

Everyone in the Bay Area knows it can happen any day:

The Big One

By Chris Lavin

Yet while we are regularly surprised by the occasional jolt and subsequent tinkle of china in the cabinets, very few people who live in our neighborhoods have actually gotten around to laying in the supplies that will be needed when a major earthquake hits.

Orinda's mayor and the Orinda Association are out to change all that. "When the big one hits, we will have a couple fire trucks and a single police officer to help 18,000 people in Orinda," Mayor Steve Glazer said. "With crumpled roads and broken water systems, we have to be prepared for a week or more without any outside help. Good intentions will not be worth much. You are either ready to survive on your own or you will be in great difficulty."

Since January, the Orinda Association has committed to the effort. It began selling two sizes of earthquake kits: large backpacks for \$65 complete with basic food, water, medical and other supplies, and smaller duffel bags costing \$48 for a car trunk.

"Every car should have one," said Fred Lothrop, a volunteer trainer in the Lamorinda CERT program, which stands for Community Emergency Response Training.

One of Glazer's concerns is that much of California's emergency preparedness information tells individuals and families that they should have three days of supplies in case of an emergency. He believes that is far too short of a time-frame.

"You cannot rely on anyone but yourself when disaster strikes," Glazer said. "There are simply not the government resources available when there is massive destruction. Katrina is a huge wake-up call and we need to heed the warning and take steps to be prepared immediately."

Since the Orinda Association began selling emergency kits in January, it has sold 138 backpacks and 42 duffel bags. To order, visit www.orindaassociation.org. To learn more about CERT training, visit www.LamorindaCERT.org.



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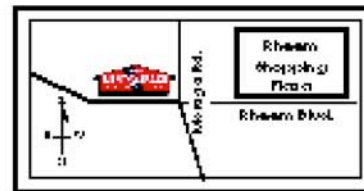


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