**

**Orinda okays RFP for potential half million dollar storm drain mapping**

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

**Orinda resident working to clear a public drain.**

In order to create a comprehensive map of all storm drains in Orinda, the city council has authorized staff to prepare a request for proposals (RFP) seeking bids on the job. Although there are some existing maps, primarily of public storm drains, the city lacks an up-to-date map of the storm drains, both public and private.

The work of compiling the data for the map has been estimated by Orinda staff at somewhat over \$500,000. Council member Brandyn Iverson questioned why the city needed to have an outside contract for the work of gathering data and preparing the map. She wondered if it could be done cheaper in-house. Her budgetary concerns drew an impassioned response from Mayor Darlene Gee.

Gee, who is by profession a transportation engineer, defended the high level of expertise in the industry. She focused

on the millions of dollars of damage that can be done by storm water in a matter of minutes, harking back to the Miner Road sinkhole of 2017. Gee recalled that that storm drain had been deemed to be in good condition as little as three years before it catastrophically failed.

"Public works are expensive," Gee noted, adding, "it's about things that are really important to life and limb. So no, it is not about getting it on the cheap." Iverson was delighted by the lesson, exclaiming, "I love it when you do that! . . . You are so persuasive."

The matter was presented to the city council on July 16 by City Manager David Biggs and City Engineer Siva Natarajan, as Public Works Director Scott Christie was on vacation. The action of completing a comprehensive map of all city storm drains, public and private, was recom-

mended to the council by the Infrastructure Subcommittee.

According to the staff report, Measure R has been identified as the funding source most appropriate for this mapping project. Roads and storm drains are one of the focus areas for use of Measure R funding and there is a sufficient fund balance available to allow for this appropriation. Measure R, a half-cent sales tax increase, was passed in 2020, and was specifically targeted at increasing Orinda's fire safety and for work on roads and storm drains. As a general tax, revenue raised can be allocated as the city council determines.

The staff report additionally pointed out that for a period of time in the past, the work was done as time permitted by a GIS position which was shared between Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda. Unfortunately, that position was eliminated at the time of the Covid pandemic. Part-time engineering interns have also been engaged on occasion with mapping. But the piecemeal work did not complete the job. The Infrastructure Subcommittee considers the work to be significant enough to public safety to advocate for it being done by an outside agency.

Staff estimates that there are nearly 17 miles of private storm drainpipes in Orinda, many of which interconnect with

the public stormwater drainage. "Understanding the complete interconnected system and identifying any concerns before problems arise provides a better approach to risk management for the city. Drainage failures within the private piping could easily cause significant property damage to both public facilities and residents, and ultimately result in significant unplanned costs to the city," according to the report.

In written comments, Arlene Cohen called the drainage issue critical, reporting that her property receives massive flows of water from houses on public streets that can overwhelm the drains on her property, resulting in flooding and damage.

Comments from the public, both at the meeting and in writing, supported the proposed mapping project. The motion, which passed unanimously, authorizes staff to solicit proposals, but does not authorize expending funds for the mapping project at the current time.

According to Natarajan, the process will realistically take two to three months. The first step will be to develop the scope of work, refining exactly what is needed. After developing the scope, the proposal will be advertised. After proposals are submitted, they will be reviewed and staff will come back to the council with recommendations.

**Pickleball courts and a dog park**

... continued from Page 1

The off-leash dog park would be fenced, and would provide separate entrances and spaces for small dogs and for large dogs in an area of approximately a third of an acre. The proposal is complicated, however, by the fact that the park would require a walk uphill from the existing parking area and the path would have to be compliant with the

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The proposed pickleball courts would be located in Wilder, near the play fields. According to USA Pickleball, the sport was invented in 1965 on Bainbridge Island, near Seattle, by three dads whose kids were bored with their usual summertime activities. "Pickleball has evolved from original handmade equipment and simple rules into a popular sport throughout the US and Canada. The game is growing internationally as well, with many European and Asian countries adding courts."

The Wilder site does not allow for perfect orientation of the pickleball courts. However, Bob Finch in public comments opined that the orientation would be acceptable to players. Finch also addressed the noise issue associated with pickleball, and in addition urged the city to also consider spending the lesser sum on the same agenda for funding data gathering about the conditions of private roads.

Another public commenter expressed displeasure at the time spent by the council on

the dog park/pickleball courts issue while the matter of public drains was relegated to the end of the agenda. She suggested that if the city fixed its infrastructure problems that the community would then support new amenities. (See separate story.)

Council members, however, were concerned about the high projected price for both plans. The higher dog park expense, caused by ADA compliance, would be lower if the dog park took the Wilder site, but the Orinda Oaks site wouldn't accommodate pickleball courts.

Council member Brandyn Iverson suggested moving the dog park to the Wilder site because of the costs, which she considered shocking. However, even located at Wilder, the dog park would still require some modifications to be ADA compliant. Iverson also suggested taking another look at adding Pickleball courts to Orinda Community Park, although it is located quite close to senior housing, and the noise from pickleball is considerable.

The costs for the dog

park are estimated by Callendar at nearly \$974,000, while the costs for the pickleball courts are estimated at around \$775,000. The pickleball courts would have higher construction costs, including a bioretention area, paving, fencing, an ADA parking space, and retaining walls. Neither estimate includes design costs. Currently the city lacks funding for either project.

The Orinda community has been very vocal about their desire for pickleball courts, although less so about a dog park. Vice Mayor Latika Malkani said that she really, really wants to see both projects happen, but acknowledged that the city does not have funding at the proposed levels. She raised the question about the possibility of obtaining grant funding, and wondered if having actual designs would improve the city's chances of obtaining some grant funding. She also suggested the possibility of community fundraising, perhaps coupled with some matching funds from the city.

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## Lamorinda Market Statistics

YTD through June (SFR)	2024	2023
Median Sales Price	\$2,025,833	\$1,957,667
Avg Sales Price/SqFt	\$839	\$830
Avg Days on Market	17.7	28.7
Number Properties Sold	266	248

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## Orinda to survey conditions of private roads

By Sora O'Doherty

On the recommendation of its Infrastructure Committee, the Orinda City Council on July 16 voted four to one to enter into a contract to assess the condition of the city's private roads. Council member Inga Miller disagreed and voted against the measure, which she also said was unethical and perhaps an unconstitutional use of public money for private benefit, refusing to agree with the public benefits cited by the committee.

After decades of arguments over the 20% of roads in Orinda that are deemed private for a variety of reasons, the committee put forward a recommendation that the city use the same company that assesses the condition of public roads to conduct a similar assessment of the private roads to gather data on what condition the roads are in now.

In accepting the recommendation, the council agreed to appropriate \$30,000 from Measure R to fund a Pavement Management Technical Assessment of private roads following the same criteria and methodology used in the Metropolitan Trans-

portation Commission Pavement Management Technical Assistance Program (P-TAP).

The committee cited a number of public benefits of conducting the survey of private roads, including the fact that some private roads are used by the general public and knowing the condition of private roads may assist in evacuation planning and emergency response.

Additionally, the committee said that private roads often intersect with public roads and their condition may impact the maintenance of public roads or planning and coordinating utility infrastructure work. Private roads subject to slope instability, the committee noted, may have impacts to the public system, hinder evacuations, and disrupt utilities.

Under the agreement, the city will employ Harris & Associates, the firm that conducts the annual assessment of Orinda's public roads, to immediately commence assessing the private roads. The data on the private roads will not be aggregated with the data on public roads because to do so could

cause a change in the city's pavement condition index rating (PCI).

Miller repeatedly said that the survey would not be the same as that conducted on the public roads because it would only be a visual inspection and would not include any maintenance history.

Mayor Darlene Gee pointed out that the first time the public roads were surveyed, there was no maintenance history, but that the contractor was prepared to accept any maintenance history submitted by the private road owners.

Miller also asked what was the purpose of the survey. Vice Mayor Latika Malkani, a member of the committee, responded to Miller's comments and questions. She took issue with Miller's assertion that the public benefits were pretextual. "They are not at all pretextual," she said.

In responding to Miller, Malkani went on, explaining why she wanted the survey "because for too many years the discussion around what we refer to as publicly maintained or privately maintained roads has been, in my opinion,

riddled with exaggeration and hyperbole and inaccuracy. On all sides from various perspectives, and ultimately from a lack of data." She concluded, "I really really want to know some of this information. This is assessment. Nothing more, nothing less, but very critical."

A number of written and in-person comments strongly supported the move to survey the private roads. One public speaker, Kim White, appeared to speak against the motion, talking about "public citizens" and "private citizens." While agreeing with the issues discussed concerning private and public stormwater drains, White concluded that she doesn't feel responsible for paying for somebody's private road.



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National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

Millions of neighbors take part in National Night Out across thousands of communities from all fifty states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide on the first Tuesday in August (Texas and select areas celebrate on the first Tuesday in October). Neighborhoods host block parties, festivals, parades, cookouts, and various other community events with safety demonstrations, seminars, youth events, visits from emergency personnel, exhibits and much, much more.

**Lafayette** - Stop by the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Amphitheater (3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.) from 5 to 7 p.m. on Aug. 6, to meet your local police officers and firefighters. Food will be available for purchase at Ofie's Kitchen Food Truck.

**Orinda** - Orinda Police Department is inviting the community to join them for a BBQ, on Aug. 6, from 5 to 8 p.m. If you bring a backpack or school supplies to donate, you'll have a chance to dunk the Chief of Police in the Dunk Tank. - S. O'Doherty

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1:00 - 2:30PM	GRADES K-5, 6-8 AND 9-12 GROUPS
3:15 - 4:30PM	GRADES 6-8 SOLOISTS
5:00 - 6:15PM	GRADES 9-12 SOLOISTS
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# Letters to the editor

## Orinda Wasted \$1 Million on Legal Fees

A group, Orindans for Safe Emergency Evacuation ("OSEE"), won a lawsuit against The City of Orinda, successfully challenging the legally required Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") for Orinda's plan for downtown development called Plan Orinda (which includes the Housing Element ("HE") and the Downtown Precise Plan ("DPP")). The HE includes the state-mandated housing; the DPP would add many more housing units than the state requires and isn't due until 2026. Plan Orinda could add as many as 1,618 new housing units downtown, which the EIR found would have a "significant" adverse impact on emergency evacuation in the event of a wildfire.

The Court decided on February 22, 2024 that the EIR "does not comply with CEQA's informational and disclosure requirements in its analysis of Wildfire Impact..." (CEQA is the California Environmental Quality Act.) "Because the

EIR... does not provide the public and decision-makers with sufficient information to understand the magnitude of the impacts of the [Plan Orinda] on evacuation in the face of wildfire hazards, the City did not have sufficient information to balance the benefits of the [Plan Orinda] against its adverse impacts, after mitigation, and the City's Statement of Overriding Considerations is therefore not supported." (Contra Costa Case No. N23-0579, 2/24/2024.)

Orinda should withdraw the DPP, and consider a redistribution, away from downtown, of the state-mandated zoning for new housing. Instead, it continues to oppose withdrawal of the DPP, even though the DPP is not due for two years.

Orinda has incurred legal fees of approximately \$1 million. Its defense was handled by the law firm in which the city attorney is a partner. It rejected my repeated suggestion that it take advantage of the court's free, non-binding

mediation program, and have a retired justice from the court of appeal provide an independent evaluation of the case before trial and possibly save the city legal fees.

The legal fees could better have been spent on mitigating the significant adverse impact on wildfire evacuation that the EIR found downtown development will cause. A first step would be repealing the DPP.

Nick Waranoff  
Orinda

### Orinda home values

As the Orinda homeowner's insurance crisis deepens and some of the most valuable real estate in the world becomes essentially worthless, my thoughts turn to PG&E.

Looking back on many of the historic "wildfires" that decimated communities all over Northern California over the past decade a clear theme emerges: PG&E's poorly maintained and outdated power-lines were the cause. They've

admitted it in court. So how is this crisis not (at least in part) of their making? Why doesn't their liability extend to those of us who are now being so

deeply impacted as a result of their negligence? I think PG&E should be forced to pay CA home insurers to offset the absurd situation they've put us in. I know

it's just a fantasy because it seems only the bad guys win these days, but a boy can dream...  
Jack Kelly  
Orinda

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Police Department Traffic Issues  
94549Traffic@gmail.com  
**Moraga Police Department:**  
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055  
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049  
**Orinda Police Department:**  
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820  
Chief of Police, Ryan Sullivan  
925-254-6820  
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org

## Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report July 7 - July 20

Alarms 52  
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 12  
Traffic 130  
Suspicious Circumstances 4  
Suspicious Subject 17  
Suspicious Vehicle 7  
Service to Citizen 21  
Patrol Req./Security Check 15  
Public/School Assembly Check 0  
Supplemental Report 21  
Vacation House Check 25  
Welfare Check 20  
Ordinance Violation 8

**Vehicle violations**  
Auto Burglary 4  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Dui Misd 4  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Hit And Run Felony  
Martino Rd./Greenbank Dr.  
Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.  
Boyer Cir./Dewey Ave.  
Reckless Driving  
Deer Hill Rd./Elizabeth St.  
Taylor Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.  
Laurel Rd./Deer Hill Rd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Olympic Blvd.  
Acalanes Rd./Eb Sr 24  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Springhill Rd.  
Tanger With Vehicle  
3900 Block S Peardale Dr.  
Tc - Fire And Amb Enroute  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Taylor Blvd.  
Tc - Property Damage  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Acalanes Rd.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
1000 Block Dewey Ave.  
1100 Block Bacon Way

**Other criminal activity**  
Fraud Credit Card  
900 Block Oak St.  
Fraud False Pretences  
3200 Block Stanley Blvd.  
Police Department  
Grand Theft  
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.  
3200 Block Stanley Blvd.  
Identity Theft  
Police Department  
3200 Block Driftwood Dr.  
Panhandling  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Petty Theft  
800 Block Rosedale Ave.  
10 Block Hidden Valley Rd.  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
10 Block Lucas  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)  
Petty Theft From Veh  
3000 Block Rohrer Dr.  
Residential Burglary  
1300 Block Sunset Lp.  
Shoplift  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (11)  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Disturbance-domestic  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

3300 Block Moraga Blvd.  
900 Block Acalanes Rd.  
3400 Block Solana Ct.  
Disturbance-Fight  
1000 Block Miller Dr.  
Disturbing The Peace  
900 Block Moraga Rd.  
Loud Music  
900 Block Paulson Ct.  
10 Block Roxanne Ln.  
10 Block Lucas Ranch Ct.  
Loud Noise  
700 Block Solana Dr.  
Solana Ct./Solana Dr.  
3800 Block Quail Ridge Rd.  
3500 Block Hamlin Rd.  
900 Block Dewey Ave.  
Camino Vallecito/N Peardale Dr.  
Loud Party  
500 Block Arrowhead Dr.  
500 Block Mcbride Dr.  
3700 Block Quail Ridge Rd.  
3200 Block Gold Ct.  
Public Nuisance  
900 Block 4th St.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Oak Hill Rd.  
Oak Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd.  
1100 Block Vacation Dr.  
Vandalism  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
60 Block Lafayette Cir.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
1500 Block Rancho View Dr. (2)

**Other**  
Contrib Delinquency Minor  
Police Department  
Elder Abuse  
10 Block Hartwood Ct.  
Fireworks  
3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Harcassmer  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Threats  
3500 Block E View Dr.  
900 Block Carol Ln.  
Trespass  
3500 Block Angelo St.  
Violation Custody Order  
3600 Block Walnut St.  
Violation Restraining Ord  
1000 Block Glen Rd.

## Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report July 9 - July 14

Alarms 4  
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 6  
Traffic 24  
Suspicious Circumstances 3  
Suspicious Subject 0  
Suspicious Vehicle 4  
Service to Citizen 18  
Patrol Req./Security Check 2  
Public/School Assembly Check 2  
Supplemental Report 8  
Vacation House Check 1  
Welfare Check 1  
Ordinance Violation 0

**Vehicle violations**  
Auto Burglary  
Harold Dr./Scofield Dr.  
Excessive Speed  
Rheem Blvd./Center St.  
Moraga Rd./Lucas Dr.  
Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa  
Donald Dr./Moraga Rd. (2)  
700 Block Plot (2)  
Moraga Rd./Devlin Dr.  
Moraga Road Corliss  
Ifo 1600 Andrews Dr.  
Reckless Driving  
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.  
Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr.  
Canyon Rd./Camino Pablo  
Camino Pablo/Eileen Ct.  
Tc - Property Damage  
Taco Bell  
Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr.  
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.  
Glorieta Elementary School, Ori  
**Other criminal activity**  
Panhandling  
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.  
Petty Theft  
700 Block Augusta Dr.  
Hacienda  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Drunk In Public  
Canyon Rd./Larch Ave.

**Other**  
Harassment  
Police Department  
Phone Harass  
Police Department  
Trespass  
1100 Block Larch Ave.



## Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report June 30 - July 13

Alarms 64  
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 11  
Traffic 60  
Suspicious Circumstances 9  
Suspicious Subject 4  
Suspicious Vehicle 7  
Service to Citizen 53  
Patrol Req./Security Check 27  
Public/School Assembly Check 1  
Supplemental Report 14  
Vacation House Check 0  
Welfare Check 13  
Ordinance Violation 6

**Vehicle violations**  
Accident Injury Camino  
Pablo/Santa Maria Way  
Accident Property  
Camino Don Miguel/Miner Rd.  
Dui Misd  
20 Block Bryant Way  
Reckless Driving  
Orchard Rd./Brookside Rd.  
Moraga Way/Stein Way  
Moraga Via/Glorietta Blvd.  
Moraga Way/Whitehall Dr.  
Camino Pablo/El Toyonal  
Moraga Way/Altamont Dr.  
Camino Pablo/Camino  
Sobranite  
Tc - Fire And Amb Enroute  
Santa Maria Way/Camino Pablo  
Tc - Property Damage  
Camino Sobranite (2)

**Other criminal activity**  
Residential Burglary  
30 Block Via Floreado  
60 Block Brookwood Rd.  
Robbery  
Camino Sobranite  
Shoplift  
Moraga Way  
Camino Sobranite (2)  
Vehicle Theft  
100 Block Via Floreado  
10 Block Carisbrook Dr.  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Disturbance-Fight  
Camino Sobranite  
Loud Music  
30 Block Charles Hill Cir.  
Public Nuisance  
Orinda Way  
Moraga Way/Camino Pablo  
10 Block Theatre Sq 106  
Vandalism  
10 Block Rich Acres Rd.  
**Other**  
Animal Cruelty  
Moraga Way  
Barking Dog  
100 Block Alta Vista Way, Dan  
Checks Non Suff Funds  
10 Block Big Leaf Rd.  
Fireworks  
Dolores Way/Donna Maria  
Way  
Ivy Dr./Miramonte Dr.  
Whitehall Dr./Ardith Dr.  
Moraga Way (3)  
Ivy Dr.  
90 Block Coral Dr.  
Mentally Ill Commit  
100 Block Ardith Dr.  
Possession Of Stolen Prop  
Camino Sobranite  
Resist Delay Or Obstruct  
10 Block El Dorado Ln.  
Transient Contact  
Orinda Way (2)  
Camino Pablo/Orinda Way  
Trespass  
500 Block Orindawoods Dr. (3)  
Camino Sobranite/La Cuesta Rd.  
Trespass W/Vehicle  
Martha Rd.

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence — we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate. Lamorinda Weekly reserves the right to refuse publishing a letter submission. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com.

# November General Election

... continued from Page 1

In the Moraga Orinda Fire District, two current directors are not seeking reelection — John Jex in Division 2 and Craig Jorgen in Division 5 have announced that they won't run again. Both positions are for four-year terms.

Election day will be Tuesday, Nov. 5. Vote by mail ballots will go out on Oct. 7, and the last

day to request a vote by mail ballot is Oct. 29.

Although the deadline for voter registration is Oct. 21, eligible citizens who need to register or re-register to vote within 14 days of an election can complete this process to register and vote at their county elections office, polling place, or vote center. Their ballots will be processed and counted once the county elec-

tions office has completed the voter registration verification process.

Same Day Voter Registration, known as Conditional Voter Registration in state law, is a safety net for Californians who miss the deadline to register to vote or update their voter registration information for an election.

## In Memory

### Trudy Lynne Ausfahl

September 30, 1940 - July 4, 2024



Trudy Lynne Ausfahl was a loving wife, mother, grandmother and friend. God called her home to heaven on July 4 at the age of 83 after a lengthy battle with dementia.

Trudy was born to Kent and Eloise Wierman in Barberton, Ohio on September 30, 1940 and was raised in Akron, Ohio. Growing up she enjoyed spending time with her many cousins and close group of friends, as well as waterskiing on Portage Lakes.

While attending Kent State University, she and her college roommate decided to spend a summer working at a resort in Swampscott, Massachusetts. It was there that she met her future husband, Bill Ausfahl, who had traveled east for a Cal fraternity convention. Although Bill had to return to California, their long-distance relationship blossomed. They were married on June 23, 1962, in Akron, Ohio and moved to California to start their life together. They eventually

settled in Moraga, where they lived for nearly 60 years and raised their three sons, Tom, Andy and Matt.

Trudy was a kind and caring person, with a down-to-earth and unassuming personality. Her warmth, ready smile and good nature drew many to her. She also had a sly sense of humor and loved to laugh. She had a wonderful group of friends, including those she made in her bridge and walking groups as well as those she made from being active in the Lamorinda community for so many years. She was a longtime member of the Junior League and the Moraga Garden Club. She also had many interests including music (she loved playing the piano), tennis, and travel, particularly to Hawaii, as well as land preservation (both in the Bay Area and Lake Tahoe). She developed a love for Cal, pretty much a given knowing the Ausfahl family, and enjoyed attending Cal football and basketball games. She was a staunch supporter of women's athletics at Cal, and she was thrilled to see the increased athletic opportunities now available for girls and young women. She was also very fond of Kent State, her alma mater, where she majored in Education. She supported many students over the years who were pursuing careers in teaching.

Most of all, she cherished family. Despite her many decades in California, she never forgot her Ohio roots and maintained strong connections with her cousins and friends.

She was a devoted and loving wife and mother and was graced with five granddaughters whom she adored (and deserved, after raising three boys!). With sons and grandchildren spread across the country, she treasured the annual summer family reunions at Lake Tahoe, which typically occurred over the 4th of July holiday. This made her passing on the 4th of July all the more touching.

Trudy was a Christian, who loved the Lord. In her latter years, she drew particular comfort and strength from her beloved daily devotional books. She is survived by Bill, her loving husband of 62 years, sons Tom (his wife Corinna and their daughters Catharina, Charlotte and Alexandra), Andy (his wife Ali and their daughters Emma and Daisy) and Matt and brother-in-law Robert (King) Ausfahl.

A Celebration of Life will be planned for a future date. In lieu of flowers, donations in Trudy's memory can be made to either: 1) John Muir Land Trust, P.O. Box 31, Martinez, CA 94553 or 2) Kent State University Foundation, P.O. Box 5190, Kent, OH 44242-0001 (Trudy Ausfahl Medallion Scholarship).

## Sallielou Carter

November 1, 1928 - June 25, 2024  
Resident of Walnut Creek



Our mom Sallielou Carter passed away peacefully on June 25, 2024. She was born in Oakland to James and Sallielou Ward, the youngest to sisters Jean and Anne.

She previously lived in Oakland, Orinda, Lake Wildwood and most recently Walnut Creek. She attended Oakland High School and UC Berkeley where she was a member of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority. She was married to her husband Gordon for 62 years whom she met at age 14 at a Methodist youth group. He was the love of her life and she always said he had given her a fairytale life. They loved to travel visiting many different countries with friends. She fiercely loved her family and was a

loyal friend. Throughout her life, she brought joy, warmth, and laughter to everyone she met.

Sallie was involved in many different organizations, including the PTA, Cub Scouts, Montclair Junior Women's Club, Welcome Wagon, Diablo Assistance League, Clipper Club (Oakland Presbyterian Church), Orinda Women's Club and PEO, as well as being a small business owner and real estate broker. Her earlier passions included backpacking, boating, tennis, golf. But most of all she loved entertaining her family and friends.

At Lake Wildwood she volunteered with Music in the Mountains, Hospice of the Foothills and was an elder at Sierra Presbyterian Church. Upon returning to Walnut Creek she was a member of Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church.

Our mom lived her life embracing joy and beauty, always with kindness and unconditional love. She is survived by her 3 children, Steven Carter (wife Carla), Nancy Wilkerson (husband Nelson), Patti Grijalva (husband Hiram); 6 grandchildren, Jesse Perez (Jenna), Scott Wilkerson (Lia), Kristen Clark (Brandon), Andrew Grijalva, Michael Grijalva (Vendy), Jeremy Carter; as well as 4 great grandchildren, Myla & Carter Perez and Aria & Eleanor Wilkerson. Also survived by many beloved nieces, nephews and lifelong friends. She is predeceased by her parents, her sisters Anne and Jean, niece Margaret and her husband Gordon.

In lieu of flowers please say a prayer and remember our sweet mother. A Celebration of Life will take place at Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church in Lafayette on Thursday, August 15th at 1pm.

As our mother would say, all are welcome.

## In Memory



# The best chewy brownies with mixed nuts on top

By Susie Iventosch



Photos Susie Iventosch

Back in our April 10 issue, we featured Toasted Pecan Maple Blondies and, in that column, I mentioned that the brownies from Sprouts Farmers Market are tough to beat. Well, I think we finally have! And who doesn't love a good brownie? We think the best brownies are the classic chewy "box-type" brownies that everyone loves, only these are homemade, which makes them even better! We love the combination of toasted nuts on top, and dark chocolate chips in the center for an extra dose of chocolate. They are super easy to make and quick to bake so you won't have to wait too long for a delicious bite of chocolate nirvana!

If you don't like nuts, no worries, just don't use them, and if you love nuts, you can always add more chopped nuts to the batter. We love this combination of pistachios, almonds, walnuts, pecans, and cashews because it looks and tastes so great, but we also love our brownies with just toasted pecans on top, too. Whichever combination of nuts you pick; just remember they are always better when pre-toasted in a 350 F oven for about 5-7 minutes.

The key to baking these brownies is to slightly underbake them. Once they look almost set in the center, we take them out of the oven and let them finish baking from the residual heat.

This offers a nice crispy edge for those who love edges (like me), but the centers are dense and moist and so delicious.

We use a superior quality Dutch process cocoa powder for most things we bake with cocoa powder and this recipe is no different. To make Dutch process cocoa powder, the cocoa beans are washed with an alkaline solution to neutralize the natural acidity found in cocoa beans. It results in a smoother flavor and a darker color. The smell, texture and taste of the Dutch process cocoa powder is our favorite. Some people prefer the more acidic cocoa powders, but the brownies will be delicious either way you choose.

We prefer to bake our brownies in a metal pan lined with foil, but lately, we have been baking them in our glass 8-inch pan, also lined with foil and they've turned out beautifully. So, no need to stress if you don't have an 8-inch square metal pan. Just be sure to lower the temperature by about 10-15 degrees if you use a glass pan.

These brownies hold up well when stored in an airtight container in

the refrigerator. They stay super-moist and can be enjoyed for a week or

two. If you want to store them longer, I suggest wrapping them in plastic

wrap and freezing them in an airtight container in the freezer.

## The Best Chewy Brownies with Mixed Nuts on Top

### INGREDIENTS

- 6 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2/3 cup Dutch processed unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tbsp. cornstarch
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup walnuts pieces
- 1/4 cup pecan pieces
- 1/4 cup slivered almonds
- 1/4 cup pistachios
- 1/4 cup cashews

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350F. Line an 8-inch metal baking pan with foil. Spray the foil and any exposed sides of the pan with cooking spray.

Line a baking sheet with foil and lay the nuts out on the foil. Bake in the oven for about 5-7 minutes to toast the nuts. Remove from oven and toss all of them together in a small bowl. Set aside.

Mix flour, salt, baking soda, and cornstarch in a small bowl. Set aside.

Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Add sugar and stir until it is well-blended with the butter. Remove from stove. Add eggs, one at a time, blending well after each with a fork or wooden spoon. Add oil and vanilla and mix well. Stir in cocoa powder and mix well. Add flour mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate chips.

Spread the batter into the prepared pan and cover with the toasted nuts. Gently press the mixed nuts ever so slightly into the batter with your fingers or a spatula.

Bake in 350F oven for 25-30 minutes. Even if they are still soft, remove from oven as they will continue to cook from the heat of the pan. Cool completely before cutting into 2-inch squares. Store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com). If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>

## In Memory

### Sheryl (Sheri) Lynn Grant Woodruff

September 7, 1944 ~ February 7, 2024



Sheri Woodruff died fighting her fight in her own bed at home after a long illness. She was born to Dorothy Jeanne (Cooper) Grant Davis and Lester Martin Grant in Oakland, California. Her parents received a surprise gift of two girls on September 7, 1944; Sheri, the elder by six minutes, and her identical twin, Sandra Lee (Sandi). Another sister, Leslie, rounded out the family 3.5 years later.

She attended Daniel Webster Elementary School, and Frick Junior High School in Oakland and moved to the Walnut Creek/Lafayette area upon her parents separation, where she attended Acalanes High School in Lafayette. Sheri was very active during high school in dance, cheerleading and choir including performing in the school musicals.

She and her sister Sandi performed a memorable duet in the musical "Oklahoma".

After high school graduation, Sheri attended Diablo Valley College while working in the offices of UC Berkeley during the height of the free speech movement. Most importantly, during this time she met her husband-to-be, Barry H. Woodruff.

Sheri and Barry celebrated their wedding on Treasure Island, San Francisco, on February 14, 1965. They "honeymooned" with a long drive back to Florida and Texas for Barry's Navy Flight Training. Thereafter they headed to a base in Maine until Barry was deployed to Viet Nam. Sheri, pregnant with their son, Grant, headed back to Lafayette and family while Barry was in Viet Nam. When Barry's deployment ended they returned to Connecticut with their new family. Grant attended school in Newtown while Sheri and Barry experienced the ups and downs of the airline industry.

The years brought many changes in where they resided and when they celebrated holidays, but there was one constant. That constant was Sheri's absolute commitment and support for Barry and his chosen profession of flying. It was this love for him that enabled him to weather the vagaries of the industry and pursue his dreams, and the family to flourish. They ultimately returned to California and settled in Burton Valley where Sheri became an active participant in the Lafayette Community. She volunteered for years in Grant's schools. She was also an active participant and leader in Book Club. Sheri was an avid reader with a particular interest and wealth of knowledge in American History and politics. She had a bold sense of humor which she frequently displayed with her Book Club group often arriving dressed appropriate to the book being discussed. During this time, she also worked in a Walnut Creek book store, gathering many books and friends along the way.

Following her tenure at the bookstore, Sheri began a long and meaningful career at Lafayette City Parks, Trails and Recreation. She was the first to respond to all manner of public inquiries both reasonable and unreasonable, which she handled with aplomb. Her wry sense of humor was legendary amongst her friends. After she retired, she continued to support the Community Center as a member of the Community Center Foundation for over nineteen years. Support included flipping pancakes at the Bunny Brunch, donating and wrapping gift baskets at the Santa's Bag Boutique and attending meetings that were filled not only with business, but also with laughs and camaraderie. She was always generous to her friends and family with time and help if they were in need.

Sheri is survived by her husband, Barry H. Woodruff; son, Grant C. Woodruff (Kiran) and four grandchildren (Drew, Alexandria, Harlow and Jasper), sister Sandi Armistead (John) and Leslie Waldie, niece Brooke Raimondo, nephews David Armistead (Sherry) and William Armistead (Audra), eight grand nephews and nieces and a multitude of devoted friends.

## In Memory

### Lionel Winton Sorenson, Jr., M.D.

June 6, 1927 - July 18, 2024



Lionel "Lee" Winton Sorenson, Jr., M.D., was the only son of Dr. Lionel Winton Sorenson, M.D., and Charlotte Edmunds. Known as "Junior" growing up, Lee spent his early years in Sandy, Utah, where his father served as the town's only physician and surgeon from 1933 to 1939.

At 10 years old, Junior spoke at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City because they thought he was 12. To this day, the home on 32 East Main Street in Sandy remains a historical site. At the age of 12, the family moved to Corcoran, California, seeking warm weather to heal his mother from rheumatic heart disease. Unfortunately, Charlotte passed away in 1940.

Lee was active in Scouting as a boy and attended Corcoran High School for three years with his class of 44 students, leaving after his junior year for Fresno State. Lee was a star runner, participating in Fresno State's track team, known as "one of the best all-civilian teams in the country." After serving in the Navy as World War II concluded, Lee enrolled in the University of California Medical School's joint Berkeley-San Francisco program. He fell in love with ophthalmology during his medical training, completing a residency at UCSF and Santa Clara in 1956. After working in Berkeley as a private ophthalmologist for a few years, he partnered with Owen Dickson in 1956 and worked uninterrupted until March 17, 2020, when the office closed due to the worldwide pandemic. His nearly 70 years as a practicing physician belongs in the record books.

Lee's real love was always his wife and family. In 1948, during his time at the University of California, Berkeley, Lee met Ann Fornoff at the LDS Church in Berkeley. Once Ann saw the sparkle in his eye, it was instant love. Their first date, the Cal-Northwestern Rose Bowl game (13-14 loss in the last one minute), set up a lifelong love of Cal Football. They married in 1950 in the Logan Temple. Together, Ann and Lee raised five sons: John, Bob, Dan, Bruce, and Andy. Lee and Ann pursued many activities, including tennis, golf, running, water skiing, and all sorts of exercise. Lee competed in dozens of races, including the 1980 Boston Marathon. He was also an avid golfer and golf practitioner, chipping and putting every day and regularly competing at the local club for a few dollars. Famously, he would also remind you that he played with the best domino players in the world. He loved to play Boggle with all visitors and did not mind coming up short, despite some made up words. Lee served as the Sunday School President for 20 years and was known for sharing an eclectic inspirational quote prior to each class, and he sang off key in the Ward Choir for 40 years. The Sorenson home always featured music, with Lee on the guitar, Ann on the piano, and songs from the 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s shared with groups of all sorts in sing-a-long format.

Lee was known by all he met as a man of perfect integrity, genuine modesty, and absolute kindness. He was kind to everyone—patients, neighbors, grandchildren, golfers, runners, and guests. The sparkle in his eye and his cute smile never lapsed.

Lee is survived by his wife, Ann, and sons John Alan Sorenson (Miriam Smith), Robert Lynn Sorenson (Stephanie Sorenson), Bruce Fornoff Sorenson (Connie Sorenson (1958-2016); Catherine Soso), Daniel Scott Sorenson (Roberta Sorenson), and Andrew Lee Sorenson (Riki Sorenson); 21 grandchildren (Rebecca, Sarah, Stephen (d), Becca, Scott, Karen, Chris, Sandy, Krystina, Suzie, Julie, Laura, Sophie, Brenda, Skip, Kristen, Joey, Jacob, Zach, Kacey, Michael); and 31 great-grandchildren (Michael, Matthew, Grace, William, Sophie, Annemarie, Casen, Lily, Eliza, Clara, Natalie, Heidi, Wendy, Frank, Mary Lou, Harvey, Ginger, Kailee, Koen, Stanislaus, Ellie, Norm, Daphne, Donna, Eli, Georgia (d), Arik, Lionel, Isla, Gus). Another is on the way (that we know of).

Memorial Services will be held on Saturday, Aug. 3, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 3776 Via Granada, Moraga, California. Those wishing to visit with family may arrive at 9 AM. In lieu of flowers, please take your kids out for ice cream.

## Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 200 words) to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com), and include "Celebrations or Remembrances" in the subject line.

**Not to be missed**

**Art**

**Art Gallery at the Orinda Library:** Soul Boxes. The Lamorinda Arts Council invites the public view Soul Boxes about gun violence deaths in the U.S., mixed media paintings by Thuy Linh Bennett King, ceramics by Karen Hildebrand, and Olympic memorabilia by Andy Toro. Meet the artists at a reception in their honor on Saturday Aug. 3 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Their exhibit runs until Friday, Aug. 30 (closed Sundays). Visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits-library-gallery/> for details.

**The Lamorinda Arts Council** invites you to meet Lois Reynolds Mead in the Art Gallery at Wilder on Sunday Aug. 4 at a reception in her honor from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. where light refreshments will be served. Her solo show of colorful acrylic collages featured in "Uppercase" magazine runs from Aug. 4 to Sept. 6. Visit the gallery M-F from 3 to 5 p.m., closed weekends. Download directions if you plan on visiting at

<https://lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits-wilder/>.

**Art Gallery at the Orinda Library:** Call For Artists - "Stories We Tell" Deadline Aug. 15. The Lamorinda Arts Council seeks artwork that is visually narrative, which may include (but not require) a written narrative component for a two month exhibit (Sep. & Oct.). Narrative art includes traditional mediums like drawings, paintings, and sculpture, as well as photography, animation, manga, and comic strips. Visual artworks often accompany songs, film, theater performances and documentaries. Submissions may be abstract or representational. Please review the Prospectus at <https://LamorindaArts.org/call-for-artists/> which includes a link to submit artwork.

**Music**

**Orinda - Concerts are held** at the Orinda Community Park on Thursday night from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Call (925) 254.2445 for information. Thursday, Aug. 1 - Tin Man; Thursday, Aug.

15 - Vintage Jukebox; Thursday, Aug. 29 - Spill the Wine; Thursday, Sept. 12 - Patron

**St. Paul's Concert Series** is excited to host Classical Guitarist Andrew Flory as the featured performer in their upcoming concert on Aug. 17 at 7 p.m., St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1924 Trinity Avenue, Walnut Creek. Online broadcast: visit [stpaulswc.org/concert-series](http://stpaulswc.org/concert-series) for the concert link and program. Donations graciously accepted at the door (avg. \$20/\$10 Students) and in online registration. All are welcome regardless of donation!

**The Diablo Women's Chorale's** Fall season starts on Monday, Aug. 19 at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 3051 Putnam Blvd., Pleasant Hill. Auditions will be held by appointment that evening between 6 and 9 p.m.. For information on membership and auditions, contact Nancy Hickman, Membership Chair at (925) 899-5050 or [hickmandg@gmail.com](mailto:hickmandg@gmail.com). [www.diablowomenschorale.org](http://www.diablowomenschorale.org)

**Live Outdoor Concert.** Who doesn't love a good 80's song? On Saturday, Aug. 10, 5 to 6:30 p.m. come enjoy the sound of Lafayette's own Random Nature! band. Bring chairs and a picnic to the Grove behind Lafayette Christian Church, 584 Glenside Drive, and enjoy and groove to Random Nature! under the beautiful trees of the Grove. No admission charge.

**Live Music at the Library** - Free concerts celebrating the Lafayette Library's 15th Anniversary Year! Fridays 6 to 8 p.m. Food trucks, Fun for the family, a sing! Aug 2 : Death and Taxes; Aug 9 : Diana Gamera and Patrick Wolff; Aug 16: Jinz Jones. FREE at the Amphitheatre [www.LLCLCF.org](http://www.LLCLCF.org)

**Theatre**

**Orinda Starlight Village** Players present William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing through Aug. 10. Fridays and Saturdays, at 8:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 4, 4 p.m. and Thursday, Aug. 8, 8 p.m. Orinda Park Amphitheater, 28 Orinda Way, Orinda,

Tickets: Eventbrite [bit.ly/omuchado](http://bit.ly/omuchado)

**Different points of view** clash in Town Hall Theatre's season opener, Human Error by Eric Pfeffinger. Previews Aug. 22 and 23, performances Aug. 24 through Sept. 24. Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School Street, Lafayette. Tickets: \$20-\$45, Pay-What-You-Can tickets available at the door (subject to availability). [www.townhalltheatre.com/human-error](http://www.townhalltheatre.com/human-error)

**Literature**

**The Lamorinda Arts Council** presents Art Embraces Words on Saturday Aug. 24 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Enjoy presentations from writers Lucinda Jackson and Jane Blomstrand, award-winning poet Emma Wong, and local artists. Call for Artists and Writers to contribute to their 10-26 program. Visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/art-embraces-words/> for details.

**Other**

**Lafayette Police Department** is hosting the annual National Night Out event on Aug. 6 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Amphitheater (3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.) from 5 to 7 p.m. to meet your local Police Officers and Fire Fighters. Food available for purchase at Ofieskitchen Food Truck.

**Orinda Police Department** is hosting the annual National Night Out event at their station this summer. Meet your neighbors, learn how to help fight crime, and have fun on Tuesday, Aug. 6, from 5 to 8 p.m. Join for an evening of community building over BBQ (hot dogs and hamburgers). If you bring a backpack or school supplies to donate, you'll have the opportunity to dunk the

Chief of Police in the dunk tank! All supplies will be donated to the Family Justice Center in Concord.

**Lamorinda Idol Finals:** Sunday Aug. 18 at Orinda Theatre - 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Congratulations to all Finalists for Lamorinda Idol 2024! Join the Lamorinda Arts Council to see the Finalists perform at the historic Orinda Theatre, 2 Theatre Square, Orinda. Come for one session or stay all day. 11 a.m. K-5th Grade Solos; 1 p.m. K-12th Grade Groups; 3:15 p.m. 6-8th Grade Solos; 5 p.m. 9-12th Grade Solos; 7 p.m. Announcement of Winners! For details visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/idol-2024-finalists/>

**Alzheimer's, ALS, Parkinson's ...** There's Hope. Please join us for an informative update on the latest research: Tuesday, Aug. 13 at 7:30 p.m. at the Rossmoor Event Center, Walnut Creek; Wednesday, Aug. 14 at 1 p.m. at the Orinda Rotary Club, Orinda Community Center; Friday, Aug. 16 at 7 a.m. at Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club, Lafayette Veterans Hall. Free to the public. [BrainChemistryLabs.org](http://BrainChemistryLabs.org)

**New Knitting & Crochet Club.** All are welcome for free on the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. at the Moraga Library. Join enthusiastic beginning and experienced knitters and crocheters in the Moraga Knitting & Crochet Club. This drop-in program is open to everyone, so bring a knitting or crochet project. Give and receive tips and techniques from others. All skill levels welcome! No reservation necessary. Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Road. Free parking.

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**Lamorinda Weekly**

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# LAMORINDA SPORTS

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## Acalanes grad Jewel Roemer making her first appearance with the U.S. Olympic water polo team

By Jon Kingdon



Photo provided

Maggie Steffens with Jewel Roemer earlier in their careers.

Water polo in the Bay Area and in Lamorinda specifically has made great strides, going back to when Heather Petrie had to play on the boys' water polo team at Miramonte in the early 1990's, ultimately competing in four Olympics (2000, 2004, 2008, 2012). Petrie set the standard for players like Maggie Steffens (Monte Vista H.S.) who is now competing in her fourth Olympics (2012, 2016, 2020, 2024). Acalanes alum and upcoming Stanford senior, Jewel Roemer, on her first Olympics team, stands ready to accept the baton from Steffens and carry

the standard for water polo excellence in the East Bay.

Roemer is a three time (2021-2023) All-American at Stanford, two-time NCAA champion, three-time first team All-American (2018-2020) at Acalanes with two NCS championships, and a two-time Junior Olympics MVP with the 680 Water Polo Club.

Jewel's father, John Roemer is the current Head Coach of the Miramonte girls water polo team, which has won the last three NorCal Championships with a composite won-loss record of 83-2. In 2022, Roemer

was named the best girls' water polo coach in the country by MaxPreps.

It all began for Jewel when she was seven – though it was not love at first sight, getting splashed and pushed under the water. "My dad supported me every single day at practice, just trying to make me as happy as I could be while I was there," Jewel said.

John did more than attend the practices. "Jewel wouldn't get into the water for practice unless I got into the pool as well which in the end helped her development because I was able to correct little things that I wouldn't have noticed outside of the pool."

When she reached the age of ten, Jewel began to stand out in the water. "I started to be more dominant with the ten and under coed teams, outplaying the boys at times and that was a confidence booster. I would also play with the fourteens and even with eighteen-year-olds and would get beat up with all the older girls so coming back to my own age group also gave me a lot more confidence."

There was a bit of a hazing process in going against the older girls. When Jewel was ten, she went to Italy with a team of high school girls,



Jewel Roemer

Photo USA Water Polo/Catharyn Hayne

coached by Maureen O'Toole, a great player in her own right, to practice with the team. "Mo put her in a game, which I had not anticipated," John said. "A much older opponent held Jewel underwater for about ten seconds and Jewel came up and elbowed her in the ear guard. After that they were much nicer to her because they respected her for fighting back."

"That was a scary moment for me," Jewel said. "I was thirteen when I took my first international trip and then was invited to play on some national teams. At 14, I played with the 14 and 16 and under teams

at the junior Olympics and I was able to contribute with every age group. That's probably when I felt that I can do this, and I determined that I wanted to be the best that I could be."

Jewel has three older brothers, the youngest of them 14 years older than Jewel. None of them were water polo players, but they did play rugby and basketball. "I tried to get them to play water polo, but they were land animals," John said.

Still, they engendered a love of sport for Jewel: "I grew up watching them play basketball in high school, college, and after that and I really enjoyed it. They had

a good perspective and mindset which they shared with me that I didn't really appreciate until I started playing at a higher level."

Growing up, she was more than just a water polo player. "Jewel was a very good softball player and played CYO basketball through the eighth grade at St. Catherines, winning the diocese every year, and even played the baritone sax in the band at Acalanes," John said.

"I did have fun doing other things," Jewel said. "I grew up watching my dad coach as well and water polo just clicked for me."

... continued on Page 12

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# Lamorinda's track team the Avengers are back

Submitted by Lupi Gutierrez Beagle



Photos Lupi Gutierrez Beagle

From left: Aimee Gee, Melinda Cooper, Sara Ratchford, Izaiah Garcia, Andrew Beagle, Simon Keenan, Elan Grant

Olympians track and field team known as the Avengers returned with a vengeance at the 2024 NorCal Special Olympics Summer Games track & field event. The Games were hosted the last weekend in June by Santa Clara State University, where opening ceremonies kicked off the annual event Friday night with the Parade of

Athletes at Stevens Stadium Buckshaw Field, followed by the 2024 Law Enforcement Torch Run. Athletes from over thirty California counties were represented to compete in the largest local competition, highlighting thousands of athletes and coaches coming together in the spirit of competition and inclusion.

Participating for the Lamorinda team were four Contra Costa athletes with a mighty combination of intensity, perseverance and passion for their respective events. The team secured six gold and four silver medals between them.

Aimee Gee, 23, is the veteran of the team and won gold in both shot put and in her first ever turbo javelin competition. She also competed in the 100-meter where she took silver.

Melinda Briones, 32, who played softball in the 2015 Games, recognized her heats were stacked at her first track & field Summer Games. She received participation in shot put and placed fourth in her first time competing in the turbo javelin, just missing a bronze medal. Briones also placed fifth in the 100-meter.

Andrew Beagle, 15, a rising sophomore and wrestler at Miramonte High School, returned to his second Summer Games. Beagle took gold in his preferred event, the turbo javelin, with a throwing distance of 13.65 meters. He placed silver in both the running long jump and in the 100-meter.

Incoming Miramonte High School Freshman Simon Keenan, who competed in the swimming portion of the 2023 Games last year, switched over to participate with the Avengers in his first track and field showing. Keenan, who is the youngest on the team, returned home with three Gold Medals in the 100-meter, turbo javelin, and running long jump.

The Avengers also competed in the 100-meter relay for the first time as a team. After a



Team members: Andrew Beagle, Melinda Briones, Aimee Gee, Simon Keenan

referee's false start, Keenan ran his entire leg before he was stopped. Once the race resumed, Keenan ran it again with all three baton handoffs flawlessly executed. Beagle closed and caught the other team with incredible speed and was just edged out by literally a tenth of a second. A great effort from all four legs.



KayleeRae Walls

## Acalanes grad Jewel Roemer

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Despite being ten years younger than Maggie Steffens, there is a long-term connection through their parents as Maggie's father, Carlos, and John Roemer played together at Cal. "When Jewel was little, we would go and watch Maggie play," John said. "Now they're on the same team and sometimes I have to pinch myself because it's hard to believe we are where we are at right now."

Growing up in such a water polo rich environment has contributed to Jewel's development.

"Watching Maggie play when I was younger and having women coaches like Natalie Benson, Coralie Simmons, and Heather Petrie, learning their history and what they had to go through just to play the sport is super inspiring and I really appreciate them and their efforts and how much they have invested and still invest in the sport. I've learned so much from all of them, and you can just tell how much they love us and how inspiring they been and what a huge role they played in my being where I am right now."

Having worked so

closely with Jewel, John sees what has made her so special in the water.

"Jewel has always had the passion and the innate ability to focus along with her mental toughness," John said "She plays the five position (the left handed position) for the US team because she sees everything, and she's passing to her right handed teammates strong side and the comment has been made that she has the vision of an owl with a field vision of 360 degrees."

Yet, with all of her accomplishments, Jewel continues to look for ways to take her game to an-

other level. "I am still looking to improve my passing in general, setting my teammates up for shots or passing the ball somewhere where I know that that person can hit someone else for a shot - just reading the game better. I'm also working on communicating in the pool, especially on defense which is something that we all have to improve on. The team does put me in great positions to distribute the ball well, so I've learned a lot and gotten better."

Though 5'6" and going against bigger players, size has not been an issue for her. "As an attacker, I

use my quickness over brute strength, but I've grown a lot stronger too and the water is a good neutralizer if you do the right things like have strong legs," Jewel explained.

Jewel is a human biology major at Stanford, which also has some connection to her being a water polo player. "Having suffered some sports injuries, I really enjoy learning about how the human body works and optimizing health through things like nutrition, and majoring in human biology has allowed me to explore things I'm interested in and may lead me into

some field of medicine in the future," Jewel said

Paris brings back great memories for Jewel, having competed there last May. "Paris is really a beautiful city and when we last played there, we were allowed to go explore the city and eat really great food and do all the touristy things," Jewel said. "So, at the Olympics we are going to be really focused and see it as more of a work trip."

Jewel has scored a goal in each of her first two games in the Olympics, a 15-6 win over Greece and a 13-11 loss to Spain. The team will next play Italy on Wednesday.

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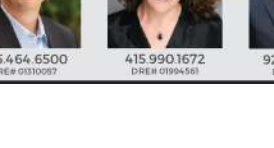
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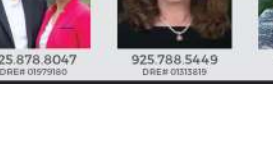
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# Lamorinda

# OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly

Volume 18

Issue 12

Wednesday, July 31, 2024



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page OH2

## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Summer Sweetness

By Cynthia Brian



Daisies, rudbeckia, and echinacea enrich the sweetness of summer.



Sky blue plumbago with pink crape myrtle.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Build a rock cairn for fun or as a monument.

*“What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness.” John Steinbeck*

It is still hot, yet a cool breeze wafts through the patio where I am writing under an awning. I can't bear being inside an office when I can do my work outside on my trusty Mac laptop with a full view of nature, the soothing sounds of a gurgling fountain, and the perfumed air from my roses and viburnum. In the cold of winter, I long for days like these: warm, sunny, and sweet.

Hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies are darting about, oblivious to my presence. The fiery orange crocosmia, also known as coppertips or firecracker plant, is on display and attracting pollinators. I adore this exotic perennial because the corms are easily transplantable, it blooms when so many other plants are dormant, and it is showy in floral arrangements. Although it is a sun lover, I've also planted it in sheltered

shade for longer-lasting blooms.

Bees are gathered on my bronze fennel. I cut a few fronds of seeds to sprinkle on my vegetables for tonight's meal without bothering the buzzers. Walking my property, I noticed that my many hollyhocks were being eaten by the painted lady butterfly caterpillars. Painted lady butterflies are found throughout the world and because they are such beneficial and beautiful pollinators, I am happy that they dine on my hollyhocks.

My fragrant four o'clock plants didn't get the memo that they were supposed to bloom in the late afternoon or early evening. My flowers bloom like clockwork every morning from nine to 11. Many years ago, my mom gave me seeds from her species growing on our ranch. They have perennially sprouted and supported a multitude of pollinators, including the nocturnal moths. As a kid, I remember that her four o'clocks bloomed on time in the late afternoon.

... continued on Page OH8

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MORAGA	9	\$860,000	\$2,275,000
ORINDA	5	\$1,050,000	\$4,350,000

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- 3626 Brook Street, \$3,895,000, 4 Bdrms, 4583 SqFt, 2005 YrBlt, 06-18-24,  
Previous Sale: \$2,375,000, 07-11-05
- 3368 Johnson Road, \$1,380,000, 3 Bdrms, 2047 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 06-21-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,495,000, 09-08-21
- 41 Manzanita Court, \$1,285,000, 3 Bdrms, 1272 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 06-25-24
- 3725 Meadow Lane, \$5,425,000, 4 Bdrms, 3890 SqFt, 2004 YrBlt, 06-21-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,290,000, 07-02-03
- 1543 Rancho View Drive, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 2621 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 06-28-24
- 3235 Surmont Drive, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3270 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 06-25-24,  
Previous Sale: \$743,000, 05-12-99
- 3354 Sweet Drive, \$1,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1535 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 06-27-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,112,500, 04-10-15
- 1002 Woodbury Road #302, \$3,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 2931 SqFt,  
2015 YrBlt, 06-18-24, Previous Sale: \$2,600,000, 06-16-22

### MORAGA

- 116 Fairfield Place, \$1,725,000, 4 Bdrms, 2477 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 06-25-24
- 3 Hansen Court, \$965,000, 2 Bdrms, 1211 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 06-21-24,  
Previous Sale: \$244,000, 05-01-91
- 27 Merrill Circle, \$2,195,000, 5 Bdrms, 4874 SqFt, 1990 YrBlt, 06-28-24
- 20 Miramonte Drive, \$860,000, 3 Bdrms, 1762 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 06-28-24,  
Previous Sale: \$665,000, 01-22-16
- 274 Paseo Bernal, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2117 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 06-27-24,  
Previous Sale: \$320,000, 02-01-92
- 1755 Spyglass Lane, \$2,275,000, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 06-26-24,  
Previous Sale: \$950,000, 03-27-01
- 96 Sullivan Drive, \$2,060,000, 5 Bdrms, 3337 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 06-21-24
- 8 Trinity Terrace, \$1,800,000, 5 Bdrms, 2498 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 06-21-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,260,000, 06-13-07
- 3771 Via Granada, \$2,010,000, 4 Bdrms, 3403 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 06-21-24

### ORINDA

- 108 Camino Sobrante, \$2,050,000, 4 Bdrms, 2476 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 06-21-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,014,000, 07-12-13
- 32 Candle Terrace, \$4,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 4856 SqFt, 1990 YrBlt, 06-17-24,  
Previous Sale: \$3,300,000, 10-28-20
- 102 Glorietta Boulevard, \$1,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 1412 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 06-18-24
- 90 Meadow View Road, \$2,188,000, 4 Bdrms, 2022 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 06-28-24
- 14 Washington Lane, \$2,012,000, 4 Bdrms, 2300 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 06-28-24,  
Previous Sale: \$1,485,000, 07-14-16



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Clark (00903367) | Shannon (01885058) | Amy (01855959) | Molly (01498053) All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

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## County Assessor certifies and delivers the 2024-2025 County Assessment Roll

(Martinez, CA) – The "2024-2025" Assessor's Close of Roll Affidavit" was signed by Gus S. Kramer, Assessor, and subscribed and sworn to the County Clerk-Recorder's Office, on June 28, 2024. The 2024-2025 Assessment Roll has been delivered to the County Auditor, as required by law.

The increase to the local tax base for 2024-2025 is over \$11.16 billion. This represents a 4.17% increase in assessed value and brings the total net local assessment roll to more than \$278.83 billion. The 2024-2025 assessment roll is the highest to date in Contra Costa County's history.

Cities with the largest increases in assessed value include Antioch, Oakley, and Martinez with increases ranging from 4.99% up to 6.09%. San Ramon, Concord, and Walnut Creek saw the lowest assessed value increases ranging from 2.97% down to 1.45%. The assessment roll now consists of 380,681 parcels, an increase of 1,239 over the previous year.

The Assessor's annual letter to the Board of Supervisors and 2024-2025 Assessment Roll Reports can be found at:

<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/83431/2024-2025-BOS-Close-of-Assessment-Roll-Letter-and-Reports-to-the-CCC-Board-of-Supervisors?bidId=>

**LAFAYETTE**

SECURED VALUE:	\$11,846,320,741
UNSECURED VALUE:	\$74,201,422
GROSS VALUE:	\$11,920,522,163
LOCAL EXEMPTIONS:	\$136,710,082
NET VALUE:	\$11,783,812,081
GAIN/LOSS:	\$508,192,960
% CHANGE:	4.50%

**MORAGA**

SECURED VALUE:	\$6,027,695,843
UNSECURED VALUE:	\$27,085,170
GROSS VALUE:	\$6,054,781,013
LOCAL EXEMPTIONS:	\$271,697,074
NET VALUE:	\$5,783,083,939
GAIN/LOSS:	\$233,093,985
% CHANGE:	4.19%

**ORINDA**

SECURED VALUE:	\$9,763,659,673
UNSECURED VALUE:	\$42,041,987
GROSS VALUE:	\$9,805,701,660
LOCAL EXEMPTIONS:	\$67,086,800
NET VALUE:	\$9,738,614,860
GAIN/LOSS:	\$360,124,405
% CHANGE:	3.83%

Provided by: Robin Cantu, Assessor's Customer Services Coordinator  
Robin.Cantu@assr.cccounty.us



# CCTA awarded \$1.490 million grant for Countywide Evac Plan

By Vera Kochan

The Contra Costa County Transportation Authority (CCTA) proposes to develop a new Countywide Emergency Evacuation Plan. A \$1.490 million grant for the Plan was awarded to CCTA by Caltrans and will be shared by all 19 Contra Costa cities and unincorporated county.

This Plan will conduct local-level evacuation compliance assessments, per Senate Bill 99, which requires cities, upon the next revision of the Housing Element on or after Jan. 1, 2020, to review and update the safety element to include information identifying residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes. Also, a high-level evacuation route capacity, safety, and viability analysis for the county is expected per Assembly Bill 747, which requires jurisdictions to, after Jan 1, 2022, review and update the safety element of their general plan.

Additionally, the Plan builds upon the development of the Contra Costa County multi-jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. An outcome of this study, as identified by several agencies throughout the county, is an understanding that typical climate and other hazard risks may result in multi-jurisdictional evacuations using routes that may span several jurisdictions.

CCTA is adding \$212,900 as a local match, which puts the project's cost at \$1,702,900. "There is no breakdown of how much budget will be applied to the Town of Moraga and cities of Orinda

and Lafayette individually," stated CCTA Director of Planning John Hoang. "We are looking at several key areas throughout the county and Lamorinda is identified as one of those key communities we will focus on regarding fire emergencies."

Hoang added, "We will examine the transportation network and evacuation needs and address potential vulnerabilities that could exacerbate emergencies, for instance, by leveraging intelligent transportation system technologies that will be deployed as part of our Countywide Smart Signals project."

"CCTA previously had some experience in funding pilot small Smart Signal projects within a few local county agencies," said Moraga Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp. "Some time ago, Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda began transportation planning efforts and seeking funding to create a Lamorinda regional Smart Signals system. We successfully partnered with CCTA and Congressman Mark DeSaulnier to receive grant funding totaling \$5,913,559 for the design and construction of our regional Smart Signal project."

According to Knapp, Lamorinda has developed evacuation plans; participated in the county's multi-jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan; and has held several coordinated evacuation simulation exercises with police, fire, public works departments, and volunteer groups such as CERT. "The next level improvement for evacuation planning is to identify our inadequate

or bottleneck constraints in our full Lamorinda regional transportation system and work systematically toward addressing them."

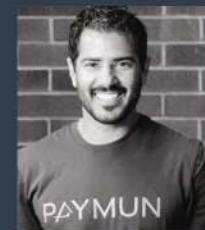
Knapp praised the teamwork of Lamorinda's agencies in their common efforts to resolve transportation issues. By collectively approaching CCTA to become a partner, CCTA was awarded a countywide Sustainable Transportation grant.

"The number one issue raised by residents during the Housing Element process was evacuations during fire," indicated Moraga Planning Director Afshan Hamid. "With the Town being part of a Countywide Emergency Evacuation Plan, this is a huge step forward with the Town listening to resident concerns. The Plan will enable a robust emergency evacuation plan, identify vulnerable communities, assess evacuation timelines, and formulate strategies to optimize egress during emergencies."

Hamid stressed that the Plan will target sustainability and resilience for Moraga's most vulnerable residents and foster proactive cooperation with multi-jurisdictions with regards to climate and hazard risks. "Crafting an Evacuation Plan tailored to the needs of Moraga will empower stakeholders with indispensable tools for adept emergency preparedness and citizen evacuations, especially in scenarios such as wildfires or floods. Lamorinda is taking a leadership role in addressing resident concerns on Evacuation Studies."



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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Summer Sweetness

Photos Cynthia Brian



Four O'clock flowers usually open in the afternoon and bloom throughout the night.



The blue giant bird of paradise, a native of South Africa, exhibits a crown of white sepals with a blue tongue.

... continued from Page OH1

Other sweet summer blooms include daisies, echinacea, birds of paradise, plumbago, and gladiolus. The sky-blue color of plumbago is mesmerizing. Buds on my crape myrtle trees are about to burst open and I've observed crape myrtle trees blooming in numerous yards.

#### **A few not-so-sweet summer trespassers:**

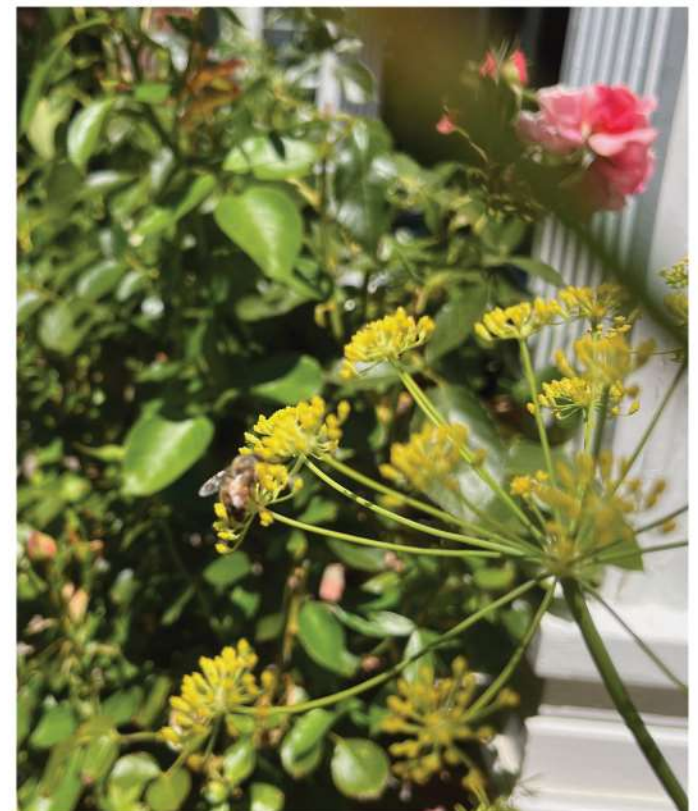
You may notice powdery mildew invading your rhododendrons, crape myrtles, viburnum, roses, and other plants when the temperatures are hot during the day and cooler or humid at night. This fungal disease looks like a dusting of flour on your leaves, and although it doesn't kill the plant, with mild cases recovering on their own with improved airflow, normal treatment is necessary. One of the best and least expensive preventative measures is to spray sulfur in advance of symptoms. In the early stages of infection, an effective organic treatment is to use a 50/50 combination of milk and water sprayed on the entire plant (leaves and stems) twice weekly until results are achieved. An un-

pleasant sour smell may develop in the hot sun, but your plants will no longer be sickly!

Rust is another fungal disease that targets roses, especially in summer. It manifests with orange and/or black spots on the leaves and stems. Sulfur or copper can be used as a preventative measure. When a few of my roses showed signs of rust, I quickly removed and destroyed the leaves to prevent further spread. I also improved the air circulation by removing surrounding plants and weeds, making sure that the roses were being watered at the roots and not by overhead sprinklers. Always disinfect and sanitize your pruning shears with alcohol so as not to spread disease.

Do you have bindweed in your garden? This little cousin of the morning glory is an invasive climbing plant that strangles other plants and can easily take over a landscape. The flowers are dainty and pretty, but don't be fooled. It is going to take patience and persistence to rid your garden of this noxious weed. The root system can spread to twenty feet wide and deep.

... continued on next Page



A bee feasts on the bronze fennel seeds.

## *Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian* **Summer Sweetness**

Photos Cynthia Brian



**Pink bindweed is pretty yet an invasive, destructive weed.**

... continued from Page OH8

The seeds, which can last for 20 to 50 years in the soil, disperse through the movement of birds, wildlife, and irrigation. Two types of bindweed have taken up residence in my orchard. I hope to one day eradicate it through perseverant pulling of new sprouts which will eventually cause the rhizomes to lose their strength. If you see bindweed in your garden, do not ignore it – dig out the roots as soon as you see it. Once bindweed has established itself in your garden, without chemical intervention (which I don't use or recommend), you will be battling this intruder for years.

### **Back to the summer sweetness:**

Add to your summer sweet garden with a rock cairn. Throughout his-



**White gladiolus shines in the evening garden.**

tory, stones have been piled high as memorials or markers. I suggest a rock cairn as a fun family nature project. Make a game of it.

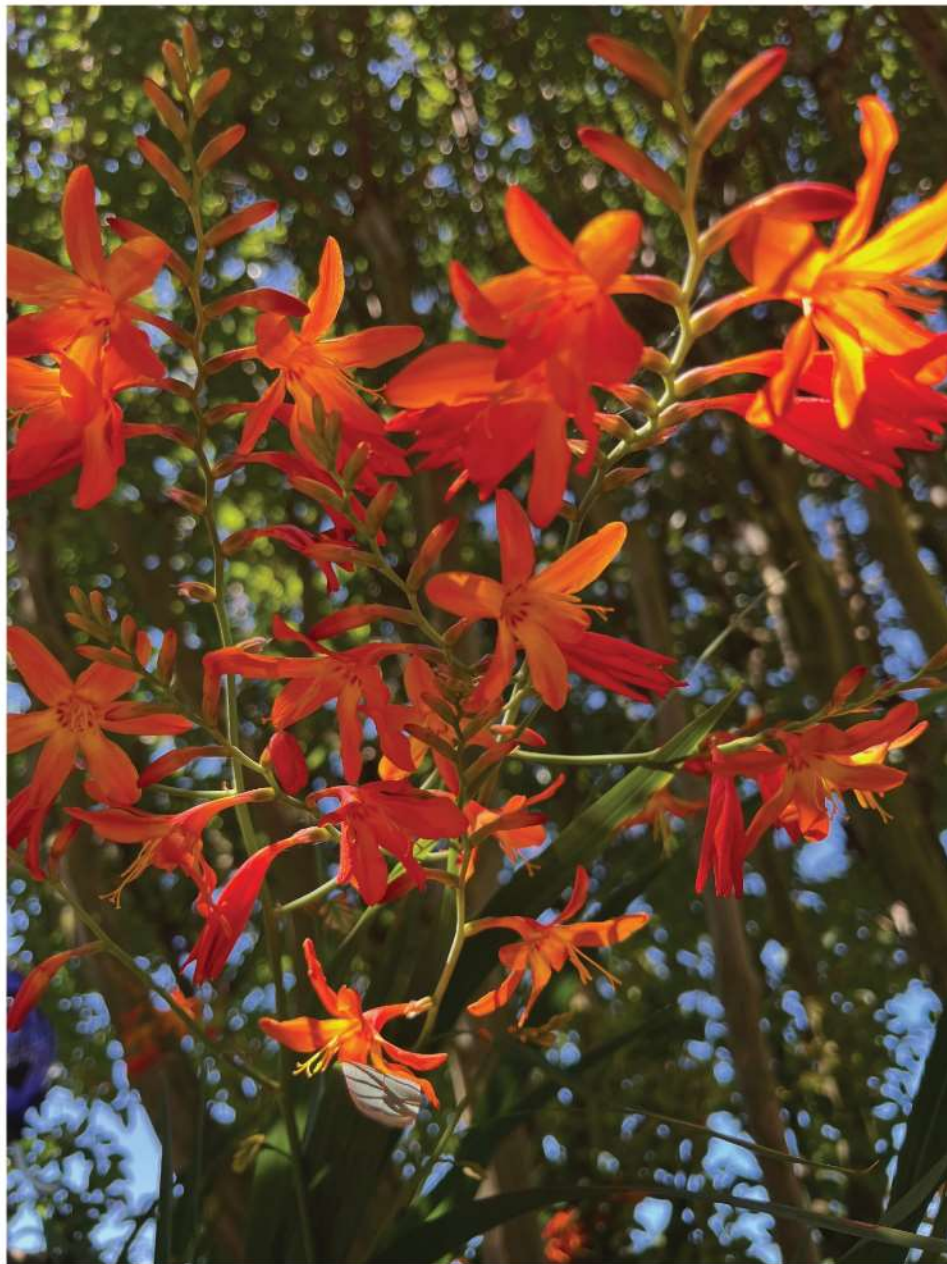
For a punch of splashy color, unleash a border mixing different heights and flower shapes with sweet alyssum, marigold, petunia, rudbeckia, and gaillardia.

Sit under a shade tree with a glass of fresh-squeezed lemonade to read a book. If you have children or grandchildren, they will enjoy the true tales of animals in my series, "Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures", available in books, Amazon, or my StarStyle® Store, <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>

Give working outside on your patio or deck a try. The chill of winter is only six months away. Savor the warmth and sweetness of summer.

## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Summer Sweetness

Photos Cynthia Brian



Fiery firecracker, crocosmia is a pollinator magnet.



The book series, "Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures" by Cynthia Brian enthralls toddlers.

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**Cynthia Brian prefers the outdoors near the gurgling fountain.**

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3 which was just honored as the 2024 Nonprofit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Her newest children's picture book, Books in the Barnyard: Oh Deer!, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available for discounted pre-sales at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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**New Listing!**  
**291 Monte Vista Ridge Road, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 5576 Sqft | \$4,250,000

This exquisite home combines luxury, comfort, quality, privacy, & convenience to SF & top tier Orinda schools.



**188 Lombardy Lane, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 4 Ba | 3948 Sqft | \$3,495,000

Fabulous home in coveted Sleepy Hollow w/a wonderful floor plan & spectacular private backyard!



**108 Oak Road, Orinda**  
4 Bd | 3 Ba | 3377 Sqft | \$2,995,000

Built in 2000 & nestled in one of Orinda's close to town neighborhoods, this bright spacious home has everything you are looking for!



**11 Idyll Court, Orinda**  
6 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 4020 Sqft | \$2,795,000

This home enjoys over 4000 sqft of living w/ an outdoor retreat including a pool & sports court ideal for gatherings and fun in the sun!



**237 Glorietta Blvd, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 3 Ba | 3109 Sqft | \$2,650,000

This wonderful 5 bd/ 3 ba mid-century gem offers one level living & space for everyone!



**38 El Gavilan, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2702 Sqft | \$1,725,000

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**New Price!**

**53 Via Floreado, Orinda**  
5 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2851 Sqft | \$1,695,000

Bright 5 bd/2.5 ba home in Orinda w/ amazing views!



**76 La Cuesta Road, Orinda**  
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**New Listing!**

**1087 Rahara Drive, Lafayette**  
3 Bd | 3 Ba | 2685 Sqft | \$2,595,000

This expansive 3 bd/ 3 ba home spans 2,685 sf on a generous 0.56-acre lot in the coveted Happy Valley neighborhood.



**50 Woodbury Highlands #34, Lafayette**  
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**New Price!**

**9 Mayfield Place, Moraga**  
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