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Photos Kendall Haynes

Another successful OMPA meet led by Orinda Country Club's 23rd consecutive victory

By Jon Kingdon

When Ann Elliott and Ashley Brush from the Moraga Country Club were named the OMPA co-meet directors for the 64th OMPA swim meet, they wasted no time in preparing for an undertaking that would comprise 1,686 swimmers and 491 heats, along with a large number of other arrangements that needed to be made. "It was an exciting undertaking and a great privilege to be so involved in this community event," Elliott said. "United We Swim."

They met with last year's meet director, Bruce Jamgotchian, right after the 2023 meet to get a jump on things. "We learned a lot from Bruce, so we

were able to put our best foot forward," Brush said.

Every parent who had a participating swimmer contributed volunteer hours throughout this weekend to make it possible. "We worked with representatives of every team that are on the OMPA board and the meet directors rotate from team to team each year," Elliott said. "We all worked together to make this a success; each team had a cluster of responsibilities, and we coordinated the bigger picture."

As a former swimmer in the OMPA, Elliott took a long-term perspective: "Everything is just electric and it's just a fun atmosphere, so I think that

thread is very much the same as when I was swimming."

For the third year in a row, Orinda Country Club, Meadow Swim and Tennis, and Sleepy Hollow finished 1-2-3 in the final standings.

As each team approached the OMPA, the one consistent among them all was the appreciation for how special this weekend has been for all concerned.

ORINDA COUNTRY CLUB

Won the Orinda Lions perpetual trophy for finishing in first. ... continued on Page 11

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Miramonte students embark on Europe summer trip

By Emma Wong



Students and instructors in front of the Brandenburg Gate - Berlin, Germany.

From July 12 through 21, a band of 35 Miramonte students embarked on an educational journey to Berlin, Prague, Krakow, and Budapest. Across the Atlantic, these Eastern European cities offered striking beauty and miles of history.

The trip was led by history instructors Xavier Frippiat, Kelly Ginocchio, and Matt Sweeney. Frippiat has guided Miramonte students five times before to cities across Europe. "This year, I seized the opportunity to appeal to students' sense of adventure," Frippiat said. "I planned an itinerary less frequented by folks in our community: Eastern Europe. I framed it as: 'Discover the Europe your Friends Haven't Seen Yet!'"

Priority was granted to students who had completed the AP European History course. "All the places we visit are oozing with historical relevance from multiple periods, something students who engaged with AP European History can attest to," Frippiat said.

The trip drew students ranging from rising juniors to freshly graduated seniors.

"I decided to attend because I love traveling and seeing other parts of the world. I also don't think I will ever have the chance to go on another trip like this with my friends," graduated senior Ryan Sinnreich said.

After an overnight flight, students and teachers arrived in Berlin, where they met their Tour Director, courtesy of the travel agency EF Tours, and checked in to the first of four hotels. A typical day was filled to the brim with activities. Students would wake up early, eat a hotel breakfast, and then take a bus ride into the city, where a walking tour was held. On longer travel days, like the one from Krakow to Budapest, students would be on the bus for up to seven hours, winding through countryside such as the Tatra Mountains.

Still, a flexible curfew allowed students to explore. "After dinner, my friends and I would go out at night for fun. We would only stay in one city for two days, so you had to make the most out of your time there," incoming junior Margaret Meckes said. ... continued on Page 12

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City of Lafayette:
www.lovelafayette.org
 Phone: (925) 284-1968
Chamber of Commerce:
www.lafayettechamber.org

Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Regular Meeting: Monday, Aug. 26, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Planning Commission Meeting
 Monday, Aug. 19, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Design Review
 Monday, Aug. 26, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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Lafayette City Council modifies connecting Lafayette plans

By Elaine Borden Chandler



Image courtesy City of Lafayette

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The Lafayette City Council has decided to proceed with the plans for Connecting Lafayette. Connecting Lafayette is a project that aims to improve the transportation around Stanley Middle School and Lafayette Elementary School. The main plan is to create a pedestrian and bicycle pathway that connects the schools, the downtown, and the Lafayette-Moraga pathway. However, due to community feedback, the council is investigating if they can modify the Topper Lane portion of the plans.

The original plans were introduced at the City Council meeting on July 8, by Transportation Program Manager Patrick Golier, Nate Levine, a professional engineer, and Engineering Services Manager Matt Luttrupp. The project has three sources of funding: the federal government's Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill; the Metropolitan Trans-

portation Commission's (MTC) One Bay Area Grant program; and local funding from Measure J and the Lamorinda Fee & Financing Authority (LFFA).

On School Street, Connecting Lafayette's plan was for a multi-use pathway for pedestrians, bicyclists, skateboarders, etc. that would span on the north side of the street from Moraga Road to the Lafayette-Moraga trail. The school district agreed to a ten foot wide easement along Lafayette Elementary School property from Moraga Road to First Street, where there would be a painted eight foot wide parking lane and a 10.5 foot wide pathway. From First Street to the Lamorinda Trail, there would be a four foot wide buffer with low vegetation and a ten foot wide pathway.

For St Mary's Road, the community said that they wanted a better loading zone for Stanley Middle School. Following

a data collection effort, Connecting Lafayette planned to change the current unmarked dirt parking area with diagonal parking near Topper Lane into paved parallel parking. This would be paired with making the sidewalk from Topper Lane to Acampo Drive continuous and six feet wide. This sidewalk is the only part of the plan that does not have funding.

The last part of the Connecting Lafayette plan was a multi-use pathway with a landscaping section on the east side of Topper Lane. It would connect St Mary's Road and the back side of Stanley to the Lafayette-Moraga Trail and by extension to the multi-use pathway on School Street. It was previously ten feet wide like the other pathways. In the new plans, the pathway was reduced to six feet wide and meandered to preserve as many large existing trees as possible. In addition,

the plan calls for a new sidewalk that would connect Topper Lane and Birdhaven Court to the new pathway on Topper Lane.

After the presentation, the council directed questions to Luttrupp. Councilmember Anduri asked why a proposed four foot wide path on Topper Lane had been rejected. Luttrupp informed him that not only has past experience shown paths under six feet wide to be too narrow but also that five foot wide landings every 200 feet would be needed to maintain ADA compliance for a four foot wide path.

All 14 citizen comments on the plan were about the pathway on Topper Lane. Two of the comments urged the council to go forward with the pathway for matters of safety and one comment was ambivalent. The rest of the comments expressed serious dissatisfaction with the plan. These comments included the loss of trees and shade, the cost, the impact on private property, and that the residents of Topper Lane had not been sufficiently informed or had their opinions considered. Several solutions were offered, including alternate locations for the pathway or a one-way street. The most popular, however, was that the pathway be reduced to four or five feet wide.

The City Council had a finalizing discussion. Luttrupp confirmed that alternate locations for the path were unviable and a one-way street had previously been unpopular with residents. The council agreed that they were completely satisfied with sections of the project on St. Mary's Road and School Street and started to discuss possible alterations for Topper Lane. Councilmember Candell suggested that Lafayette present the four foot wide option to MTC. Golier noted that it would require the ADA landings and that he wasn't sure what MTC's response would be. Anduri suggested they request an ADA four foot wide path but change it to six feet wide if MTC requires it.

... continued on Page 3



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Little Seeds: supporting growing families

By Diane Claytor



Photo provided

Kat Neill (left) and Lauren Locke, owners of Little Seeds, are passionate about supporting families and building community in their Lafayette storefront.

Anyone who's ever had a newborn baby knows how challenging those first few months can be. As a parent, you're exhausted. You worry about everything and have so many questions: why does my baby cry all the time? why won't she go to sleep? why isn't he gaining weight? why does my body look and feel like this? And you can feel so isolated, staying home with your baby day in and day out, often not even having time to take a shower.

Little Seeds, a new business that will help every new parent - from prenatal to postpartum and beyond - opened in Lafayette last month, and already owners Lauren Locke and Katlynn (Kat) Neill have been thanked repeatedly for offering this very much needed service.

Locke, a sleep consultant, maternal health occupational therapist, and facilitator for mommy and me groups, grew up near Fresno, moving to Lamorinda to attend Saint Mary's College. Neill grew up in Lafayette, was an au pair while studying in Amsterdam, and has spent the last ten years teaching CPR and infant massage.

The two women met through social media, quickly bonding over their shared passion for supporting and connecting families with invaluable resources and local

professionals offering expert advice.

With five children between them, Locke and Neill are no strangers to the many challenges new parents face. "It's no secret that new parents need a lot of support," Locke says, and Little Seeds is devoted to helping them "navigate the huge transition into having a tiny human in their lives."

Little Seeds began as resource fair for growing families. "Our area is rich with very knowledgeable people in their respective fields," Neill notes, "and our goal has always been to connect these experts with our local families." With this objective, Locke and Neill created the first annual Little Seeds Fair in 2023, a one-of-a-kind event that connected families with local professionals dedicated to supporting them.

The Fair was a huge success - and from that, Locke explains, this concept of a brick and mortar offering more of the same came to life. She continues, noting that their goal in the large airy and bright Lafayette storefront, "is to offer a local space where families can come in person and gather in community to learn, educate, and find resources. We're an in-person parent hub for growing families," she says.

Little Seeds provides everything families need

to navigate the journey into parenthood with confidence and support. There are currently more than 10 classes available; weekly sessions include infant massage; three different playgroups; mom and baby yoga, as well as toddler and kids yoga; music and movement. There are also monthly prenatal classes, including labor 101; breastfeeding basics; newborn care and prenatal partners yoga; postpartum support and postpartum body; and infant and child CPR.

Additionally, there is a six week series on postpartum depression and anxiety, facilitated by a licensed therapist; a series on baby sign language and one on hypnobirthing, as well as a mom and baby group covering topics relevant to both in those early postpartum months. More classes and workshops will definitely be coming.

"Wanting to build a community amongst new parents, Locke and Neill have created a Monthly Coffee and Chat where parents can relax and talk with a group of rotating experts, including sleep and lactation consultants. Additionally, several times a year, moms will have the opportunity to make new friends at the Little Seeds Moms Mingle."

Dads certainly haven't been forgotten. Locke and Neill are in the process of creating some dad-specific groups, "where they can come and be with other dads," Neill says.

Having only been open a month, Little Seeds' offerings will no doubt evolve over time. Locke and Neill are committed to serving the community, promising that if there's something needed but not currently available, they'll try to figure out a way to fill the need.

"We want everyone to feel welcome here," Neill notes. "We want you to come in and feel like this is a place where you belong, where you can find your community. We just want to support families, wherever they are in their parenting journey."

For more information or to register for a class, please go to www.littleseedsfamily.com

Connecting Lafayette plans

... continued from Page 2

Vice Mayor Kwok suggested that they request a four foot wide path, then five feet wide if that is rejected, and then return to six feet wide if

necessary.

The council passed a motion that the Connecting Lafayette designs be approved but that the staff submit a request to change to an ADA four or five foot

wide pathway to MTC. Another motion was then passed that when the Topper Lane pathway is constructed that the staff try to preserve and then plant as many trees as possible.



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Town Council Meetings:
 Wed., Aug. 28, 6:30 p.m.
Planning Commission:
 Tuesday, Aug. 20, 6:30 p.m.
Parks and Recreation Commission:
 Mon., Sept. 9, 6:30 p.m.



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LINDA EHRIICH



Moraga National Night Out 2024 shared venue with Hacienda Nights

By Vera Kochan

It's hard to tell who enjoyed Moraga's National Night Out more – the residents or the police officers. Held on Aug. 6, the event took place at the Hacienda de las Flores along with the summer's final Hacienda Nights food truck gathering. An additional get-together was held in the Campolindo neighborhood.

National Night Out was first introduced nationally in August 1984. It included law enforce-

ment agencies, state and regional crime prevention associations, neighborhood watch groups, civic groups, and volunteers. It is estimated that the initial event involved 2.5 million neighbors in 400 communities throughout 23 states.

Through the years, National Night Out evolved into something more than just getting an up-close look at a police car. Neighborhoods had block parties and cookouts. Cities developed festivals, parades and other community events that included safety demonstrations, seminars, and youth activities.

There was always one common goal in mind when it came to National Night Out: to strengthen the relationship between the public and its local law enforcement personnel. On Aug. 6, in California alone, 367 cities participated in some type of activity dedicated to this intention including Moraga, Lafayette and Orinda.

The Moraga Police Department (MPD) brought a contingent of representatives to the Hacienda and set up a table overflowing with



Moraga Police Department celebrates National Night Out Photo Vera Kochan

MPD giveaway items for young and old alike. Eye glass cases, pens, key-chain flashlights, notepads, and junior police badge stickers were just some of the items available to the public.

On hand to mingle with residents were: MPD Chief Jon King, Detective Craig Walker, Officers Michael Dreyfuss, Fabiola Hernandez, Jeffrey Yang, Kurt Eriksen, and Support Services Coordinator Cathy Ghiselli. Later in the evening MPD was joined by an

officer with the California Highway Patrol who drove his motorcycle onto the Hacienda patio for optimum viewing enjoyment.

King prefers it when National Night Out is held in neighborhoods, noting that the country-wide event is usually held in October. "We've resisted doing it in big gatherings, because it gives neighbors a chance to get to know each other and us. It works for the officers. It's a bad time of year for this

[many residents are still away on vacation], that's why they did this on Hacienda Nights."

Looking on the bright side, King added, "We love any opportunity to visit with the community. It's important for me that they [the residents] know that we are here to keep them safe. It's equally important for my officers to meet the folks."

"This is a great community. I'm blessed to be the chief."



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Upcoming elections trigger new concerns and assurances over ballot security

By Vera Kochan

With the 2024 elections just around the corner, government sources are attempting to ease voter concerns when it comes to the security of the entire process. Skepticism, to say the least, has almost become a watchword with regards to the many ways voters might assume their ballots could be tampered with or altered to reflect a different outcome.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the FBI issued a July 31 joint press release addressing potential Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks during the 2024 election cycle. The purpose of the public service announcement was to raise awareness to the possibility of cyber attacks on election infrastructure or adjacent infrastructure that supports election operations that could interfere with the public's access to election information.

"With Election Day less than 100 days away, it is important to help put into context some of the incidents the American public may see during the election cycle that, while poten-

tially causing some minor disruptions, will not fundamentally impact security or integrity of the democratic process," stated CISA Senior Advisor Cait Conley. "DDoS attacks are one example of a tactic that we have seen used against election infrastructure in the past and will likely see again in the future, but they will not affect the security or integrity of the actual election. They may cause some minor disruptions or prevent the public from receiving timely information."

On a local note, Contra Costa County has partnered with CISA to implement resources for securing all aspects of its election infrastructure, describing it as 48 steps for a secure election. There are four major safeguards that include these steps: securing networks, securing facilities, securing processes, and securing people.

Voters can rest easy knowing that system software and equipment is not connected to the internet. Contra Costa County (CCC) takes many layers of steps to insure that technology isn't tampered with, such as

"voting systems are tested multiple times before each election to ensure accuracy, stand-alone voting system and tabulators are never connected to the internet (nor do they have modems or hardware in them that could be remotely 'activated'), the voting system is physically restricted under lock and key and only authorized personnel are allowed access."

Additional safeguards include "locked USB ports prevent unauthorized access, layers of cybersecurity measures (multifactor authentication, password policy, staff training) are in place, limited access to key assets by designated staff, network hardening with vulnerability testing, constant and comprehensive scanning for cyber hygiene and penetration testing, firewalls with network segmentation and active monitoring with intercept software, robust backup and patching protocol, strict physical security and chain of custody protocols for all voting technology software, as well as firmware and hardware, and finally, the trusted build of system

(the certified version of the software and firmware) is reinstalled before each election."

CCC makes it difficult for anyone to tamper with ballots thanks to limiting access to high-security areas, ID badges and key cards, and 24/7 video surveillance and alarms. All staff must go through rigorous background checks and the proper training to protect ballot security and voting equipment. There are always two people with ballots and equipment at all times.

The public is welcome to observe the preparation of tabulating devices, vote-by-mail processes, central count and election night, canvass procedures, and 1% manual tally. The public is also allowed to apply for the Certified Election Observer Program, which gives behind the scenes access to the election process and ensures that CCC operates with transparency. This program is held in advance of elections, and participants attend classes and tours to observe the processes.

... continued on Page 5

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MORAGA PARKS & RECREATION

Familiar face moves to MOFD

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Julie Sparks hired as new MOFD Office Specialist for Emergency Preparedness.

Julie Sparks, long known in Lamorinda as the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Registrar and trainer and a Fire Adapted Community Ambassador (FAC-A), has been hired by the Moraga Orinda Fire District. Sparks, who started her new job on Monday, now serves as an Office Specialist in Emergency Preparedness. She will be working closely with Dennis

Rein, the MOFD Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.

Sparks has also been a member of the MOFD Communications Support Team and is a member of the Lamorinda Area Radio Interest Group (LARIG) and holds a HAM radio license. An Orinda resident for 17 years, she is the mother of two adult sons who went through the Orinda school district.

She will be required to give up some of her previous activities, which would constitute a possibly perceived conflict of interest now that she is officially a MOFD employee, including her role as Secretary/Treasurer of the CERT Foundation, a position she has held since 2013.

Sparks plans to reach out to significant players outside our area and observe what has

been working for them and how those practices might fit in our area. She will meet regularly with and support all the community volunteer groups who have a stake in emergency preparedness, include CERT, the MOFD Communications Support Team, LARIG, and FAC-As, as well as multiple Firewise neighborhoods.

"My goal is to continue the great work in emergency preparedness that has been started by MOFD, and further develop our community connections through education, transparent and accurate information, face-to-face brainstorming, and strategizing to build Moraga and Orinda's preparedness for disaster and foster resilience in our towns," Sparks has said. Although Lafayette is not part of MOFD, Sparks plans to liaise with the neigh-

boring community.

When not at work, Sparks enjoys hiking with the Lamorinda mom's hiking group, spending time with her boyfriend Craig (sometimes on the back of his Harley Davidson motorcycle), and caring for her senior rescue canine 'house hippo' Vera. Sparks is always learning more from her tech friends in the radio club over coffee at Café Teatro on Tuesday mornings, and often is the net control for the General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) monthly net that allows radio users to maintain their radio skills.

"I am beyond grateful to have this opportunity to work with such a great group of firefighters at MOFD," Sparks says. "I look forward to being on the team that works diligently to keep our amazing community safe."

Ballot security

... continued from Page 4

Voters have questioned whether a convicted felon is allowed to vote. CCC states, "Under California law, you are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older on election day, not currently serving a prison term for the conviction of a felony, and not currently found to be mentally incompetent by a court. A person with a criminal history cannot vote if they are currently serving a state or federal prison term for the conviction of a felony." Once released from prison, under California law, their right to vote is automatically restored and they should register.

CCC assures the public that voting by mail is a highly regulated process and "fraud is nearly impossible due to the number of checkpoints, people, and systems that work to-

gether" to keep the vote safe. The drop boxes are made of high-grade metal, are bolted to the ground, and equipped with tamper evident seals, locks, and water/fire proof materials. Also, there are multiple procedures in place to detect if someone has voted more than once thanks to the activity being logged in the voting history system. Cases where a voter has attempted multiple votes are reported to the District Attorney and the Secretary of State Fraud Division for investigation and possible prosecution.

When it comes to counting votes, scanners can't always "read" the vote if there are stray marks, more ovals filled than allowed, or write-in votes. In these cases, the ballot is sent to adjudication where a team of two election officials examines the ballot and makes a joint decision

on the voter's intent. Ballots that are damaged (ripped, torn, or stained) can't be put through the scanners and will be duplicated onto a readable ballot by two election officials that will then reprocess it through a scanner.

In a recent press release by CCC Clerk-Recorder-Elections Office, voters should be aware of a "potential texting scam asking about voter registration." California voters have been receiving texts asking them to check their registration information through provided links. If anyone receives this type of text message, do not click on the links. Instead, go directly to www.contracostavote.gov and click onto "My Voter Registration" to verify status.

Contra Costa Registrar of Voters Kristen B. Connelly stated, "Remember that your County Elections Office

is your trusted source of election information. We are urging our residents to be vigilant and to reach out directly to the County Elections Office if you have any questions about text messages or emails that ask you to register to vote via a link that is not directed to our website."

Misinformation and Disinformation: Election Edition. Join a presentation from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. at the Lafayette Library on Thursday, Aug. 22 for an eye-opening discussion of the impact of misinformation and disinformation on elections. Learn how to spot fake news, fact-check sources and navigate the complexities of today's media landscape to become a more informed voter and citizen. The presentation by the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley will take place in the Homework Center, 3491 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Register at https://ccclib.bibliocommons.com/events/666b5c05d8f18e57580c645a7blm_aid=32036. Contact programs@lwvdy.org for more information.

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STRIVE PATH

College Coach's Corner

WITH Sunny Grewal

Welcome to Coach's Corner, where we address questions asked by local student families. If you have a question for us, please email us at contact@mystrivepath.com.

Question: My son is about to start at Acalanes. I keep hearing about "intellectual curiosity" and how it's important when it comes to college admissions. What is it, and how should we think about it in the context of choosing courses and extracurriculars?

Answer: Great question!

Intellectual curiosity (IC) is a key factor in college admissions, especially at selective schools that carefully review applications. It's more than just taking challenging courses—IC reflects a student's genuine interest in learning and exploring subjects that truly captivate them.

Colleges use various criteria to evaluate applicants, and while intellectual curiosity is a bit nebulous, it's highly valued, particularly by smaller, selective institutions. Schools like Emory even score applicants on their IC, helping admissions committees decide whether to admit a student. In contrast, larger public schools may place less emphasis on IC, focusing more on grades and test scores.

So, how can your son demonstrate intellectual curiosity? It's about making thoughtful choices in course selection, essays, recommendations, and extracurriculars. Encouraging your son to pursue subjects that genuinely interest him—whether it's Japanese, Art History, or even chess—can help him stand out. The key is to take these courses and activities because he's truly curious, not just to impress colleges. Authenticity in his interests will resonate with admissions committees.

Ultimately, the best way to approach IC is to prioritize genuine learning over college admissions. If your son pursues what he loves, his intellectual curiosity will naturally shine through. And if certain courses or activities, like weightlifting, are right for him, it's important to support those choices, too.

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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.
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MOFD firefighters help out across the state and beyond

By Sora O'Doherty

2024 has proven to be a massive year for California fires, with over 811,388 acres burned to date, as compared to the 112,855 acres burned

last year. The Cal Fire website gives 227,987 acres as the five year average, putting this year nearly four times higher than average so far.

The Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD), while prioritizing maintaining sufficient resources to address anything that might arise within the district, has been sending firefighters to assist with the big wildfires elsewhere in California, as well as in Washington state. Generally MOFD firefighters go out for 14 days at a time. In the event of a fire here, personnel from other agencies would assist MOFD.

MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Dennis Rein and Engineer Steve Rogness were all at the Borel fire in Kern County for a couple of weeks. Their team was prepositioned in Sacramento for four days, then went down to the Sequoia lightning fire, and then, according to Rein, they 'kind of inherited' the Borel fire.

Rein worked as a liaison officer, interfacing between fire agencies and all the assisting organizations, including utilities, sheriffs, ranchers, and tribal nations if reservation property is involved. The Chief works in fire operations, and was in charge of the Borel fire night shift, managing all resources and trying to keep that fire in the box overnight.

MOFD Engine 345 returned on Aug. 7 from a two-week assignment on the Park fire in Butte County. The huge Park fire, now 37% contained, has already burned 429,188 acres across four counties. The engine was staffed by Captain Mike Marquardt, Engineer Anthony Grgurevic and two Probationary Firefighter/ Paramedics, Kyle Byrd and Eddie Epperson, who graduated earlier this year from the Academy.

MOFD Engineer Rogness is currently assigned to the Retreat/Rimrock fires, acting as Geographic Information Systems Specialist in Washington with the California Complex



Photo Dennis Rein

David Mazaika Presenting at the morning briefing at the Pioneer Fire, Lake Chelan, Washington.

Incident Management Team 14. This active fire is 64% contained and has burned around 45,000 acres. An evacuation order is currently in place.

Two other fire incidents in Washington -- the Pioneer and the Easy incidents -- are being managed by California Complex Incident Management team 15. MOFD Engineer David Mazaika is assigned to the Pioneer incident as a Medical Unit Leader.

MOFD Wildfire Mitigation Manager Gorden

Graham is assigned as a Radio Operator to the Pioneer fire, and MOFD Captain Jared Costanza has been deployed to the Easy Fire as an assigned Line Safety Officer Trainee. Wildfire Mitigation Specialist Frank Mahallon is assigned as a Radio Operator to the Pioneer fire.

Captain Jon Bensley is currently awaiting his assignment orders to be assigned to the Crozier Incident as a Line Safety Officer in El Dorado County.

Currently, the gov-

ernor of California, Gavin Newsom, has declared states of emergency in three fires across a number of counties. The Borel Fire is in Kern County, the Thompson Fire is in Butte County, and the Gold Complex and Park Fires are affecting Butte, Plumas, and Tehama Counties.

MOFD Battalion Chief Lucas Lambert, who provided information for this story in addition to Dennis Rein, noted, "We have a long fire season ahead of us."

Insurance Commissioner takes steps to preserve insurance for those in active fire areas

On Aug. 8 Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara issued a mandatory one-year moratorium on insurance companies to preserve residential insurance coverage for more than 185,000 policyholders affected by the Park, Borel, and Gold Complex fires. The Commissioner's Bulletin shields those living within the perimeters or adjoining ZIP Codes of these fires from insurance non-renewal or cancellation for one year from the date of the Governor's emergency declarations regardless of whether they suffered a loss.

In issuing the mandate, Lara said, "Homeowners plagued by devastating wildfires deserve the peace of mind that their home and future will remain covered by insurance as they recover and rebuild. Protecting wildfire survivors from non-renewals is one of the many actions I am taking to implement proactive solutions that address the impacts of climate change and extreme wildfires on our communities."

The Department of Insurance is deploying staff to wildfire disaster areas to assist survivors in filing claims and protect communities from potential insurance fraud and abuse.

The Commissioner's ability to issue the moratoriums results from a California law that he authored in 2018 while serving as a state senator in order to provide temporary relief from insurance non-renewals and cancellations to residents living within or adjacent to a gubernatorial-declared wildfire disaster.

Following the Governor's state of emergency declarations, the Department of Insurance partners with CAL FIRE and CalOES, pursuant to existing statute, to identify wildfire perimeters for mandatory moratorium areas. The Department of Insurance will continue to collaborate with CAL FIRE and CalOES to identify additional wildfire perimeters for any fires where the governor declares a state of emergency. -Sora O'Doherty

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Cal Shakes thrilled with successful fundraising drive

By Sora O'Doherty



Image courtesy Cal Shakes

"And, after, every of this happy number that have endured shrewd days and nights with us shall share the good of our returned fortune." --"As You Like It", Duke Senior, Act 5, Scene 4

About a week ago, Cal Shakes put out a call for financial help to complete preparation and open Cal Shakes' 50th Anniversary production of "As You Like It". An overwhelming response not only met

the funding goal but brought together over 700 donors and believers, according to Clive Worsley, Cal Shakes Executive Director.

The theater company now has the momentum needed to start production and open the play. Because donors came forward to support the group, rehearsals will begin, scenes will be blocked, lights will be hung, costumes will be fitted, and the set will be

moved into place.

Tickets for the 50th Anniversary show are now available. "As You Like It" by William Shakespeare will be performed under the stars, with previews starting Sept. 12. There will be a Gala Opening Night on Saturday, Sept. 14, and the show will run through Sept. 29. Cal Shakes promises "a beautiful show and a gathering of people who care about the arts and

are doing something about it."

"People we know, and people we haven't met yet, came together to make this happen in a matter of days. As a result of such incredible generosity, just under 100 artists and staff will continue the process of rehearsing and building out this production," Worsley said.

"We are so honored and excited to welcome you," he continued, and urged people to get tickets, grab a blanket, come up and enjoy something from the café before the show, and celebrate outdoor theater and the return of Shakespeare to the Cal Shakes stage!

Tickets are available on line at <https://calshakes.org>

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Construction work in Orinda



Construction has begun on the transformation of the old Bank of America building in downtown Orinda.



Peets and Nation's get new facades, planned when Nation's moved across the street.

Two developments approved for downtown Orinda are now moving forward with construction, having secured the necessary permits. The former Bank of America building at 31 Orinda Way in Orinda Village is being turned into a two-story building, with plans for three restaurants downstairs and offices on the second floor. Project developer Ben Zarrin of Paymun Real Estate Design & Development, plans to move his offices to the new build-

ing from 25 Orinda Way. Across the highway, the old façade on Peets Coffee and Nation's Giant Hamburgers is being replaced with a new design, approved last year. The design change came after Nation's moved across Moraga Way from number 76 to number 65. Nation's shares the building with Peets and the new façade will be in the same style for both businesses. There will also be a new, elevated and lighted sign for Nation's.—Sora O'Doherty

Initial candidate nomination period for November election closes

By Sora O'Doherty

A sufficient number of nominations have been finalized to fill all of the open positions in Lamorinda schools and councils, but some nomination periods will be extended because an incumbent didn't choose to run again.

That won't apply to the Moraga Orinda Fire District, as both incumbents, John Jex and Craig Jorgens, will be running for reelection. No other candidates filed for those positions.

However, the nomi-

nation period will be extended to Aug. 14 for the councils of Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda, the Orinda Union School District Board, as well as the Acalanes Union High School District.

At the close of initial nomination period, Lafayette had four people running for three open council member positions of four years and one two-year term. Those filing papers are incumbents John McCormick, Carl Anduri, and Gina Dawson. Also

running is Lauren McCabe Herpich.

Orinda mayor Darlene Gee is running for reelection, and two other candidates have qualified for the ballot: Cara R. Hoxie, current member of the Orinda Union School District Board, and Candace T. Evans. Inga Miller is not running for reelection.

In Moraga, at the close of the nomination period, there were only two candidates for the three open positions on the Town Council, but

the date for nominations will be extended until Aug. 14. Currently, Brian Dolan and Lisa Maglio are qualified as candidates.

Two seats on the governing board of the Acalanes Union High School District garnered six candidates by the end of Aug. 9, but one who had pulled nomination papers did not return them. Those candidates who are qualified include incumbent Wendy Reicher. Peter Catalano, Sibyl Minighini, Stacey

Schweppe, and Paul Chopra also qualified as candidates. Incumbent Christopher Grove is not running for reelection.

Orinda Union School Board District incumbent Hillary Weiner is running for reelection, and will be joined on the ballot by Vinita Anantavat for the two open positions on the board. Incumbent Cara Hoxie is not running for reelection, but is running for the Orinda City Council.

In Moraga, there are three candidates for the

two open positions on the School Board, Stephanie Dickerson, Gian Panetta and Lee Hays. Incumbents Janelle Chng and Richard Severy are not running for reelection.

By the end of the initial nomination period, Jon Deane and Alida Maria Smit had qualified to run for two vacant positions on the Lafayette School Board. As no incumbent is running for reelection, that nomination period will also be extended.

Orinda teen Raul Dial stars in award-winning feature film "Didi"

By Emma Wong



Photo courtesy Raul Dial

Teen actor and Orinda local Raul Dial interviews for "Didi" (2024).

For many, the act of stepping onstage is terrifying. But for teen actor Raul Dial, the spotlight is only the start.

The rising senior at Miramonte High School starred in "Didi," the summer comedy-drama highlighting a coming-of-age Asian American story. The movie was critically acclaimed, winning several awards at the Sundance Film Festival.

Dial's acting career began early at Sleepy Hollow Elementary School, playing musical roles like Charlie Bucket from "Willy Wonka" and "Peter Pan." "I've always loved the excitement and nervousness that comes with performance," Dial

said.

Dial's talent continued to flourish into his junior year of high school, when prime opportunity struck with Didi's casting call. "My preschool teacher from Fremont posted this casting call on Facebook. My mom happened to see her post and asked if I wanted to go for it," Dial said. "I replied, 'Of course!'"

After multiple auditions, Dial's performance led him to obtain the role in his first-ever movie. In "Didi," he plays Fahad Mahmood, who is the protagonist, Chris Wang's, best friend.

"Fahad is this funny guy that's a little crazy, but a good storyteller,"

Dial said. "He's fun to be around and has a great time with his friends."

Indeed, Fahad and Chris have the time of their lives being typical teenagers. Their mischief is exemplified by the opening scene, in which they blow up a mailbox and upload a video of their prank to YouTube.

"Didi" was directed by Oscar-winning director Sean Wang, who was raised in Fremont. The film centers around an adolescent Chris, who grapples with his relationship to his immigrant mother while trying to fit in with Fahad and the teenage social scene.

The filming process required immense teamwork. "There were countless people involved in every job, with each being just as important as the next," Dial said.

To this team effort, Dial brought his best acting foot forward. His greatest knack stems from his improvisation. "I've been told that my improv skills and ability to stay in the moment during a scene are my strengths," Dial said.

Starring in his first film taught Dial the value of independence and self-initiative. "I've learned how to trust myself more," Dial said.

"The first time I was on set, I was pretty nervous. But now, I know that if I studied the lines and scene, I'd do just fine."

Of course, any good film needs a cast with rapport. "The best part about filming was meeting new people," Dial said. "I made close

friends, like Izaac Wang, who plays Chris; and Aaron Chang, who plays another friend, Jimmy," Dial said.

Like puzzle pieces, Dial and his new castmates fell into place with one another, completing "Didi's" chemistry-laden cast. "Since Raul and I interact as best friends, our interactions required lots of improv," Aaron Chang said. "But everything came naturally because we were friends in real life too."

In acting, Dial's castmates had much to say about his skill. "Raul is such a grounded and funny actor," costar Alysia Simmons said. "He's a natural and gives other actors things to work off of."

The castmates made lasting memories, whether or not the footage made the final

cut. "My favorite memory with Raul was when we planned to push him and some other cast members into the pool," Simmons said.

In January, "Didi" premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, UT. It won both the Audience Award and Best Ensemble Award.

"I was nervous seeing myself on-screen for the first time at Sundance, but I was excited as well since we'd all worked so hard," Dial said. "We were ecstatic when it won two awards."

Dial cherishes the "Didi" experience and hopes to further hone his acting prowess. "It's been surreal looking back on how far "Didi" has come, and I'm grateful to have played Fahad," Dial said. "Look-

ing forward, I want to work towards learning the Meisner technique, which helps you react naturally to anything happening during a scene."

Sundance propelled "Didi" to the national movie scene, and the film was released in mainstream theaters on July 26. It has garnered widespread praise for its heartfelt portrayal of the adolescent spirit: confused and reckless, yet adventurous and daring.

"I think people will love how relatable the film is," Dial said. "No matter how old you are, everyone has been a teenager."

"Didi" was released in the Orinda Theatre on Aug. 9, after which Dial did an in-person Q&A. With the film's release, locals can look out for his rise to stardom.

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Without Air – a thought-provoking drama from Hungary opens in Orinda

By Sophie Braccini

"Without Air" is opening in Orinda Theater on Aug. 16 and is scheduled to run for at least a week. It is a film for all audiences that will leave people with long lasting memories.

Movie making is political; it can work to support self-gratifying nationalistic pride or it can tear apart the dominant narrative. This is what this courageous movie is all about. In Viktor Orbán's Hungary that has made anti-LGBTQ rhetoric a staple of its politics, "Without Air" shows how a high-school literature teacher, Ana, can see her whole future unravel due to a controversy over a film she recommends to her class.

The film depicts the progressive ostracization of the teacher, whether because of fear, or because of opinions, or conformism. One after another, the school's administration, the city, and the parents fall in line against her. Let us not kid ourselves, every teacher that has tried at some point, in any country, to stray from politi-

cal correctness must have felt at some level, a similar type of pressure.

"You are paid to teach values, to impart the right standards," is what a popular literature teacher hears from the ethics board after she recommends to her senior high school students to watch Agnieszka Holland's film "Total Eclipse" about the lives of French poets Arthur Rimbaud and Paul Verlaine, at the end of a class on symbolism. But an influential and very conservative parent finds it unacceptable – the two poets had a homosexual relationship – and he files a complaint against her.

Initially, the incident is downplayed by the school's director, who appreciates Ana for her successful work over the years. "A parent considers that you have crossed the red line," she tells Ana, "but I have done it for years and it's never been a problem. Is it one for you?" Little by little Ana's professional surrounding reveals itself in a way she would not have anticipated.

Some are jealous and hateful, other afraid for their standing; most are so prudent they become cowards.

In a Nov. 13 2023 interview with CineEuropa, director Katalin Moldovai said that her film's scenario is based on a true story that took place in Romania where she grew up among the local Hungarian minority. She decided that it would be a good topic for a film because of its hidden depths. "I wanted most of all to deal with this fear that courses through the entire film because I think that in Romania, in Hungary, and in Eastern Europe in general, we lived for a long time under a communist dictatorship and its influence on society doesn't fade away so easily. When events such as those shown in the film happen, there's a tendency to recreate that atmosphere, to reproduce it," she said. Of course, the topic of freedom of expression is not confined to Eastern Europe.

The character of Ana, played by a very believable Agnes Krasznahorkai, is well developed and other issues are tackled as the narrative unfolds. Ana's partner has emigrated to another country to find a better job and in his self-centered way of trying to convince her to join him, he totally misses her difficulties. She is also in charge of an aging mother who is slowly losing her cognitive abilities.

Moldovai explains that the scenario of the movie was written in 2019, before Viktor Orbán's 2021 law that censors any LGBT+ positive content in movies, books or public advertise-



Photos provided

ments. The law also restricts sex education in school, forbidding any information thought to encourage gender change or homosexuality. She adds that it is

now even more complicated for teachers to know what to say and how to say it. She believes that it leads to a form of self-censorship. The film is appro-

prate for adults and teenagers, and it could spark interesting conversations. It opens on Aug 16; for hours and tickets, go to www.orindamovies.com/



Letters to the editor

Public Roads: Who Pays?

In the August issue of the Orinda News, Daniel Gutu objected to the public funding of maintaining the 30 miles of residential streets that are currently maintained by the residents living on those streets. He called that a "gift" to these 1,500 Orinda families.

In 2017, his road was repaired by the city of Orinda. It had a PCI of 9 (a failed street) before the repair and a PCI of 100 (a new street) after the repair. It was literally rebuilt.

This cost the city about \$110,000 which was paid for with interest (an additional \$50,000) by all of the property owners in Orinda based on the assessed value of their property.

Since the assessed value of homes on private roads represents 25% of Orinda's property tax base, residents living on private roads paid 25% of the cost to repair Mr. Gutu's street

(\$40,000), a gift shared by Mr. Gutu and his nine neighbors.

So I ask - who is gifting whom?
Bob Daoro
Orinda

Vote No on Sales Tax

The arguments that Lafayette needs a sales tax do not present the full picture. A big chunk of the alleged need is the assertion that there are "unfunded mandates" from the state. But the state constitution requires that all state mandates be funded, unless a fee can be charged, such as to a developer. See art. XIII B, section 6(a) and Govt. Code Section 17556(d). Indeed, there is an entire state agency – the Commission on State Mandates—whose function is to hear and decide claims by cities for reimbursement. If a test claim is approved, the Commission adopts parameters for other affected cities to claim reimbursement.

The City Council asserts that compliance with conditions in its stormwater discharge permit is an unfunded mandate. But in a case decided in 2022, the court of appeal upheld a ruling by the Commission that most costs incurred by cities to satisfy conditions the state imposed on their stormwater discharge permits were reimbursable from the state. The parameters, however, have not yet been issued.

Another alleged unfunded mandate is staff time for compliance with state housing mandates. However, either impact fees can be charged to housing developers, or if not, a claim should be filed with the Commission.

Lafayette should assert its rights under the California Constitution to cause the state to fund the mandates, or charge appropriate impact fees to developers, instead of imposing an increase in sales tax.
Nick Waranoff
Orinda

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.

In Memory

Ned Allen Herrington

April 13, 1943 - July 6, 2024



Ned Allen Herrington passed away on July 6, 2024, with his wife, Carolyn, by his side. His life will not be defined by his last few years with Alzheimer's, but by his humor, his vitality, his wit, his intelligence, his integrity, and his ease in making relationships.

Ned graduated from the Ohio State University in an accelerated program that earned his undergraduate and his doctorate degree in Dentistry in 6 years. He served as president of his Psi Omega dental fraternity. After graduation, he joined the Air Force as a dentist and his first assignment was at an oral surgery internship in Texas. He was then transferred to McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento, CA, where his father, Lt. Colonel Charles Herrington, was also stationed. There he met his bride of 54 years.

Finishing his duty in the Air Force, Ned moved with Carolyn to Campbell, CA, in 1970 for him to work as an associate for Dr. John Hughes for 3 years before setting up practice in Lafayette, CA, in 1973. Lafayette was a small town then, where a group of dentists walked down the street to have lunch together almost every day. Those friendships were a lifelong treasure for him. Ned practiced dentistry for 40 years, enjoying his staff, his patients, and his colleagues. The last eight years before retirement, he shared his practice with his son, Matthew. It was a privilege for both of them.

Ned's best achievement was being a wonderful father to his three children, Matt, Amy, and Todd, and grandfather to six grandchildren, Michael, Charlotte, Molly, Evelyn, Faith, and Sylvia. They enjoyed boating, camping, waterskiing, golf, snow skiing, and swimming together. His epitaph will be "Ned Herrington was a good and loving man, humble, wise, and a lot of fun." To know Ned was to love his smile, his laugh, and the twinkle in his eye. He will be greatly missed, but his legacy lives on in the example he gave of a life well lived.

In addition to his wife, children, and grandchildren, Ned is survived by his brother, Michael Herrington, and his sister, Catherine Fisher. He was preceded in death by his mother, Ruth Herrington, and father, Charles Herrington, and twin grandchildren, Lillian and Bridget Herrington.

A funeral Mass was held at St. Isidore Catholic Church in Danville, CA, on August 7, 2024. For those who wish, the family would appreciate donations to the Alzheimer's Association in lieu of flowers.

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, and include "Celebrations or Remembrances" in the subject line.

Public Safety

Emergency response: 911
Emergency: 24 Hours
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours
925-284-5010
Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or www.nixle.com
Lafayette Police Department: 3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925-283-3680
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt: 925-299-3221
Police Department Tip Line: 945-497ip@gmail.com
Police Department Traffic Issues: 945-497traffic@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 21 - Aug. 3

Alarms 47
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 17
Traffic 158
Suspicious Circumstances 9
Suspicious Subject 30
Suspicious Vehicle 8
Service to Citizen 30
Patrol Req./Security Check 15
Public/School Assembly Check 1
Supplemental Report 12
Vacation House Check 17
Welfare Check 17
Ordinance Violation 2
Vehicle violations

Auto Burglary 1200 Block Quandt Rd. (2)
10 Block White Oak Dr.
Brook St./Moraga Rd. (3)
3200 Block Sweet Dr.
3500 Block Brook St.
3600 Block Happy Valley Ln.
1100 Block Nogaies St.
200 Block Lafayette Cir.
Dui Misd 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Lafayette Cir./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Reckless Driving Pleasant Hill Rd./Eb Sr 24 (2)
3400 Block School St.
Pleasant Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd.
Tc - Minor Injuries Mt. Diablo Blvd./Carol Ln.
Tc - Property Damage 3500 Block Golden Gate Wy
151 St./Deer Hill Rd.
Camino Diablo/Stanley Blvd.

Other criminal activity

Fraud Credit Card 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Panhandling 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Petty Theft 3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
3400 Block Silver Springs Rd.
Petty Theft From Veh 3900 Block S Peardale Dr.
1200 Block Quandt Ct.
Shoplift 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (17)
Vehicle Theft Moraga Rd./Acalanes Ave.
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic 800 Block Acalanes Rd.
Disturbing The Peace 3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Loud Music 1200 Block Del Arroyo Ct.
Loud Noise 900 Block Dewing Ave.
Moraga Rd./Rosedale Ave.
Loud Party 900 Block Dewing Ave.
Public Nuisance El Curtola Blvd./Eb Sr 24
El Curtola Blvd./Wb Sr 24
Topper Ln./St Marys Rd.
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
4Th St./Moraga Blvd.
Vandalism 3100 Block Kingsley Pl
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
20 Block Diablo Cir.
900 Block S Thompson Rd.
3400 Block Monroe Ave.

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report July 23 - Aug. 5

Alarms 12
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 11
Traffic 65
Suspicious Circumstances 2
Suspicious Subject 3
Suspicious Vehicle 2
Service to Citizen 25
Patrol Req./Security Check 17
Public/School Assembly Check 4
Supplemental Report 7
Vacation House Check 0
Welfare Check 3
Ordinance Violation 0
Vehicle violations
Accident Injury 90 Block Laird Dr.
Auto Burglary Paseo Bernal/Alta Mesa Dr.

Excessive Speed

Moraga Way/Lastwood Dr., Ori
Moraga Rd./Lucas Dr. (3)
St Marys College
St Mary Rd./Rheem Blvd.
Moraga Rd./Donald Dr. (4)
Moraga Rd Ifo Commons Park
Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr. (3)
Ascot Dr./Moraga Rd.
Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr. (2)
Moraga Rd./Via Granada
1400 Block Moraga Rd.
Moraga Rd./Buckingham Dr.
Moraga Way/St. Andrews Dr. (3)
Campolindo Dr./Moraga Rd.
Rheem Blvd./Chaldia Way
Moraga Rd./Woodford Dr.
Ifo Rd./Rheem Blvd.
Ifo Sta 42
Camino Pablo/Rimer Dr.
Moraga Way Ifo Station 41
Seven Eleven Plot (2)
Ifo 711 Plot
Reckless Driving Moraga Rd./St Marys Rd.
Camino Pablo/Sanders Ranch Rd.
Rheem Blvd./St Marys Rd.
Tc - Property Damage 2000 Block Ascot Dr.
Other criminal activity
Petty Theft
Not Available
Petty Theft From Veh 1000 Block Sanders Dr.
10 Block Wandell Dr.
Shoplift
Cvs
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbing The Peace Canyon Rd./Sanders Dr.
30 Block Woodside Dr.
Loud Music
School St./Hazelwood Pl.
Natalie Dr./Lennelle Ct.
3900 Block Paseo Grande
Camino Ricardo/Ashbrook Pl.
Loud Noise
Not Available
Loud Party
School St./Hazelwood Pl.
Birchwood Dr./Fernwood Dr.
60 Block Warrick Dr. (2)
Public Nuisance
1400 Block Moraga Rd.
Other
Animal Cruelty
Safetyway
Barking Dog
Tharp Dr./Redfield Pl.
Mentally Ill Commit
Not Available
Trespass 300 Block Rheem Blvd.



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report will be back

Reese's peanut butter cookies

By Susie Iventosch



Photos Susie Iventosch

We had a hankering for peanut butter cookies the other day, and my family loves this recipe made with chunky peanut butter, dark chocolate chips, and maple syrup! It's so delicious and easy to make. What we did differently this time was to add about a cup of quartered mini-Reese's peanut butter cups to the batter. If you feel like adding one mini peanut buttercup on top of each cookie, you can also do that for a fun look and extra Reese's flavor. Just push the peanut butter cup into the top of each cookie after you press the dough balls down with that quintessential criss-cross fork pattern!

In writing up this recipe, I became curious about the invention of peanut butter cookies. So, I started snooping on the Internet and discovered that there is a National Peanut Butter Cookie Day, which falls on June 12 each year! The origin of peanuts is thought to be as long as 3,500 years ago, somewhere around

ico to Africa and Asia. It wasn't until the 1700s that they were first introduced to the United States, and not until the 1800s when they actually became a commercial crop here, valued for their taste and protein content.

Finally, in 1912, George Washington Carver, well-known agricultural scientist and inventor who promoted alternative crops to cotton as well as methods to prevent soil depletion, included a recipe for peanut butter cookies in his book "How to Grow the Peanut: And 105 Ways of Preparing it for

Human Consumption." I have not read the book, but it is still available on Amazon and probably in local libraries and bookstores. When I looked into the table of contents, it appears that he actually has three peanut butter cookie recipes among his 105 ways to eat peanuts! Other recipes include peanut bisque, peanut donuts, peanut omelets, peanut cake, peanut bread, peanut butter, and even peanut coffee! I think I will have to order a copy of this book, since we love peanuts just about any way at our house!

Reeses Peanut Butter Cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup (4 oz.) unsalted butter room temperature
- 1/2 cup chunky peanut butter
- 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 egg beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 1 3/4 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 5-6 oz. Reese's Minis Peanut Butter Cups unwrapped, cut into quarters (you want about 1 cup of the quartered Reese's)
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, cream together butter and peanut butter with an electric mixer. Add brown sugar and beat until well integrated. Add egg and beat well. Stir in vanilla and maple syrup. Add flour and baking soda and beat until well-blended. Using a wooden spoon, stir in Reese's halves and dark chocolate chips by hand.

Roll dough into 20 evenly sized balls, approximately 1 1/2-inches in diameter. Place the balls onto the prepared baking sheets. Dip a fork into a bowl of granulated sugar and press down twice, once in each direction to make a crosshatch pattern. Bake for approximately 8-10 minutes, or until cookies are just beginning to brown. Remove from oven and cool enough to handle. Then dig in! Store extra cookies in an air-tight container or freeze them for later.

INFO Box

National Peanut Butter Cookie Day

<https://nationaltoday.com/national-peanut-butter-cookie-day/>



Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: 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>

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To contact me or for further information:

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- **Couples Blog:** darrellchristian.com/blog/

Understanding Early Decision and why you should stick to it

By Elizabeth LaScala

If you've been accepted by a college through its Early Decision (ED) plan you may consider yourself fortunate, as you should. You've applied to a school that's at or near the top of your target list because the likelihood of acceptance for ED applicants is higher than the overall rate for the college. You've been admitted before most of your fellow students even submitted applications. You can rest easier than your classmates and enjoy the rest of your senior year without the stress of admissions hanging over your head!

And yet, some students who have been accepted through an ED plan want to renege on their agreement later because events have transpired that cause them to regret their commitment. At that point they want to know if their ED agreement is binding and if they can disregard it without consequences. Consider the Early Decision Agreement You've Signed

You, your guidance counselor, and your parents signed an agreement that stipulates that you understand that you're committing to attend the institution if admitted. So, yes, it's binding, but not one that can subject you to civil liability. Consider the agreement that you're asked to sign. A majority of the colleges that offer ED options do so under the "Statement of Principles of Good Practice" of the National Association for College Admissions Counseling, which guides the institutional treatment of students.

When you submit an ED application, what you're agreeing to do is clear. While pursuing admission under an ED plan, students may apply to other institutions under an Early Action plan, but they may submit only one ED application. If an ED applicant is not admitted, but deferred to the Regular Decisions cycle, they're immediately released from the ED agreement and are free to accept any other colleges' offer of admission.

There are changes in a student's circumstances that will induce a college to release him or her from their ED commitment. Before we review these circumstances, you should know that when a student backs out of ED agreement without cause, it raises questions about the student's ethics that could impact decisions elsewhere. Some guidance counselors and colleges take steps to discourage renegeing on ED agreements. For example:

If an admissions office finds out that a student has applied to their institution and another via ED, they'll contact the other school. The student risks being denied consideration by both schools.

A cooperative ED plan is operated by five Ivy League schools: Brown, Penn, Columbia, Cornell, and Dartmouth. If an ED applicant is admitted to one of them, they must honor their agreement or be ineligible for admission to any of the others. Harvard, Yale, and Princeton share a similar plan.

Many guidance counselors place a hold on sending transcripts, letters of recommendation, and other admissions materials on behalf of students who have applied via ED until the decision is known. This step is taken because a guidance counselor's credibility with admissions officials is at stake.

A group of 30 liberal arts colleges share lists of students admitted to each of them via ED so that the others don't unwittingly admit them. They also share the names of students who were admitted via ED but were released from their commitments. Admissions officials sometimes discover from a guidance counselor that a student has submitted two or more ED applications. Counselors will warn students ahead of time of the impropriety of submitting multiple ED applications and, if the student persists, will contact the affected colleges, both of which will terminate consideration of the applicant.

Legitimate Reasons for Backing Out of an Early Decision

As noted above, there are a number of legitimate reasons why a college will release an applicant from an ED commitment without any negative repercussions. Below are a few common examples:

Necessary financial aid from the college didn't develop as originally planned.

A parent or other family member has died or fallen ill and enrollment at a college is no longer feasible or

desirable.

A family business or a parent's career has suffered a setback.

The student has suffered a serious health issue.

An ED agreement is a serious undertaking, often among the first formal commitments you'll make in your lifetime. You should make a good faith effort to stick to it. I can help you understand the commitment you're making. More importantly, you'll be part of a sound admissions strategy that we co-develop with you to help ensure the success of your college admissions campaign.



Elizabeth LaScala, PhD
Elizabeth@doingcollege.com
(925) 330-8801
Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D. is dedicated to providing personalized college and graduate school admissions expertise to students and their families locally, nationally and abroad. College and graduate school admissions are more competitive than ever. Doing College utilizes exclusive admissions tools, customized strategies and a network of dedicated professionals to help each student navigate the complex college and graduate school admissions process with confidence and success.

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Not to be missed

Art

A new exhibit, "Expressions," opens on Aug. 21 at the Moraga Art Gallery and highlights works by two Lamorinda artists: Dalia Alekna, and Mary Leigh Miller. A free opening reception for art lovers of all ages will be held on Saturday, Sept. 14 from 5 to 7 p.m. The gallery is open Wednesday to Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. 432 Center Street in Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center. www.moragaart-gallery.com (925)376-5407.

Orinda Books hosts artist Bonnie Bonner in August. Bonnie's beautiful botanical watercolors have been selected for many juried exhibitions and cover illustrations. For a preview, visit www.orindabooks.com.

Music

Lafayette Library & Learning Center Foundation invites the public to 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, Dancing! Aug. 16: Jinz Jones. FREE at the Amphitheatre www.LLLCF.org

Theatre

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

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

Not to be missed

Join Daniel Gumbiner at Orinda Books on Aug. 24 at 2 p.m. to discuss his new novel, "Fire in the Canyon," about a California grape-grower, his family, and the climate disaster that upends their quiet lives. Daniel is a National Book Award nominee. Information at www.orindabooks.com.

Other

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/>

Misinformation and Disinformation: Election Edu-

tion. Join a presentation from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. at the Lafayette Library on Thursday, Aug. 22 for an eye-opening discussion of the impact of misinformation and disinformation on elections. Learn how to spot fake news, fact-check sources and navigate the complexities of today's media landscape to become a more informed voter and citizen. The presentation by the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley will take place in the Home-work Center, 3491 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Register at https://ccclib.bibliocommons.com/events/666b5c05d8f18e57580c645a7blm_aid=32036. Contact programs@lvwv.org for more information.

Mocktails & Cocktails: Sunday, Aug. 25 from 4 to 6 p.m. at Tutu's Lafayette. Join those who love art, literature, music and everything in between at Tutu's, 53 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Time for some conversation about your creative journey; artists of all kinds are invited to bring prompts. Look for the

Not to be missed

knockoff Picassoesque poster of surrealist Dora Maar - that's us! No host bar. Just show up. Questions? Email LamorindaArtsCouncil@lamorindaarts.org or call (925) 359.9940.

The Kapnek Trust USA Family Fun 5K Run, 1K Run/Walk and Carnival will be held at Moraga Commons Park on Sunday, Sept. 8 at 9 a.m.. Participants will enjoy a commemorative t-shirt, brunch, music, arts/crafts, carnival games, music, and FUN! All proceeds from this family event help to improve the health and wellness of children in Zimbabwe! Strollers and dogs welcome! Go to: <https://kapnektrustusa.funrun24.eventbrite.com>

Moraga Community Service Day will be held Oct. 4 through 6. It's Year 3 for this community event with 16 projects for community volunteers to participate in. These projects serve our mission to provide humanitarian aid locally and internationally to help the less fortunate/those in need, support our local schools and beautify our Town. Last year we had over 700 volunteers helping 12,000 people internationally and locally! Care, Give, Connect! More information in mid September!

Aging in Place: Making Your Home More Functional & Safe with Robineve Cole from RobinEve Interiors. Hear about design principles for your home that nurture you through all of life's stages. Gain valuable insights and practical tips to empower you or your loved ones to age comfortably, safely, and with dignity in the familiar surroundings of home. Wednesday Aug. 21 from 10:30 a.m. to noon in the Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Fee per meeting: Members Free Non-members \$10

Home Maintenance Tips with Mark Shaw, local realtor. It's difficult to keep track of the many home maintenance tasks that should be done throughout

the year: monthly, quarterly, seasonally, annually, etc. Mark will share his home maintenance schedule with you and talk about some of the most important tasks that will keep your house in tip-top form and help you avoid costly repairs down the road. Tuesday, Sept. 10, 10:30 to noon in the Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Members: Free Non-Members: \$10

The Art of Making Handmade Cards with instructor Jennifer Gerst. Learn how easy and fun it is to make beautiful cards using papers, ink, stamps, and embellishments. Step-by-step instructions and all materials will be provided to complete 4 cards per class. Session 1: Autumn Holidays - create cards for birthdays, friendship/thinking of you, and Autumn holidays Wednesday, Sept. 11 & 18, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Session 2: Winter Holidays - create cards for birthdays, encouragement, and Winter holidays Wednesday, Oct. 9 & 16, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Materials Fee: \$20 per session, payable to instructor. Minimum 4, maximum 10 attendees

Estate & Succession Planning Workshop for Business Owners. Wednesday, Aug. 28, 5:30 -7:30 p.m. Moraga Country Club (To be confirmed). Contact: Yuki Ku, (925) 289-8990, helo@rootsandwings.legal, <https://events.rootsandwings.legal/succession>

Calling all car enthusiasts! Bring and show your car at the Burton Valley Cars and Coffee event Saturday, Aug. 24, from 8 a.m. to noon. All makes and models are welcome. Don't have a car to show? Just come and see all the cars on display and enjoy coffee and Johnny's donuts. The event will be held in the parking lot at Lafayette Christian Church, 584 Glenside Drive (across from Las Trampas Swim Club). Any questions to office@lafayettechristianchurch.org.

Lamorinda's Religious Services

Lafayette United Methodist Church
955 Moraga Road 925.284.4765 thelumc.org
Sunday 10am in person worship

We are a church that strives to love as Jesus loves. Our congregation welcomes, includes, and affirms everyone on their journey of faith regardless of race, ethnicity, age, economic status, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church
433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422
www.holyshepherd.org

ONLINE WORSHIP SCHEDULE
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WORSHIP SCHEDULE In person worship at 9:30 a.m. Live stream on facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/
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10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org
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Lamorinda Weekly

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Submit sports stories and story ideas to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Another successful OMPA meet led by Orinda Country Club's 23rd consecutive victory



Photos Kendall Haynes

Chrystina Hansen congratulating her daughter Madison

... continued from Page 1

Coming into the meet having won the OMPA the last 22 years, Head Coach Steve Haufler did not concern himself with the pressure of keeping the streak going "though it did come from members of the OCC."

It was a successful season coming into the OMPA for Haufler: "We won the Park Pool relay and the Bottoms Up meet and the mini-meets as well so I felt good about what we've done so far, and our kids seem to really rise to the occasion for the big meets and the OMPA is the biggest one of all."

Our swimmers get a little extra energy to perform well on their relay teams because they're not swimming for themselves, they're swimming for the team.

This is a big deal for the community, having all nine teams together, spending the weekend competing, having fun. There's a lot of camaraderie amongst the teams and coaches and that makes for a great atmosphere."

MEADOW SWIM & TENNIS

Won the Orinda Chamber of Commerce Perpetual Award for finishing in second.

For Meadow Head Coach Kyle Peterson, the season was more than about winning.

"It's all about building character and finding depth within each age group. You can't do well at the OMPA meet without depth. We really came together as a coaching staff and there is a real trickle-down that affects the 15-18 age group, which creates a lot of good role models, and with good role models, you have fast swimming.

Finn McManus had surgery this year and has been an excellent leader, and Tali Stryker has had a number of really impressive swims even after breaking a finger a week and a half ago. They're both great leaders and were passionate in their coaching."

Assistant coach Amanda Ferguson, who began as a swimmer for Meadow, spoke of how

OMPA is more than just a swim meet: "This is the epitome of athletics where we put away all the differences. This is the highlight of the summer and it's the sport where boys and girls swim together. I believe that it fosters a lot of positive sportsmanship and life lessons."

Tali Stryker, who will be playing water polo at UCLA next year, won the girl's Outstanding Swimmer award for achieving the highest point total as a result of swimming the individual events.

Joseph Goett won the Outstanding Swimmer award for the boys.

SLEEPY HOLLOW

Won the Orinda Rotary Club Perpetual for finishing in third. After thirty-one years at Sleepy Hollow, Head Coach Matt Ehrenberger is not at all jaded. "The meet has always been an extravagant event with all of the energy, the tents, and the team areas, and it makes it easy for the kids to swim fast."

What's changed is the summers are now about a lot more things than rec swimming and the kids are more busy, but OMPA remains a great event where everyone wants to do well. The team spirit is unbelievable and that has never changed.

It's been a good year for Sleepy Hollow and our kids did a good job, and this is the meet which we all point to. What stands out is how hard our kids have worked and how they kept getting better each week.

We've had great junior coaches to lead our kids and a great staff of older guys. The leadership comes from the parents, the coaches, the junior coaches, and the kids as well. We're graduating nine seniors and most of them started with us from five to nine years of age."

MORAGA COUNTRY CLUB

Won the Ellwood Douglas/Doc Webster Memorial Plaque as the Most Improved Team.

Head Coach Matt Armanini is another coach with decades of experience and has an appreciation for how the



Orinda Country Club coaching staff from left: Olivia Harris, Head Coach Steve Haufler, Morgan Leishman, Ashlyn Fiorilli, Matt Estrada

OMPA has adjusted:

"The sport has gotten more competitive, and the meet is as spirited as it ever was and the parent groups and community has brought it to another level. The league has adapted to that growth really well, like expanding the finalists from eight to ten, giving more incentive for people to swim.

Our team has gotten way better, and our talent has been more dispersed throughout the team rather than being concentrated in one age group. We only have one graduating senior in Hazel Krozek, who is also an Eagle Scout, and has done a really good job in being a role model for the kids and coaching swimming.

OMPA is the only time that each of the nine teams has their whole team together. It's more competitive but it just makes the atmosphere that much more fun because most of the swimmers know each other. Everyone's here for a bigger reason which is just the culture that's been long established and consistent throughout the years."

MORAGA RANCH

Head Coach Mark Cavallero took a different approach with his team this summer.

"We had a great season, and we really tried to stress a "summer of fun" to make the sport exciting for the kids. I've noticed that we're competing a lot with water polo, and they work nicely together so to keep our kids engaged we've found ways to make it fun. We balanced the fun with the learning and the technical aspects of the sport.

There's just a feeling with OMPA with all of the teams coming together and that is what is keeping kids coming to rec swimming. It's the most fun swim meet around and it's the best run swim meet around. The experience of OMPA is amazing and the kids look forward to it from day one of the season. It's really great that all these kids have crossovers through water polo, going to school, and other sports so they all know each other and it's fun to see their

friends and compete against each other.

Our 15-18 medley girls relay was comprised of three of our seniors (Delaney Joyce, Sophie Lederle, Sammie Lederle, and junior Sammy Frazier) who are very good friends and swam in their final relay together and that to me is a big highlight, to see them have that experience and success together."

MORAGA VALLEY

Head Coach Trevor Rose has welcomed changes that have come in the team's programs:

"Things have improved in a lot of ways. Coaching is more involved in the training and is much more detailed now. The pools are faster and there is more access, and the kids are more into it. Working with the kids has been a blessing."

We've had great leadership in every age group, led by Connor Megan in 7-8's, Cody Delaney in 9-10's up to Allison Sagara with the 15-18's.

The highlights for our team this season have just been getting everyone back together as we've been under construction at our club for a long time, so, it's been great to have a full team effort and a full summer, and our kids have done a great job here at the meet."

ORINDA PARK POOL

Won Dan

Siri/Mike Anjedani Honorary plate for being the most improved team without relays.

Assistant Coach Aidan Vollmar, currently swimming for the University of Pacific, spoke highly about the team's summer program.

"It's been a monumental season for Orinda Park Pool. Our staff has come together as a senior and assistant staff to devise rules and make sure that each age group can develop in a way where we were able to see meaningful progress from month to month. At an event like the OMPA, we look at the percentage of drops and from the start of the meet, we've only seen a couple of our kids that haven't dropped time, and it all starts with how well our staff has been doing this year.

This meet is really something special and it has to be the best rec swim meet in the country, from a spirit and numbers perspective. I began as a swimmer and this is my 17th OMPA, and I think that's just a testament to how special this meet is.

As coaches, we try to inform our kids about taking advantage of this opportunity, let them know how special this is and teaching them how to take advantage of the opportunity despite the pressure that might come with the meet. As for our graduating swimmers, it's letting them know that we are proud of them and that the whole team was behind them at this super special event."

CAMPOLINDO CABANA

Won the Heidary Sportsmanship Trophy for demonstrating superlative sportsmanship throughout the season.

Head Coach Tatiana Gessling is another coach who began with OMPA as a swimmer.

"The energy at OMPA is always really exciting; I feel like the bleachers get more and more decorated each year and the kids get faster and faster. The best part of this meet is seeing who steps up and shines in a way that maybe we aren't expecting them to.

We've had a good season with great swimming weather all summer long, even with the really hot days. We've had a lot of good times along with a lot of small accomplishments like

more breathers, getting dives down, and our kids feeling more confident.

Our seniors that have been coaches have been a really big part of our team and have enjoyed being part of the 15-18 team, many of whom started as Mini-Marlins themselves, and it has been fun to watch them grow up."

MIRAMONTE
In what could have been an incredibly trying time for Miramonte - having a coach leave during the season - is instead another example of how special the OMPA league is.

Oceana Tan, a Miramonte parent, explained "Some of the other teams had coaches that volunteered to help us." Weina Xie, another Miramonte parent, shared that sentiment: "It was so far, so good. Despite the fact that we did not have a head coach, the kids came together anyway. All of the parents in Moraga really worked together and pointed to this last big event to see that our swimmers did their best."

EAST BAY SEA SERPENTS

The Sea Serpents, who are affiliated with the Special Olympics of Northern California, have been coming to OMPA every year since 2012.

"The East Bay Sea Serpents once again joined us on Saturday with their largest participation ever, with twenty-five participants which is incredible, and we are really excited that they continue to join us and be part of this amazing community," Ashley Brush said.

Brian Wentzel, the Sea Serpents Director, shared how much his team looks forward to coming to OMPA. "It's really a special event for them, especially being in this kind of unified environment where they get to swim with this crowd of spectators and all the energy is really a unique opportunity to swim. The support they get is over the top and they just love coming here and receiving their medals."

With the conclusion of the meet, Ashley Brush had advice to the next meet directors: "Get all of your work done ahead of time so you can sit back and enjoy the process."



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Miramonte Students Embark on Europe Summer Trip



Photos Annie Strickler

Budapest's Margaret Bridge.

... continued from Page 1

With a roster of nearly 40 people, students learned discipline when traveling in groups. Should they choose to split up, teens were trusted to be responsible for everything, from their belongings to their time. "We had to rely on ourselves to navigate and find food or entertainment," rising junior Annie Strickler said. "It developed our independence."

"I found the group to be very respectful of the adult chaperones and places we visited," Frippiat said. "I had the graduated seniors as former students, so I trusted them a great deal."

With most students unable to speak German, Polish, Hungarian, or Czech, language barriers posed challenges when interacting with locals. Still, the spirit of travel prevailed, teaching students how to adapt. "Being somewhere where people don't share your language gives you a new per-

spective," Strickler said. "It can help you understand people in your own country once you return home."

Each walking tour promised something new. Students toured Germany's magnificent Dresden Castle, admired the Saints Peter and Paul Church in Kraków, and snapped photos of Budapest's Margaret Bridge at night. For those who had taken AP European History, this trip made the images they'd only seen in textbooks spring to life. Being able to physically touch the Berlin Wall was a highlight for many. "I'm grateful I got this opportunity to tour the Berlin Wall remains, Brandenburg Gate, and St. Mary's Basilica," graduated senior Olivia Lee said.

Yet amid exciting learning experiences, students also grappled with heavy historical legacies, particularly those of the Holocaust and Nazi occupation. Upon arriving in Berlin, students visited the Topography of Terror Museum, the former headquarters of the Nazis' Schutzstaffel (SS) military group during World War II. A week in, the group traveled to Kraków and took a guided tour of the Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps. "I found the Auschwitz tour most memorable: the exhibits were filled with prisoners' old clothes, shoes, and briefcases," Lee said. "Seeing the sheer amount of items left behind put the scale of the Holocaust into perspective."

The gravity of such experiences

proved eye-opening to every student. "It's critical for young people to be exposed to the failures of the past so we ensure history doesn't repeat itself," Lee said.

With these lessons in mind, students experienced each country's vibrant diversity and heritage. "Through Krakow's Kazimierz district, we learned a lot about Jewish history: not just as in World War II, but also everyday life there," graduated senior Mika Strickler said.

Moreover, current events charged cities full of vigor, like in Berlin. "I'd pick Berlin as my favorite because of its bike friendliness, many public parks, and the energy of the Euro Cup Final happening then," Frippiat said. "It had countless cafés and beer gardens at every turn."

Of course, the cuisine was delectable. In fact, some students tasted a crossroads of cultures. "To be honest, my favorite food we had in Europe was this sushi pizza in Dresden, Germany. I loved the crispy rice crust," Mika Strickler said.

These nine dynamic days have shaped a summer to remember, especially for seniors capping off their high school years. "I loved watching the sunset over the Prague skyline while sipping on cider and zooming around the city on Lime scooters," Lee said.

"My friends and I visited an amusement park in Krakow, where we rode a Ferris wheel and got a beautiful view of the city and the Danube River,"

Mika Strickler said. "It was unforgettable."

The beauty of Europe, and the memories made there, will be cherished by these students, especially because they've shared this adventure together.

"When young adults travel abroad, they are given a different perspective of the world and a broader array of what is possible," Frippiat said. "Traveling abroad sets the groundwork for many more adventures and explorations in their lifetime."



Saints Peter and Paul Church in Kraków.

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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly

Volume 18

Issue 13

Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2024



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page OH2

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Growing Dinner

By Cynthia Brian



Originally a cherry plum tree, the plums this year are large, orange, and apricot flavored.



The "fruit" of a camellia tree is filled with seeds that will grow more camellia plants.



Banana peppers are ready to be picked.

Photos Cynthia Brian

"I farm the soil which yields my food, I share creation. Kings can do no more." Chinese Proverb

Last week I hosted "Nonie Camp" for my granddaughter. We spent four days and nights of uninterrupted, farm-inspired outdoor time together, chez moi. First thing every morning she happily began her chores: feeding the animals, watering the patio plants, and filling the fountains. After multiple activities including climbing trees, building forts, shooting hoops, skipping rope, swinging, swimming, and playing, our stomachs growled with hunger. Into the potager, we trekked. As we tended the garden and picked fruits and vegetables, she exclaimed. "This is amazing, Nonie. We are growing dinner!"

As an advocate for sustainability and cultivating our food, I was thrilled that she recognized the wonder of being able to step just beyond

our doorstep into nature to harvest a healthy meal. With the hot weather and lengthened daylight, tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, corn, and a multitude of other crops are ripe and ready for consumption. I wait all year to eat fresh tomatoes, make tomato sandwiches, and toss up salads of tomato, cucumber, onions, and basil.

Our warm and sunny summer also offers numerous delicious herbs to be clipped for our cookouts.

Basil: Harvest the leaves of basil regularly to encourage new growth. Mixed with olive oil and garlic, basil makes a scrumptious pesto.

Cilantro: Cilantro can also be made into a pesto sauce, and is an essential ingredient in Mexican, Indian, and many Asian dishes. It bolts when it gets hot. Use the seeds, known as coriander, as a spice.

... continued on Page OH9

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City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	15	\$705,000	\$6,825,000
MORAGA	5	\$1,300,000	\$2,385,000
ORINDA	12	\$1,100,000	\$2,625,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

- 967 3rd Street, \$2,659,500, 4 Bdrms, 5054 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 07-12-24,
Previous Sale: \$850,000, 09-12-11
- 565 Arrowhead Drive, \$2,665,000, 4 Bdrms, 2548 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-05-24
- 3293 Beechwood Drive, \$1,380,000, 3 Bdrms, 1226 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-12-24,
Previous Sale: \$930,000, 05-23-16
- 21 Chapel Drive, \$705,000, 3 Bdrms, 2172 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 07-01-24,
Previous Sale: \$190,000, 08-11-20
- 1099 Country Club Drive, \$1,390,000, 4 Bdrms, 2282 SqFt,
1963 YrBlt, 07-05-24, Previous Sale: \$900,000, 11-03-21
- 1183 Glen Road, \$1,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 1448 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 07-01-24
- 1135 Glen Road, \$3,325,000, 3 Bdrms, 2902 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 07-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,935,000, 02-23-06
- 3277 Glenside Drive, \$1,650,000, 4 Bdrms, 2377 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 07-12-24
- 3911 Happy Valley Road, \$6,825,000, 2 Bdrms, 4718 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 07-12-24,
Previous Sale: \$2,280,000, 10-07-19
- 3155 Indian Way, \$2,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 2702 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-08-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,750,000, 08-13-18
- 2841 Kinney Drive, \$1,190,000, 2 Bdrms, 1324 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 07-09-24
- 3367 Mcgraw Lane, \$3,629,000, 4 Bdrms, 4447 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 07-01-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,740,000, 01-11-13
- 3961 South Peardale Drive, \$1,725,000, 3 Bdrms, 2210 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 07-09-24
- 1013 Via Roble, \$1,825,000, 4 Bdrms, 2294 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 07-10-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 06-24-19
- 3346 Woodview Court, \$1,667,500, 4 Bdrms, 2071 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 07-02-24,
Previous Sale: \$537,500, 03-24-00

MORAGA

- 619 Augusta Drive, \$1,625,000, 2 Bdrms, 1552 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 07-01-24
- 101 Hazelwood Place, \$1,900,000, 3 Bdrms, 1782 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 07-01-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 11-16-21
- 221 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 3276 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 07-09-24
- 1891 Saint Andrews Drive, \$2,385,000, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt,
1983 YrBlt, 07-11-24, Previous Sale: \$1,251,500, 11-24-14
- 111 Wallace Circle, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 1927 SqFt, 2019 YrBlt, 07-02-24

... continued on Page OH8

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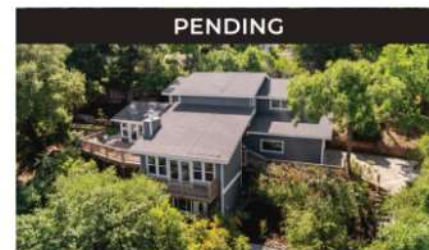
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Fire safety

By Jim Hurley



Common vent screen

Photo Jim Hurley

There we were, having dinner at a house near Serene Lakes, when a text message alerted us to a forest fire about ten miles north of our location. Looking out from the deck, we could see a plume of smoke rising straight up into the sky. Fortunately, there was no wind that day -- the fire was hardly moving, hence the straight plume of smoke. We had plenty of time to prepare, load the car and leave.

For those living in the beautiful and frequently breezy hills and canyons of the Lamorinda area, we know it is essential to be prepared should there be a fire.

Typically, I attempt to provide some humor with my perspective on home maintenance. This article, however, is intended not only to help you prepare for the chance that a fire could come in your direction, but to give you peace of mind that you have done all you can to protect your home and family in the case of a fire emergency -- no laughing matter. My first piece of advice: Don't Worry. Worrying won't accomplish anything, except perhaps to cause an ulcer. Take action to prepare for fire, and once prepared, you can relax.

How to prepare? Fire requires three elements to burn: oxygen, fuel (flammable material) and heat. Because we need it to survive, we can't do anything about the oxygen all around us, but removing fuel and avoiding sparks are entirely within our control.

First and foremost, avoid creating flames outside. Eschew outdoor wood or charcoal fires during the summer. If you like to gather friends and family around a fire on a cool summer evening, get a gas fire pit. Service your lawn mowers and other gas combustion motors to prevent sparks.

... continued on Page OH8

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Fire safety

... continued from Page OH4

Secondly, eliminate potential fuel from around your house by:

Removing dry weeds, dead trees, and flammable shrubs from your property. The city of Orinda has a list of plants which are considered dangerous:

<https://cityoforinda.org/DocumentCenter/View/1026/Disallowed-Vegetation-List-PDF>

Replacing shake shingle roofing with fire resistant or non-combustible materials.

Preventing embers from accessing fuel under your house or in the attic. Cover the vents on the foundation and attic of your house with wire mesh having less than 1/8 inch opening.

This last step could be a DIY item. Check the wire mesh which currently covers the vents to your foundation and attic. If the opening in the wire mesh is more than 1/4 inch square, it is recommended to cover the vent with a finer mesh. Your fire district may provide free wire mesh material for your use, if you go to their website and submit a request. Installing the mesh is pretty easy around the foundation -- cut the material to fit over your existing vents and secure it to the vent frame with self-tapping sheet metal screws. Covering the attic vents requires ladder work. If you are confident on a ladder, that is no problem, but if you don't care for heights, your local handyman might take care of that for you.

Once the outside of your house is prepared, it's time to prepare yourself. In the event of an emergency evacuation order, your first priority is to get everyone inside your home out of harm's way. If time allows, you might want to take a few irreplaceable items like family photo albums. If you happen to have those items in a box or bag, easy to grab and go, that is better. On high fire risk days, the fire district suggests having your go bag pre-packed and stowed in your car. However, do not waste time trying to gather that stuff together if a sheriff or firefighter is knocking on your door.

This article has highlighted a few important fire preparedness suggestions. I strongly recommend you visit the fire district web site for more complete information. The local fire districts have put together a comprehensive program of guidelines and actions required by statute in your area. They also provide consulting for residents on fire prevention and preparedness. Both local fire districts have pages of comprehensive information that will help you best prepare your home against fire.

Residents of Orinda and Moraga are in the Moraga-Orinda Fire District:

www.mofd.org/our-district/fuels-mitigation-fire-prevention

Lafayette residents are in the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District:

www.cccfpd.org/wildfire-mitigation-program/

Taking action and following the recommendations of your fire department professionals will give you the satisfaction of knowing you are prepared. Being prepared is the best assurance that you and your family will be safe.

Lamorinda home sales recorded

... continued from Page OH2

ORINDA

27 Bates Boulevard, \$1,675,000, 3 Bdrms, 1962 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 07-02-24, Previous Sale: \$692,500, 05-22-02
 296 Camino Sobrante, \$1,510,000, 4 Bdrms, 3286 SqFt, 1990 YrBlt, 07-02-24, Previous Sale: \$110,000, 04-01-87
 15 Claremont Avenue, \$1,765,000, 4 Bdrms, 2042 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 07-10-24, Previous Sale: \$755,000, 07-20-04
 6 Darnby Court, \$1,575,000, 3 Bdrms, 2021 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 07-03-24
 3 Duncan Court, \$2,375,000, 4 Bdrms, 3577 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 07-11-24
 39 El Gavilan Road, \$2,625,000, 5 Bdrms, 3188 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 07-02-24, Previous Sale: \$1,417,000, 04-15-10
 133 Fiesta Circle, \$2,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 2341 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 07-12-24
 42 Hillcrest Drive, \$2,350,000, 5 Bdrms, 2664 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 07-08-24
 50 La Campana Road, \$2,385,000, 4 Bdrms, 2687 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 07-12-24
 19 Las Piedras, \$2,249,000, 4 Bdrms, 3389 SqFt, 1981 YrBlt, 07-11-24, Previous Sale: \$480,000, 08-01-87
 50 Overhill Road, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 1746 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 07-03-24
 112 Ravenhill Road, \$1,555,000, 2 Bdrms, 2060 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 07-12-24, Previous Sale: \$980,000, 04-21-14



Foundation cover with 1/4 inch mesh

Photos Jim Hurley



Foundation cover with additional 1/8 inch mesh

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Growing Dinner

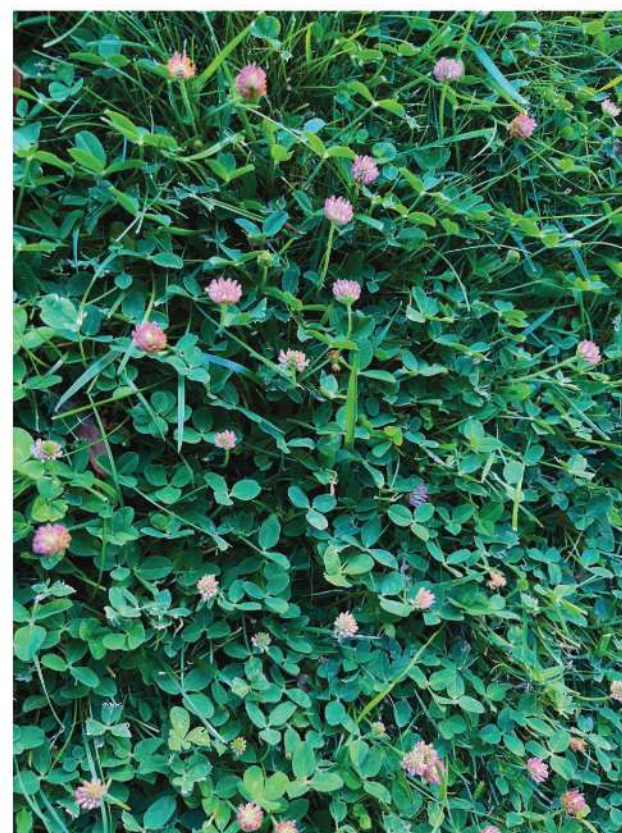
Photos Cynthia Brian



The only way to eat tomatoes is freshly plucked from the vine.



A stalk of white corn is nearing harvesting.



Clover is a nitrogen fixer and the flowers attract bees.

... continued from Page OH1

Dill: The leaves, flowers, and seeds add flavor to pickles, salads, seafood, dips, and sauces.

Basil, cilantro, and dill are summer-season herbs in Northern California.

Perennial herbs that can be snipped year-round include:

Society Garlic: Many people aren't aware that the deer-resistant flowers and leaves of society garlic are edible. I use them as garnish on baked potatoes as well as in sandwiches.

Chives: To keep the plant producing, snip this onion-flavored herb regularly.

Mint: Mint adds an energizing flavor to iced beverages, and of course, is delectable with lamb and many desserts. Grow mint in a container as it is an aggressive spreader.

Thyme: For the best flavor, harvest thyme before flowering and use the fresh leaves in soups, stews, roasts, and marinades. Thyme is a key component in bouquet garni and herbes de Provence.

Rosemary: Rosemary is a favorite of mine to add flavor to BBQ. Use the woody stems as a skewer for grilling. One plant of rosemary is all you need.

Oregano and Sage: Both are essential in Mediterranean cuisines and as garnishes for savory dishes. Use the leaves as needed and avoid cutting back more than a third of the plant at a time. ... continued on Page OH10



Zucchini plants are a staple of the summer veggie garden.

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Growing Dinner

Photos Cynthia Brian



Cynthia's granddaughter reads to the chickens after collecting fresh eggs.

... continued from Page OH9

At the end of June every year, I harvest my cherry plums. This year a strange thing transpired with one of my trees. My twenty-year-old plum tree no longer bore purple plums, but large orange plums that ripened in August. We picked a basket, which had a sweet apricot taste. Since I grow so many roses and continue to deadhead the spent blooms every few days, I have spectacular roses constantly in bloom. For a special summer salad, try scattering a few rose petals on a platter of peaches, plums, and melon dressed with a homemade lemon and herb vinaigrette. Cool, refreshing, and delectable.

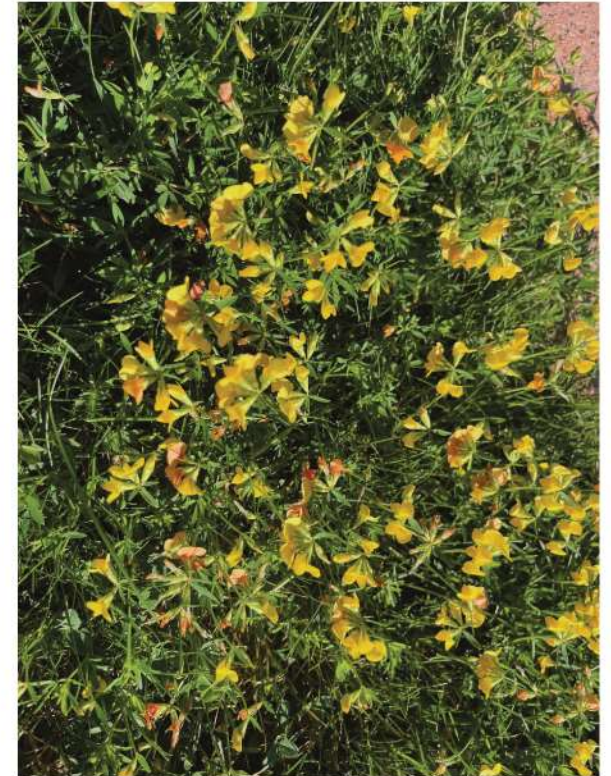
My granddaughter was impressed that the birds and wildlife also enjoyed a feast of plenty from the garden. We watched the hummingbirds darting between the blooms of the crape myrtle trees, the bees gathering nectar from the pink clover, and the bunnies munching the Bird's Foot Trefoil, a member of the pea family. Bird's Foot Trefoil is rich in nitrogen

with equal protein to alfalfa. It is often used in pastures and feed for cows and cattle. Both clover and Bird's Foot Trefoil are great alternatives or additives to a grass lawn, as they remain green even in the hot weather, albeit mowing is necessary to remove the flowers.

The benefits of growing our dinners are immense. Fresh, organic produce is nutritious. When we are cognizant of the composition of our soil, growing our food is the healthier option. We save money on buying groceries, with homegrown being more economical. We can be more sustainable and reduce our carbon footprint by minimizing packaging. One of my favorite reasons is the satisfaction of connecting to the earth and watching the growing process.

Every day of "Nonie Camp" my granddaughter went into the garden to pull a few weeds and gather our dinner. She reaped the rewards of organic homegrown and delighted me with her words, "Hmmm, this is so yummy!" Hopefully, she will pass on her love of nature to a future generation and host her version of "Nonie Camp".

Kings can do no more!



Bird's Foot Trefoil is a member of the pea family and rich in nitrogen.



Edible society garlic deters other pests.



Rose petals that have not been sprayed are delicious in salads.



Cynthia Brian stands on the balcony in front of a crape myrtle tree.

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. 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 <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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Totally renovated & updated in 2013, this light filled 6 bd/ 4.5 ba w/ bonus room & possible au-pair suite is a fabulous place to call home.



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

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417 Moraga Way, Orinda
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152 Ravenhill Road, Orinda
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76 La Cuesta Road, Orinda
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1762 Sqft | \$1,575,000

Va-Va-Views! This stylishly updated Orinda home is immersed in nature & a peaceful escape, yet right in town.



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 0.95-acre lot in the coveted Happy Valley neighborhood.



50 Woodbury Highlands #34, Lafayette
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1031 Bollinger Canyon, Moraga
5 Bd | 3.5 Ba | 4571 Sqft | \$2,795,000

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