



Something for Everyone

By Lee Borrowman

There are many reasons to live in Lamorinda. We have the best weather, the best schools, a low crime rate and every visit to the grocery store or local eatery is an opportunity to run into someone you know. For some of us, another draw to this area is the outdoor life. From swim team to hiking trails, Lamorinda has it all. This month, cycling will have its moment in the spotlight as the Lafayette Criterium returns for its third year. Cycling has reached new heights of popularity in recent years, and hundreds of cyclists roll through Lamorinda every weekend.

Whether your idea of a Sunday afternoon bike ride is tooling around the Moraga Commons on a tricycle, taking in the views while cruising along Skyline/Grizzly Peak, riding the Lamorinda Bicycle Loop, building up a sweat climbing Mt. Diablo or getting dirty on a mountain bike at Redwood, if you live in Lamorinda and own a bike there is always somewhere to go and something to do.

If you're new to cycling or Lamorinda, a great place to start is your local bike shop. Go on a weekday if you can; weekends can be busy and the staff may not have time to give you the level of attention and service they would like to provide. There you can buy proper equipment, get maps, safety tips and recommendations for the best places to ride.

Another service a bike shop can offer is to put you in touch with local cycling clubs, which are a great resource for information; why reinvent the wheel when there are experienced cyclists out there who can tell you how to build it (or at least, how to change a tire)? And because there is safety in numbers, clubs provide opportunities for cyclists to ride in groups rather than hitting the streets alone.

Sharp Bicycle in Lafayette is a co-sponsor of the Lamorinda Cycling Club (LCC), which hit the Lamorinda cycling scene less than a year ago and has already

made a name for itself in local racing. Although LCC has been primarily focused on racing as the team developed, they are now ready to expand to include club, or recreational, cycling.

Long-time cyclist and LCC member Paige Youngman has stepped forward, along with Club VP Ben Inglis, to welcome new recreational cyclists to the club. With 35 years of cycling experience, Youngman is ready to put together riding groups based on skill level, provide information on basic bike maintenance, equipment and proper fit, diet and nutrition, and offer training tips to those with goals such as riding that first Century, whether it's a 100 miles or a 100 kilometers.

To reach the Lamorinda Cycling Club, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LamorindaCyclingClub/> or call Paige Youngman at 925-899-6506. Tell him what kind of cycling experience you are looking for, and let him know the Lamorinda Weekly sent you!



Ted Brooks, Lamorinda Cycling Club/Synergy; Photo by Mark Adkison, Ph.D., Hors Categorie Photography



Bob Miller and Ted Brooks roll into Sharp's



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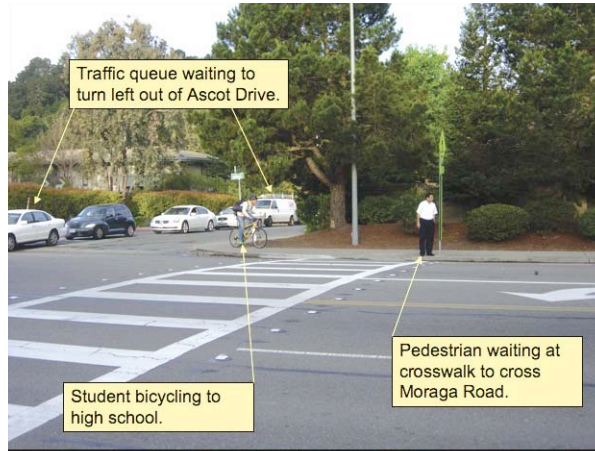
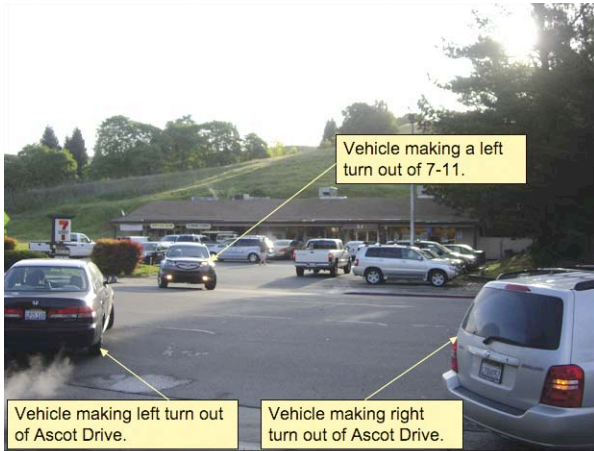
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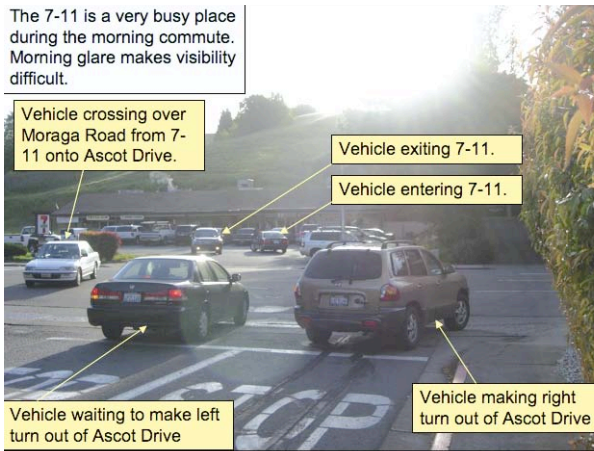
Pat & Patty McCloskey

Town Wins \$601,000 Grant for Ascot Signal

By Steve Angelides



The 7-11 is a very busy place during the morning commute. Morning glare makes visibility difficult.



Moraga Town Engineer Jill Mercurio announced at the Town Council meeting on June 27 that the Town has been awarded a \$601,425 state grant for a signal and other improvements at the corner of Ascot Drive and Moraga Road.

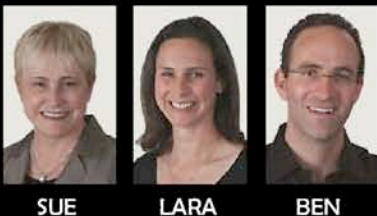
Of 335 grant applications statewide, only 78 were funded. 10 of those were in Contra Costa County. The next highest grant was for \$482,000.

“We did very well,” a beaming Mercurio said as she made her announcement, which was followed by a round of applause. Mercurio prepared the grant application on an expedited basis in just a couple of weeks after learning of the prospect for the state funds and obtaining approval from the Council to apply.

While commenting on Mercurio’s success when he spoke to the Moraga Chamber of Commerce a couple of days later, Town Manager Phil Vince heaped praise upon her. “We have a great Town Engineer,” said Vince, “and she’s one of the best grant writers I’ve ever met.”

According to Vince the signal at Ascot has been one of the Town’s priorities for the past several years. A previously prepared traffic study, along with photos she took, enabled Mercurio to win the grant on short notice.

The Town will match the state funds with \$67,000 of street improvement funds to complete the total \$668,000 cost of the project. Mercurio expects engineering work on the project to start in the fall.



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Harry Potter Week Arrives!

By Nee-Sa Lossing

Harry Potter fans rejoice as the seventh, and final, installment of the popular children's series is released this month, accompanied by the fifth movie. The set release date for the book, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, falls on July 21, while the movie, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, premieres ten days earlier, on the 11th.

"Harry Potter Week," as fans have lovingly nicknamed the ten day stretch between releases, holds many fun events embracing the series, besides the official releases.

Local movie theaters will have special showings of the movie, directed by David Yates, including a 12:01am showing at the Rheem heater the morning of the 11th.

"I plan on seeing the movie the day it comes out," says Harry Potter fan Maria Sarmiento. "I've re-read the fifth book to prepare myself for the movie."

Although fans of the book series already know the plotline of this movie, seeing their mental images of the story come to life is a joy.

Orinda Theater will be showing the film from Wednesday, July 11th to Sunday, July 15th at noon, 3:30pm, 7:00pm, and 9:45pm daily. Monday, July 16th through Thursday, July 19th, the theater will be showing the film at 7:00pm and 9:45pm nightly.

Around the corner from Orinda Theater, fans can pre-order Deathly Hallows, written by J.K. Rowling, from Sweet Dreams for 20% off the cover price, \$27.99.

The highly-anticipated release has been long-awaited by Potter fans, and will be a bittersweet moment for all. The last book will answer questions that readers have had in their minds since the beginning, but it will also mean the end of the series. Whether excited or sad, all fans would agree that the release of this book can't come fast enough.

Orinda Books is currently taking pre-orders, as well, and is hosting a party from 11:00pm to 12:01am, the night before the release, July 20th. All fans are invited, and are encouraged to dress in costume for a night of videos, trivia games, and readings. Books may be pre-ordered online, by phone, or in-store for 20% off the cover price.

The Storyteller, in Lafayette, will be having a Harry Potter Party the morning of the 21st, exclusive to customers who pre-order the book with them.

Lafayette Book Store will be having a members-only party the night of the 20th, but pre-orders may still be picked up at midnight by non-members.

No matter where fans purchase their book, it is clear that the release will be a monumental event for every fan.

"I'm excited for the release of Deathly Hallows," said Sarmiento. "I'm anxious to see what will happen to Harry and his friends."

Rheem Theater:

showtimes: (925) 988-3411 questions: (925) 376-0885

Orinda Theater:

showtimes: (925) 254-9060 questions: (925) 254-9065

Sweet Dreams in Orinda: (925)937-7025

Orinda Books:

(925) 254-7606 website: www.orindabooks.com

The Storyteller in Lafayette: (925) 284-3480

Lafayette Book Store:

(925) 284-1233

Did You Know?

-Three different owls were used to play Harry's pet, Hedwig, in the first movie.

-The Hogwarts motto, "Draco dormiens nunquam titillandus" means "never tickle a sleeping dragon" in Latin.

-The fourth movie, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, was originally planned to be two movies, released a few months apart, but the director, Mike Newell, decided against it, and cut out some of the book's sub-plots to create a plot suitable for one movie.

-Goblet of Fire also features the biggest underwater set ever constructed, holding up to 500,000 liters of water.

-According to J.K. Rowling, the approximate value of a Galleon, the currency used in the wizarding world, is about five pounds, or \$7.30.

-The first person to be cast in the first Harry Potter movie was Robbie Coltrane, who plays Rubeus Hagrid.

-There are thirteen characters in the book series that are named after flowers (ie. Lavender Brown), and fifty-four characters' first and last names form alliterations (ie. Severus Snape)!

-Five members of the Black family are named after stars or constellations: Sirius, Bellatrix, Regulus, Alphard, and Andromeda.

-J.K. Rowling tends to reference the numbers 4, 7, and 12, a lot in the Harry Potter series.

-The Harry Potter series has been translated into over 63 languages other than English, and there are different versions for the U.S. and the U.K.



Harry's coming to the Orinda Theater

Photo by Nee-Sa Lossing

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Lafayette's New Police Chief Focuses on Customer Service

By Lee Borrowman

Fourteen years ago, Mike Hubbard was a Lafayette traffic cop who wished he could do more to help the community than issue speeding tickets. Timing is everything, and now he is back; this time, he is the boss. Arriving just in time to be one of the forces behind the Slow Down, Lamorinda! campaign, Hubbard has completed his first three months as Lafayette's new Chief of Police, and he is delighted to be here.

"I plan to give to the citizens of Lafayette as much as time and energy as I give to the bad guys," says Hubbard, adding sincerely, "How often do we get a chance to really help people?" Being Chief is a wonderful opportunity, he explains, "Because I can implement philosophies that I've held for years."

Hubbard's first priority is to make the Lafayette Police Department a more customer-service oriented entity. "We have two responsibilities," says Hubbard, "The first, obviously, is to ensure public safety, and the other is to respond to the needs of the community. It's bad service to tell the public what it wants; you have to ask people what their concerns are, and listen to what they have to say."

Hubbard has been a very visible presence in the city since his arrival this spring, attending meetings and mixers at every opportunity, and is considering ways to find out exactly what residents of Lafayette hope their police department can do for them. A large part of this effort is the hiring of a new Public Service Officer. "The PSO will go with our officers to crime scenes, collect evidence and spend time with the citizen to gather more complete information. The PSO can also be proactive, offering suggestions for how people can be safer in the future," explains Hubbard. Spending time with residents is not only good customer service, but Hubbard expects that the careful evidence and information collecting of the PSO will also result in more convictions.

There are two issues in Lafayette right now that concern Hubbard:

Bonfires set by teenagers using bad judgment during or after parties pose a serious risk during this severe fire season. Fires have been set off the reservoir trail on East Bay Municipal Utility District land, and in the open space in Burton Valley, putting surrounding homes and communities in harm's way.

Hubbard is reinstating and revamping the city's old Youth Diversion program, with a dedicated Youth Services Officer, providing what he calls, "A way for young people to learn citizenship right here in Lafayette." With the cooperation



Chief Mike Hubbard and his wife at a Welcome reception

Photo by Andy Scheck

of the community, young first-time offenders who have committed a non-violent crime, such as shop-lifting, would find themselves on work-details, perhaps cleaning graffiti, or even washing patrol cars. Hubbard says he would also support a well-crafted Social Host Liability Ordinance, which would hold homeowners responsible if teenagers consume alcohol in their homes during a party, but adds that the one currently being circulated needs some revisions to make it viable.

The other issue is theft, which remains Lafayette's most rampant crime. Hubbard would like to remind everyone to lock the doors of their homes and cars. "We are still seeing thefts occurring from unlocked cars in which valuables have been left out in the open. This is very safe community for anyone walking down the street, but that doesn't mean your possessions are safe. Don't give anyone the opportunity to make you a victim."



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The Slow Down, Lamorinda! campaign will wind down next week. This week's target enforcement area is in Moraga, on Moraga Road at Corliss, and the final week will be in Orinda, on Moraga Way at Brookside.

So who has been speeding up and down the streets of Lamorinda? Most Lamorindans will say, "Not us!" It appears that at least some of us do, but we are not alone. Statistics obtained from the Lafayette Police Department indicate that during the first four weeks of the campaign about 36% of speeding tickets issued were handed to residents of Lamorinda. 34% of ticketed speeders lived in other parts of Contra Costa County, and 30% were from outside the county. The percentage of speeders who are residents was highest on Moraga Way, and roughly half of the speeders on Pleasant Hill Rd lived not in Lamorinda but in other parts of Contra Costa County. Lafayette's Chief Mike Hubbard had not finished compiling the June statistics when we went to press, but says the overall numbers are not likely to vary much over the length of the campaign.



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For a Day in the Sun, Lafayette Reservoir Offers a Full Plate

By Chris Lavin



Amanda Rainey is about to catch her first catfish Photo Andy Scheck

During the school year the Lafayette Reservoir Rim is inhabited by strollers pushed by running mothers wearing headphones who have dropped older children at school and need to get some exercise, but now, in the hot days of summer, anglers, hikers and boaters are using the grounds for summer recreation.

Roller-bladers, skaters and scooter lovers also can use the trails around the reservoir on Tuesdays and Thursdays from noon till closing, and after 11 a.m. on Sundays on the paved trail. A launching area provides a place to put in your own boat, if it fits on top of your car, or else rentals are available. No motorboats are allowed.

"We almost always catch a fish here," said Jose Juarez of Oakland, who brought his family on a recent weekend to try their luck from a dock. "Not today. Maybe it's too hot."

Always an optimist, Juarez grabbed another worm that he had purchased at a nearby bait shop, and baited the hook of a young boy who faithfully cast it into the cool water.

Located off of Mount Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette, the reservoir, managed by East Bay Municipal Utilities District, is a day destination open for recreation but also provides drinking water for EBMUD users, and therefore no swimming is allowed. A playground is provided, however, as well as a native garden area behind the visitor center and picnic areas, two of which may be reserved.

"We have been coming here for years," said Said Muhatma, of Lafayette. "We live in an apartment building so we don't have a yard. This is our yard, sometimes. We like the water."

The reservoir is one of several managed by EBMUD for recreational activities, and officials stock it with a mixture of trout, perch, bass and catfish. A \$4 day use permit is required for casting a line.

And while catching a fish can be fun, officials warn that eating them on a regular basis may not be all that healthy. Fishing advisories have been in place for quite a few years throughout the county and state. Elevated levels of PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyls) and mercury can be found in fish from local water supplies, and fish higher up the food chain like carp or bass can accumulate higher levels of the chemicals. For guidelines on local fish consumption, visit www.oehha.ca.gov/fish.html.

Just as Juarez was talking about how his family never caught enough fish to really worry about chemical levels, the boy with the fishing rod and fresh worm let up a cry. He reeled and reeled, and pulled up a catfish that must have weighed at least 2 pounds.



Steve and Sam at the Lafayette Reservoir

"Well, maybe we'll have to look at what we're eating more closely," Juarez said, laughing and grabbing fish to remove the hook.

For more information, fee schedules and picnic reservations, visit www.ebmud.com, then click on services, and then recreation.

Reporter Cathy Tyson contributed to this story.

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The Race is On!

By Lee Borrowman

As the Tour de France winds its way through the high mountains between Le Grande-Bornand and Tignes, cycling enthusiasts who couldn't make it to Europe this month can enjoy an exciting race a bit closer to home. The 3rd Annual Lafayette Criterium will be held on Sunday, July 15. Early risers can watch Stage 8 of the Tour de France on Versus TV from 4:00AM to 7:30AM and still catch the end of the first heat in Lafayette.

Criterium racing is unique to the United States. A "crit," to use the jargon, is a fast race around a short course, traditionally taking place on city streets. Top cyclists will average speeds of 30 miles per hour, and sprint up to 40 mph. The 1 km route along Mt. Diablo Blvd., 1st Street and Golden Gate Way will be closed to car traffic, although the west-bound lanes of Mt. Diablo Blvd. will remain open.

Criteriums are spectator-friendly, and taking place right in middle of downtown Lafayette, this should be a great race to watch. Walking clockwise around the inside of the course, opposite the direction of the riders, will offer the best viewing opportunities. If you'd rather not walk, Mt. Diablo Blvd before the finish line is the place to be, as riders round the last corner and sprint to victory both at the end of the race and in "prime" laps (a prime is a race



within the race; a bell is rung and a small prize awarded to whoever completes the lap first).

The day's event is not just a single race but rather many, as cyclists are classified by age, gender and ability, and race in competitive groupings. Some riders will be competing in an "Omnium" this weekend, which combines scores from the Criterium with those achieved at the Mt. Diablo Hill Climb that takes place on Saturday, July 14.

Meet some of the racers on page 10.



Lafayette 2007 Criterium Schedule

Time	Classification	Duration	Prize
7:15	Cat 5	40 min	Medals
8:00	Women 3/4	40 min.	\$150/\$150
8:45	Men Masters 45+/55+	40 min.	\$150/\$150
9:30	Men Elite 3	50 min.	\$300
10:25	Kids 8-9	10 min.	Ribbons
10:35	Kids 6-7	10 min.	Ribbons
10:45	Kids U5	10 min.	Ribbons
11:20	Men Pro 1/2	70 min.	\$1,000
12:35	Women Pro/1/2/3	50 min.	\$500
1:30	Men Masters 35+ 1/2/3	50 min.	\$350
2:25	Men Masters 35+ 4/5	40 min.	\$200
3:10	Men Elite 4	40 min.	\$200

About the categories: Category 1 and 2 racers are the young pros and semi-pros. Category 5 cyclists are generally the least skilled and experienced, in their first year of racing. Older cyclists are grouped both by age and ability, 35 years and up, 45 years and up, or 55 years and up. Master racers can choose to race with younger age groups. At press time, the Masters 35+ 4/5 field was full at 50 racers but all other categories had plenty of room for last-minute entries (a racing license is required).

Cyclists aged 9 or younger can take a crack at the track, too! Register your little racer in front of Boswells Sunday morning before 10:15. Sponsored by the Oakwood Athletic Club, this event is free but donations to the Lafayette Art and Science Foundation will be happily accepted at registration. All participants will be rewarded with race ribbons and cookies.

Kids race by age groups, each for 10 minutes:

Ages 8-9 roll at 10:25
 Ages 6-7 at 10:35
 Ages 5 and under, including those on trikes and training wheels, take off at 10:45



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Council Removes Palos Colorados Funds from Capital Improvement Plan

By Steve Angelides

At its meeting on June 27, the Moraga Town Council removed Palos Colorados funds from the Town's capital improvement plan—except for money to help repair the dilapidated Moraga Library—and discussed the possibility of managing those funds as an endowment.

The developer of the Palos Colorados housing development, which is slated to be built in the hills near the Lafayette border, will be paying the Town a total of \$17 million due to the development's impact on the Town. \$9.5 million of that money is expected to flow into the Town's coffers within the next 12 to 15 months.

Town staff had proposed spending \$1.5 million of those funds on capital improvements over the next four years. Besides the library repair funds of \$196,000, the other items included \$565,000 to help narrow and beautify Moraga Rd., \$482,000 to remodel the Town's office building at 329 Rheem Blvd., \$148,000 to relocate the Town's corporation yard, \$75,000 to study the feasibility of a gymnasium and community center, and \$63,000 to help remodel the La Sala Building located next to the Hacienda.

Except for the library repairs, the Council decided that the other projects will remain unfunded, at least until the Town comes up with a plan for managing the Palos Colorados funds. After hearing from the public, including several members of the Friends of the Moraga Library who spoke in favor of the library repairs, Councilmember Rochelle Bird set the tone for the Council's discussion.

"I have some very strong feelings regarding the financial future of this town," Bird began. "We have a unique opportunity with one time funds," Bird continued. "Let's not have happen what happened to us as a state," she warned. "In a prosperous time we ran up the credit cards and wound up with a loss." "We can look at these monies perhaps as an endowment and only spend the interest," Bird suggested.

Council members Linda Deschambault and Ken Chew spoke next and seemed to support the concept of setting the Palos Colorados funds aside. Earlier in its meeting, the Council had voted unanimously to place all of the Palos Colorados funds into a separate account rather than commingling them with the general fund. So far the Town has received an initial payment of \$250,000 in Palos Colorados funds, which will be deposited into the new account.

As the remaining council members spoke it became clear that despite their own pet projects, they unanimously agreed that proper management of the Palos Colorados funds

was paramount. Councilmember Dave Trotter, whose campaign platform included a gym, will have to wait for his feasibility study. "This is not the time for such a study," Trotter agreed.

At least for now, Mayor Mike Metcalf, who favors a complete study and design for narrowing and beautifying Moraga Rd., will have to settle for a limited \$20,000 traffic study that was previously budgeted. Metcalf expressed the hope that perhaps by the mid-year review in December the Town would have a plan for managing the Palos Colorados funds, and the Council majority might be willing to start spending some of those funds for studies.

Town Manager Phil Vince said that although he would love to have all of his staff in one building, based on the Council's discussion the Town would have to continue to rent out the upper floor of its office building at 329 Rheem Blvd. for a few more years, while earning interest on the Palos Colorados funds which later could be used to pay for the remodeling necessary to move the rest of the staff into the building. Vince said the capital improvement plan would be modified based on the Council's discussion and brought back to the Council for a final vote on July 11.

The details of the library repair remain to be worked out. The capital improvement plan prepared by the staff proposed spending a total of \$465,000 on that project, consisting of the \$196,000 in Palos Colorados funds plus \$269,000 in asset replacement funds. The staff plan proposed spending \$365,000 of that money in fiscal year 07-08, and the remaining \$100,000 in fiscal 08-09. However, despite the consensus on the need for the library repairs, there were suggestions during the Council's discussion that even that project could be scaled down or slowed down.



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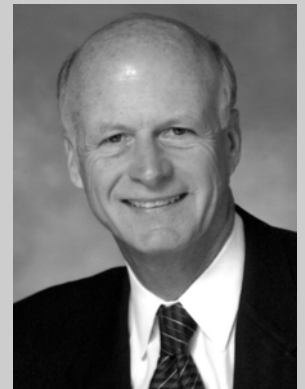
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Thursday, July 26 Mixed Nuts; Decades of Rock	Thursday, August 23 Celtic Heart; Irish
Thursday, August 2 littledog2; Rock 'N Roll	



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Design Board Reviews Content-Neutral Sign Ordinance

By Steve Angelides

The Moraga Design Review Board spent its June 25 meeting reviewing the first draft of a proposed content-neutral sign ordinance prepared by Planning Director Lori Salamack.

Salamack prepared the draft following a study session at the Board's previous meeting during which the Board heard a taped presentation by a law professor who said sign ordinances should be content-neutral to be enforceable.

The Town's current sign ordinance is not content-neutral. It has special provisions for reader boards and marquee, memorial markers, flags, barber poles, political signs, real estate signs, service clubs, service stations, special events, and time and temperature signs, among others.

Salamack's draft proposes to regulate signs depending on the use of the property where the sign is posted instead of the content of the sign. "Let's just say that will be easier to enforce," Salamack explained to the Board. Asked how broken the Town's current ordinance is, Salamack would say only, "it's broken."

At the meeting the Board members and the three Town residents who attended and spoke suggested several significant changes to Salamack's draft.

The draft allows a permanent 6 square foot illuminated sign on residential property. It was suggested that only externally illuminated signs be permitted on residential property, and that 6 square feet was too large.

Acknowledging the wishes of the merchants who spoke at the study session for a neon "open" sign, the draft would allow a one square foot neon sign. It was suggested that "open" signs that small might not

be readily available.

The draft limits temporary signs on non-residential property to 10% of the window area. It was suggested that Walnut Creek's limit of 15% might be more appropriate.

Acknowledging the merchants' wishes, the draft permits temporary "A frame" signs on non-residential property. It was suggested there be a limit on how far from the store front such signs could be placed, a limit on what percentage of the merchants in each shopping center could have such temporary signs at one time, and a limit on how close such signs could be to a scenic corridor.

In an effort to accommodate open house signs, the draft permits temporary self-supporting signs on Town sidewalks from noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. However, after it was pointed out that most of Moraga lacks sidewalks, Salamack said that issue needs to be rethought.

Salamack said she will prepare a second draft incorporating the suggestions made at the meeting, and present it to the Board in August at the earliest.

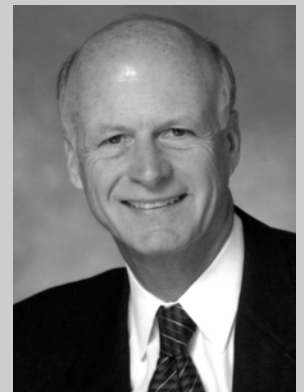


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Orinda 'Architecture Awards'

Meant to Strive for Best

By Chris Lavin

Because applications for and disputes about some of Orinda's residential redesigns have become the front and center of more than one city planning meeting, Mayor Steve Glazer has instituted the "Mayor's Award for Excellence in Architecture, Design and Sustainability," an award meant to inspire even the most recalcitrant homeowner to strive to a new standard of aesthetic awareness.

"We would like for people to do their best within their budgets," Glazer said.

Applications for the award are open until September 15 for projects under way or currently in the application process.

More than half of Orinda's homeowners have owned their homes for more than two decades, and because resale and buying anew costs so much, more homeowners are opting for redesigning rather than moving, real estate agents say. When a homeowner applies for a redesign permit, the city must approve the plans and then the county reassesses the property value considering the new addition or remodel – not the

entire house. So while property taxes might increase somewhat, the home is not reassessed at market value.

But when one or more parts of a redesign happen to fall within the eyesight of neighbors or passers-by, trouble can begin. Retaining walls, decks and new driveways are sometimes the culprits, and neighbor gets pitted against neighbor at planning department meetings.

Glazer has long advocated that neighbors simply talk to one another about their redesign plans. Before applying for a permit to redesign or rebuild a part of the property, he has said, let your neighbors know what you are doing. That way they don't find out about the plan through city disclosures, notices or word-of-mouth.

"So much of the pain can be avoided," Glazer said.

For more information about the architecture awards, visit www.ci.orinda.ca.us.



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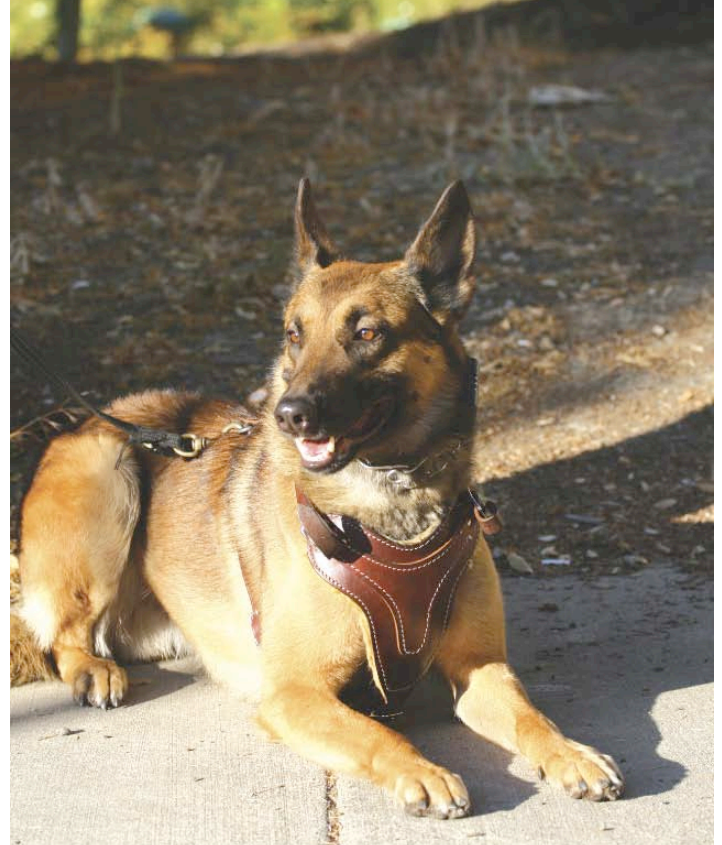
By Cathy Tyson

He works for free, has no benefits package, and goes home with his partner every day. Not your average police officer. Chef the Orinda Police Department's dog, shares his shift with Officer Danny Vargas. Chef is only one of eight police dogs in the county.

"He is definitely handy, I use him to help find missing kids, burglary calls, drug detection. Just the other day, there was a burglary at the Moraga Safeway, the suspect ran near the creek on Ivy Drive. We caught the guy."

A Belgian Malinois, one of the varieties of the Belgian Shepherd, Chef was trained by Dan Moore K-9 Services, to do man-work and dope-work. He will alert on marijuana, cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. He walks around a vehicle and stops when he smells any of those. "Just having him there is a tremendous help," says Officer Vargas. "He is constantly watching me, its really weird, and will only take commands from me. He will bite you and drag you out of places on command. If a suspect is hiding on a roof, he will start barking and jumping."

The City of Orinda owns Chef and pays for food and vet expenses, although they have a mutual aide agreement with the county. It's the least they can do for an employee that doesn't complain, doesn't get overtime and never calls in sick.



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Photo by Rick Konlon

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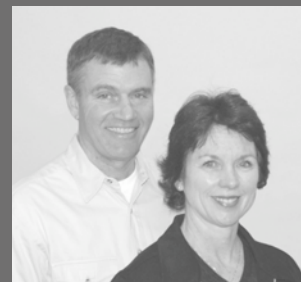
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The Quest for Senior Housing

By Jennifer Wake

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, between the years 2000 to 2010 the number of people aged 65 and older will nearly double, and that figure is expected to balloon in years to follow as more baby boomers reach retirement age.

With Lamorinda's population being older – relative to the rest of the Bay Area – Lafayette Senior Services Center Coordinator Mei Sun Li says the issue of where seniors will live and what services will be available is huge. “Without proper support services and additional senior housing, people will need to move from their homes and from the area,” she said.

That time has come for 75-year-old Lafayette resident Vic Anderson.

When the owners sold the apartment building four years ago where Anderson has lived for the past six years, he assumed the rents would increase. The catch was the location.

Within walking distance to Chow restaurant, downtown Lafayette and BART, the apartment's rents were grossly under market value. Although no major renovations were made to his two-bedroom apartment, which does not have a dishwasher or central air conditioning, and with a laundry room down two flights of stairs, over the past four years Anderson's rent has gone from \$750 to \$1,100 per month.

Yet when he looked for alternatives, he came up with nothing. “Chateau Lafayette offers seniors rents based upon their income,” said Anderson, “but my friends have been on their waiting list for 10 years. I realized that with rent going up, I couldn't do anything ‘extra’ without going broke.”

Determined to stay in the area, and despite his age, Anderson took a part time job as a parking attendant working for Bill Eames and Ed Stokes at Diablo Foods. “I couldn't ask for anything better. It's been a fun job; I meet so many people.”

Each year, as his rents increased, Anderson took on more hours until he was working 35 hours per week at the lot, but he began to worry. “What if my legs go out?” he said.

At the end of this month, Anderson plans to move to Seattle to live with his sister where he will no longer have to work, and will spend only \$200 a month for his share of his sister's modular home dues. “I've had a good life. I'm getting along fine, but this way I won't have to worry about it,” he said. “I'm looking forward to it, but I'll cry when I leave Lafayette.”

Mei Sun Li says the problem Anderson faced is not unusual. “It's not age specific,” Li said. “There are no senior apartments out here. And even if you own your home, but develop macular degeneration in your late

50s, and can't drive, then you have another problem.”

The Senior Services Center offers Lamorinda seniors free van rides to get to lunch dates or to run errands to the grocery or drug store, but only has one van in service. The van is funded by donations from the City of Lafayette, the Lafayette Community Foundation, the Moraga Juniors, and the Town of Moraga with additional donations expected from the city of Orinda.

“We can't take people to and from doctor's appointments with one van,” Li said. “But what people don't understand is LINK services (through County Connection where buses pick you up from home) are only for ADA-qualified people who have particular disabilities. If you're simply old and can't drive, you're not eligible.”

While the senior housing available in the area does offer transportation, the rent is costly. Of the few independent living facilities in the Lamorinda area, costs generally range from \$3,500 to \$7,000 a month.

“The main problem is that land here is too expensive,” Li said. “And even if you raise funds to build, people who own the sites don't want to sell. You also have to have accessible services and transportation when you develop housing.”

Li sees the newest trend in senior housing to be Co-Housing, much like what Anderson plans. “Seniors are buying homes together, with separate wings and a communal area,” Li said. “They share care-giving services and are all on the title, but it still takes a middle-class income.”

As the population continues to age, Li says changes will need to be made. “In the next few years, it's going to be an increasing problem – explosive,” she said.



Anderson stands watch at the parking lot between Diablo Foods and Longs Drugs in Lafayette

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Carmen Features Local Talent

By Sarah Henningsen

Although shows by the Walnut Creek-based Festival Opera company attract professionals from throughout the Bay Area, the July production of Georges Bizet's Carmen, one of the most famous operas of all time, is rich with Lamorinda talent. Individuals from throughout the community have actively participated during the past few months to put on a great show, both as on-stage performers and behind-the-scenes workers.

The majority of Lamorinda locals performing in Carmen are serving as members of the chorus ensemble. This ensemble is composed largely of students, many of whom participate in their school choirs during the year. Shannon Bruce, who will be a junior at Campolindo High School in the fall, commented on her experience as a chorus member in Carmen: "I feel so privileged to have worked with such a talented cast of people. I've learned so much about opera music."

Even some younger kids from the Lamorinda community are represented in the production of Carmen, as part of the smaller Boys Chorus that makes several appearances throughout the lengthy opera. Although the boys sing only two songs, they have a huge presence onstage and make a great impression on the audience. The group includes elementary and middle school kids as well as more experienced singers that lead the way for the younger ones, like Tylor Bruns, Alejandro Cervantes, and John Cogswell, who will be entering the local high schools



Clockwise from top left: Stefan Miller, Tim Quock, Robin Miller, Shannon Bruce, John Cogswell

next year. As Chorus Master James Toland expressed, "The boys have been a terrific bonus to the overall quality of the chorus."

Toland, a Moraga resident who teaches part time at Campolindo and Acalanes in addition to assisting premiere opera companies, spent the past few months helping to develop the chorus as a whole. Leading the majority of pre-staging music rehearsals with the chorus ensemble, Toland thoroughly enjoyed working with the younger set of chorale members: "The young people singing in the chorus are a remarkable addition to a very talented group of singers. The students have just made an enormous contribution to the beauty and power of the sound of the chorus. Their participation has helped create a stage full of people of

all ages and types and it is just a wonderfully vibrant group of people onstage." As evidenced by the beautiful sound of the choir ensemble, Toland has proven to be a huge asset to the production of a musical as challenging as Carmen and has inspired countless students from throughout the Lamorinda region.

The first weekend of performances was received positively by both critics and the community. The final two performances of Carmen will be held at the Dean Leshner Center on Friday July 13th and Sunday July 15th, at an afternoon matinee. Tickets can either be ordered at www.festivalopera.com or by phone, 925-943-SHOW.

Carmen's local performers:

High School Students:

Jason Long
Tylor Bruns
John Cogswell
Alejandro Cervantes
Cameron Gordon
Matt Boone
Shannon Bruce
Mayra Swatt

Middle School:

Ben Thomas
Jeremy Raine

College:

Piper Haywood
Chelsea Nenni
Troy Guthrie
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Rotary Names Barnard President and Martin Rotarian of the Year

The Moraga Rotary Club has named Colin Barnard its president, and Jonathan Martin its Rotarian of the Year.

Barnard is President of Barnard Capital, Inc. of Walnut Creek, which provides commercial real estate loans. He began his term as Moraga Rotary President on July 1.

Martin is head of the Saklan Valley School, a private preschool through 8th grade school in Moraga. He was honored for his years of active service to the Moraga Rotary Club and the community.

The Moraga club participates in larger Rotary projects, and also has several of its own projects supporting local education. It provides dictionaries to third grade students, Christmas stockings to Juvenile Hall in Martinez, Track and Field Day for third through fifth graders, and sponsors several Moraga teams in the Odyssey of the Mind competition.



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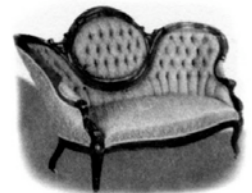
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Clothing Swap Brings Local Divas Together

By Jennifer Wake

Did you know that most women wear 20 percent of their clothing 80 percent of the time, keeping their closets and drawers filled with clothes that rarely see the light of day?

For those of you wanting a clothing shift, you can bring your gently used clothes, shoes, handbags, and more to the "Diva Eve Clothing Swap" – a special night that includes complimentary makeovers, spa treatments, massages, diva drink specials, hors d'oeuvres and a performance by

Nya Jade – on Thursday, July 26 from 6 to 10 p.m. at Joe's of Lafayette.

For women only, the Clothing Swap not only allows guests to enjoy a fun night out with friends, but offers a way to de-clutter closets. All unclaimed items will be donated to Shepherd's Gate in Livermore, which has provided services and housing for battered and homeless women and children since 1984.

The evening will begin with time to mingle and get pam-

pered from 6 to 8 p.m., followed by the clothing swap from 8 to 10 p.m. (private dressing areas will be available). Acclaimed San Francisco-based singer/songwriter Nya Jade will perform her music, which has been classified as pop, soul, and rock, beginning at 8:30 p.m. Tickets for the event are \$25 in advance, or \$35 at the door (on availability basis).

For more information about the event, visit www.clothingswap.org/Lafayette.



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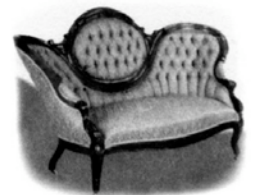
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Beach Reads for the Thinking Gal and Guy

By Sophie Braccini



Steve Tollefson's list of recommended books:

There's nothing more exhilarating than a passionate person talking about what moves them most. That's what happened on Thursday the 28th, when Stephen Tollefson, Director and Lecturer at UC Berkeley – Undergraduate Education, talked about “forgotten treasures” at the Lafayette Library. Steve is a writer himself and has published two volumes of witty books about grammar called GrammarGrams and several short stories.

It was a very special “Sweet Thursday,” sponsored by the Friends of Lafayette library (FLL) and supported by the Lafayette Book Store. About 110 people showed up to hear about lost treasures and talk about favorite books. Stephen Tollefson has a special gift for presenting books, many of which are forgotten treasures from well known and less well known authors. He can arouse each and everyone's curiosity.

The presentation was interactive with many in the audience giving their own impressions and opinions on books that have a special meaning for them. Books presented by Steve were on sale at the meeting and it was a challenge keeping fresh books on the table since they were eagerly snapped up. Linda Peterson, President of the Board of the FLL, and a published Mystery writer in her own right, was the moderator of the evening. She concluded by highlighting the importance of books and places where people can share common interests: “Books bring us together to talk about the things we love.”

Earth Abides, George R. Stewart

Post-apocalyptic life in the Bay Area. Ecology. Pandemics. But written in the '40s.

Storm, George R. Stewart

The “natural history” of a major Pacific Storm that hits Northern California.

The Ninth Wave, Eugene Burdick

Surfers, California politics, the new science of public opinion polls.

The Sibyl, Par Lagerkvist

The wandering Jew meets one of the women who was the Oracle of Delphi: goat gods, weird children, and philosophy. Sally Field is not involved.

Alexander's Bridge, Willa Cather

Her first novel, set in Boston and London of all places.

The Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles, Herman Melville

Novella: one story for each of the Galapagos Islands.

Saint Manuel the Good, Martyr, Miguel de Unamuno

Novella: a priest who no longer believes continues for the sake of his parishioners.

And if it's been a while, how about:

The Octopus, Frank Norris

Farmers in the Central Valley fight the railroads. Great local color of the Central Valley and San Francisco. Makes you hate The Establishment.

Big Rock Candy Mountain, Wallace Stegner

An epic about the late 19th Century-early 20th Century West. Alberta, Montana, Salt Lake City, Reno, and Lake Tahoe.

The Sea Wolf, Jack London

A ferry accident in The Bay sends a man on a harrowing journey across the Pacific.

And a few more women writers:

Carson McCullers,

Ballad of the Sad Café, Member of the Wedding, and short stories

Katherine Mansfield, short stories.

We've all read “The Garden Party” but there are lots of other good ones.

Willa Cather, especially O! Pioneers!

My Antonia and Death Comes for the Archbishop.

Zora Neale Hurston

Their Eyes were Watching God

Dorothy Parker

Poems

Sigurd Undset,

but instead of Kristen Lavransdottir, find the modern novels, Madame Dortha and Ida Elizabeth 1928

Sarah Orne Jewett,

Country of the Pointed Firs

Mildred Walker,

Winter Wheat

Dorothy Johnson,

The Hanging Tree (she also wrote A Man Called Horse and The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance). All three books made into successful, well-received movies.

Jean Rhys

The Wide Sargasso Sea, Voyage in the Dark, After Leaving Mr. MacKenzie—

Laurie Colwin,

Shine On, Bright and Dangerous Object (as well as her more famous Family Happiness and Happy All the Time)

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Moraga residents Spencer and Laine bring in clothes and toys

Goodwill and Donations Thrive in Moraga's Goodwill Center

By Virginia Fox, Guest Writer

“Look at these flip flops,” says Kimberly Scrafano, accepting a donation from a customer and excitedly looking into a large plastic bag filled with decorative sandals. As the Senior Director of Community and Fund Development, Scrafano says donations have been pouring into the Goodwill Donation Center in Moraga in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center since it opened to replace a trailer in the parking lot.

“We typically get 550 donations a week in Moraga which is approximately 50,000 pounds,” says Scrafano. Donors from all over Lamorinda drop off furniture, toys, clothing, antiques and oil paintings. The center also receives collectibles and musical instruments.

“Someone donated a pair of antique dolls which we sold for \$ 1,200, and we just got a guitar,” she says smiling at the steady stream of customers. According to Scrafano, ninety three cents of every dollar raised from the resale of donations supports job training, placement and support programs.

The Moraga location, a part of Goodwill In-

dustries of the East Bay non-profit franchise, is the first Goodwill center with features specially designed to improve customer service. The extra wide service counter provides an easy place for dropping donations and the center is staffed and open seven days a

week, 9:00 AM – 8:00 PM. Donations are separated in Moraga, sent to a sorting and processing plant in Antioch, then transported to one of twenty five Goodwill stores in the East Bay ensuring that a wide range of goods is available in each retail location.

Most of the donations received in the Moraga location are usable. With the launch two years ago of Goodwill’s aggressive Recycling and Resource Recovery program, even unusable items often find an environmentally friendly end use.

Partnering with Alameda County Waste Management Authority and Stopwaste.org., G.I.E.B. recycles electronics, glass, plastic and other waste materials. Non-saleable clothing and other textiles are turned over to the salvage market. “We always look for ways to avoid adding to landfill,” Scrafano says.

Lamorinda customers agree the central location is an easy drop off point. Hauling in five large plastic sacks and a box of assorted items, Moraga resident Mark Fenske says: “I donate all the time. We have three kids who go through lots of clothes and toys. This is a real convenience.”

Frances Sheehan of Lafayette drops off a pile of clothes on hangars and says, “I’ve cleaned out my closets and my house. This is great.”

And for young Moraga residents like Spencer, 6, and his sister, Laine, 4, the donation center is a great place to practice the gift of giving. Handing over an electronic dog and pair of leopard shoes, plus bags of clothes and toys, Spencer shyly explains: “We want to let someone else have these.”



Kimberly Scrafano accepts donation from Lafayette resident, Frances Sheehan, as staff member, Debbie Greenwald, looks on.



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Ribbon Cutting at the “Stratford at Countrywood Senior Living” By Sophie Braccini



Contra Costa County Supervisor Gayle Uilkema, Lafayette Mayor Carol Federighi, representatives of three Chambers of Commerce cut the ribbon

As Baby Boomers approach the end of their professional lives, they begin looking for places to retire, not only for their aging parents, but also for themselves. In Lafayette

is a new facility available that would like to serve that purpose. On Thursday, June 28th the Stratford at Countrywood Senior Living complex held its ribbon cutting ceremony marking the official opening of this retirement community, followed two days later by first public open house.

A long line of seniors and a few mid forty’s folks lined up to tour the premises that Saturday afternoon. The new building has 103 apartments set on 3 floors. Units range from 321 sqf studios to 763 sqf two bedroom apartments. Each unit features a kitchenette with a marble counter/bar area, a small fridge and a microwave oven. The apartments are not designed for extensive cooking, but one can certainly prepare basic food items. Bathrooms are large, with wheelchair accessible showers. Seniors move in with their own furniture and can repaint the walls to their liking.

The third floor offers dramatic views of Mount Diablo and features most of the facilities recreation and common activity areas: dining room, large and comfortable movie theater, fitness room, mini spa, training room, library, and computer room. There’s even a country kitchen where residents can cook their favorite gourmet meals for friends and family. The resident chef and his team are very familiar with assisted living meal planning and offer a variety of main and side dishes to accommodate specific diets and tastes. The facility also includes an area for patients with memory challenges; otherwise, it’s designed to accommodate independent and assisted-living seniors as defined by the State of California.

The facility is located at 1545 Pleasant Hill Road, about 3 miles from the center of Lafayette. Monthly rents range from \$3450 to \$9300 and include meals, laundry, cleaning, recreational activities and most utilities. So far, about 30% of the apartments have been reserved according to facility management. The Stratford team encourages the community to come by and visit their beautiful new residence.

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Lamorinda Home Sales continued



LAFAYETTE	Last reported:	21
LOWEST AMOUNT:		\$542,500
HIGHEST AMOUNT:		\$2,400,000
MORAGA	Last reported:	9
LOWEST AMOUNT:		\$385,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:		\$1,710,000
ORINDA	Last reported:	17
LOWEST AMOUNT:		\$630,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:		\$2,565,000

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 CalREsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

135 Bacon Court, \$940,000, 3 Bdrms, 1723 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 6-12-07
 1129 Brown Avenue, \$1,825,000, 3 Bdrms, 3339 SqFt, 1995 YrBlt, 6-7-07
 6 Chapel Drive, \$1,145,000, 3 Bdrms, 1843 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 6-6-07
 3290 Fairholm Court, \$2,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 2001 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 6-14-07
 574 Francis Drive, \$829,000, 3 Bdrms, 2000 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 660 Glenside Drive, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 1736 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 6-7-07
 3644 Happy Valley Road #A, \$2,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 3405 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 6-13-07
 3705 Highland Court, \$1,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 2149 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 6-20-07
 917 Hough Avenue #5, \$542,500, 2 Bdrms, 1038 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 6-20-07
 1581 Huston Road, \$605,000, 2 Bdrms, 988 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 3729 Meadow Lane, \$2,356,000, 5 Bdrms, 3094 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 548 Merriewood Drive, \$1,192,500, 4 Bdrms, 2062 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 6-13-07
 3458 Monroe Avenue, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 2027 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 6-6-07
 691 Old Jonas Hill Road, \$2,075,000, 4 Bdrms, 2082 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 6-20-07
 3211 Palomares Avenue, \$1,075,000, 5 Bdrms, 2260 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 6-6-07
 1530 Reliez Valley Road, \$947,000, 5 Bdrms, 1946 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 6-20-07
 1742 Reliez Valley Road, \$899,000, 3 Bdrms, 1858 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 6-20-07
 32 Sanford Lane, \$2,525,000, 6-8-07
 3544 South Silver Springs Road, \$1,405,000, 3 Bdrms, 1662 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 3413 Stage Coach Drive, \$1,975,000, 4 Bdrms, 3322 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 35 Sunrise Lane, \$875,000, 4 Bdrms, 2083 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 6-15-07

MORAGA

728 Augusta Drive, \$775,000, 2 Bdrms, 2079 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 6-19-07
 737 Augusta Drive, \$1,341,000, 3 Bdrms, 2531 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 6-20-07
 238 Corliss Drive, \$1,225,000, 5 Bdrms, 2784 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 6-20-07
 128 Donald Drive, \$1,041,000, 3 Bdrms, 1752 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 6-19-07
 450 Rheem Boulevard, \$470,000, 2 Bdrms, 1170 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 6-8-07
 40 Sarah Lane, \$1,128,000, 4 Bdrms, 2208 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 2167 Sky View Court, \$1,710,000, 3 Bdrms, 3105 SqFt, 1997 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 1932 St. Andrews Drive, \$750,000, 2 Bdrms, 1552 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 800 Villa Lane #4, \$385,000, 2 Bdrms, 882 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 6-19-07

ORINDA

57 Bates Boulevard, \$969,000, 3 Bdrms, 1680 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 6-19-07
 108 Bear Ridge Trail, \$964,000, 6-15-07
 177 Camino Pablo, \$795,000, 2 Bdrms, 1176 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 6-6-07
 33 Crescent Drive, \$630,000, 6-15-07
 367 Dalewood Drive, \$2,565,000, 4 Bdrms, 2832 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 6-7-07
 14 Francisco Court, \$1,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 2232 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 6-12-07
 37 La Campana Road, \$910,000, 3 Bdrms, 2196 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 6-8-07
 41 La Cresta Road, \$905,000, 3 Bdrms, 1823 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 6-14-07
 158 La Espiral, \$879,000, 2 Bdrms, 1300 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 6-13-07
 11 Las Mesas Path, \$880,000, 6-15-07
 10 Lloyd Lane, \$762,000, 3 Bdrms, 1451 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 6-8-07
 99 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,600,000, 3 Bdrms, 2232 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 6-6-07
 3 South Trail, \$730,000, 3 Bdrms, 825 SqFt, 1925 YrBlt, 6-7-07
 55 Southwood Drive, \$1,225,000, 4 Bdrms, 1519 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 6-15-07
 461 Tahos Road, \$1,741,500, 3 Bdrms, 3270 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 6-8-07
 246 the Knoll, \$725,000, 1 Bdrms, 1532 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 6-7-07
 13 Washington Lane, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2011 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 6-14-07



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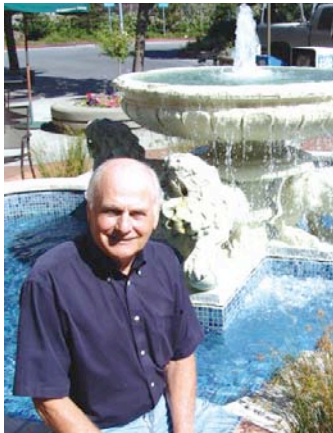
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at Orinda Theatre Square

Real Estate Notes

By John Fazel

Prudential California Real Estate

The local real estate market continues to present itself as one that is in transition being neither a buyer's market nor a seller's market. Homes that are well maintained, cleared of clutter, updated, staged and priced competitively are selling well and at close to listing price. On the other hand, homes that have a lot of deferred maintenance, in need of paint, clean up (inside and out) and that are priced too high will languish on the market and may appeal only to the bargain hunter (who will bring in a below market offer), or contractor. The contractor will also want to pay as little as possible as his objective is to do some improvements and put it back on the market at a

higher price.

Buying older, unimproved homes has stimulated the real estate market in Lamorinda in recent years and has had a very positive impact on home values. As the quality of our housing stock improves so do prices, which makes it more financially feasible for residents to improve their own homes.

In a previous article we looked at the current market in Lamorinda. We will begin adding micro markets to see how we are fairing relative to other markets similar to ours. Today we will look at Piedmont to see how we compare.

Lamorinda sales figures vs Piedmont sales figures. Detached homes only.
January 1 – June 30, 2007 compared to January 1 – June 30, 2006

	Lamorinda	% +/-	Piedmont	% +/-
Total # sales	303	+ 8%	65	+14%
2/3 bedrooms	128	+23%	37	+37%
4+ bedrooms	175	+ 0%	28	- 7%
Sales prices all homes	\$1,249,000	-8%	\$1,587,000	-15%
2/3bedrooms	\$1,004,000	-1%	\$1,265,000	- 1%
4+bedrooms	\$1,430,000	-8.7%	\$2,012,000	-16.4%

As you can see, the strength of our markets are with the smaller 2/3 bedroom homes, while the larger 4+ bedrooms homes are selling at a slower pace and for less. I see this trend continuing through the end of the year.

Reach John Fazel at
925-324-2017,
Runmntns@prodigy.net.



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Popular JM Principal Steps Down

By Lee Borrowman

The Joaquin Moraga Middle School community was shaken and saddened to hear late last month that Principal Catherine Mikes will be leaving the Moraga School District due to health reasons. Mikes was diagnosed with cancer in mid-June, and has decided to focus on her family and health over the next several months as she undergoes various treatments. The District is beginning its search for Mikes' replacement, but those who worked with her believe she will be a tough act to follow.

Mikes has been highly regarded as a dedicated and "hands-on" principal. JM Vice Principal Brad Cam said of her, "She worked tirelessly throughout the year to implement the district's strategic plan and to make JM a more student-centered environment."

She was proud of the school and its students, and liked to attend and participate in classes. On any given day, visitors to JM might have encountered Mikes speaking with delight about the first edition of the newspaper created by Journalism students, or covered in red clay after joining the Ceramics class.

The walls of Mikes' office were plastered with "to-do" lists; goals were checked off as they were attained. Although she had only just completed the first year of her appointment, Mikes already had many accomplishments under her belt. The school now has its first full-time counselor, Heidi Felt, who has worked closely with Mikes to institute a zero-tolerance policy regarding bullying. She coordinated improvements to the after school support program for at-risk students and oversaw the creation and implementation of a Writing Development Plan. She also worked on assessment strategies for math placement of incoming 6th graders, and as a result a cohort of incoming 6th graders in the 06-07 school year was identified and this group, when they become 8th graders, will comprise the first ever full Geometry class at JM. Mikes spearheaded the effort that resulted in JM being named a California Distinguished School this spring.

Mikes worked closely with teachers and with the support of the JM PTA also revamped the elective program at the school, increasing the availability of elective classes and offering some new and exciting choices such as a 6th grade Exploratory Wheel, in which students cycle through a variety of different courses during the year, and a video production/live broadcasting elective for 7th and 8th graders.

PTA President Erin Bydalek said, "I really enjoyed working with Catherine. She gave us a lot of access, and we worked in partnership with her to raise needed money for the site. She was able to initiate a lot of positive changes at JM, and was very supportive of PTA programs as well."

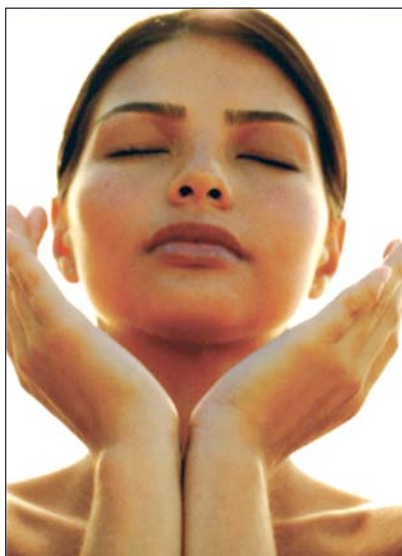
In a written statement to parents, Moraga School District Superintendent Richard Shafer said, "We are grateful for Ms. Mikes' many contributions during this past year. We wish her the very best in her recovery and in all her future endeavors. Our immediate priority will be to hire her replacement as soon as the best-qualified candidate can be selected - this process hasn't been worked out, but it is on a critical path. Parents, teachers, and



Brad Cam and Catherine Mikes
other stakeholders will be involved."

Photo by Dana Ludwig

Cam assures parents, "The administration and staff are determined to work diligently to ensure a smooth opening of school and implement the positive changes that Catherine initiated." Shafer will be working with Cam and other administrators over the summer. "I expect minimal disruption when students and staff begin to return in August," said Shafer.



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Our First Sleep-Away Camp

By Sophie Braccini

Would you send your eight year old child to an overnight co-ed camp? When I looked for a fun overnight camp for my girls in the vicinity I found the co-ed, all sports over-night camp at Saint Mary's College. Close enough to feel safe, yet still an overnight camp to give them the thrill of being on their own and to us, the parents, a little time to ourselves.

The girls shared a room complete with a microwave, a fridge and shared bathroom.

It would be an understatement to say they were a little bit excited as they put their clothes away, set up their sleeping bags and prepared to send us on our way. We lingered as long as we could to be sure everything was in order but we were running out of time. One last "put all your sports equipment in this drawer, are you sure you have everything you need and how does the bathroom shower work?" "Yes, Mom, yes, Dad, now it's time for you to go." How could they be so ready to see us go?

The girls didn't take their cell phones with them. We regretted it almost immediately when we realized they might not call us for a



Happy Campers!

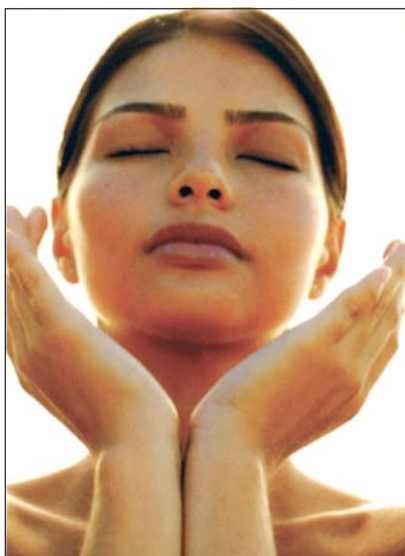
week! Luckily, they found a way, and called us 3 times during their stay.

At the end of the session, parents were invited to share a barbecue and attend their last game. The final ceremony was the opportunity for us to meet Randy Farris, the Camp Manager, who has run the camp for 30 years. We got to meet our girls' favorite counselors, Randy and Allie, two Saint Mary's students who coached and supervised them through their days at camp.

The all-sports camp is a very intensive camp. From 7:30 AM to 8 PM the day is packed with games and activities. The girls practiced tennis, swimming, handball, soccer, dodge ball and hockey. Campers range from 8 to 14 years

old and they're separated by age for activities. Counselor Allie says, "It can get a little rowdy but those are good kids, we never have serious problems." Free time comes after 8PM and that's when new friendships are formed. The campers come from all over the East Bay and beyond; one of my daughters made friends with a girl from Seattle.

After the final goodbyes were said and the bags were safely stored in the car, the stories started gushing. The final word went to the girls: to the question would you do it again, we got an enthusiastic "Yes!" I went online and registered them for another overnight camp, this time a soccer and a volleyball camp. They'll be ready for college by the time summer is over.



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Paul Caccamo's Postcard

On Wednesday, June 27, Moraga music teacher Paul Caccamo checked in from the Pacific Crest Trail at mile 906, having completed 1/3 of his journey.

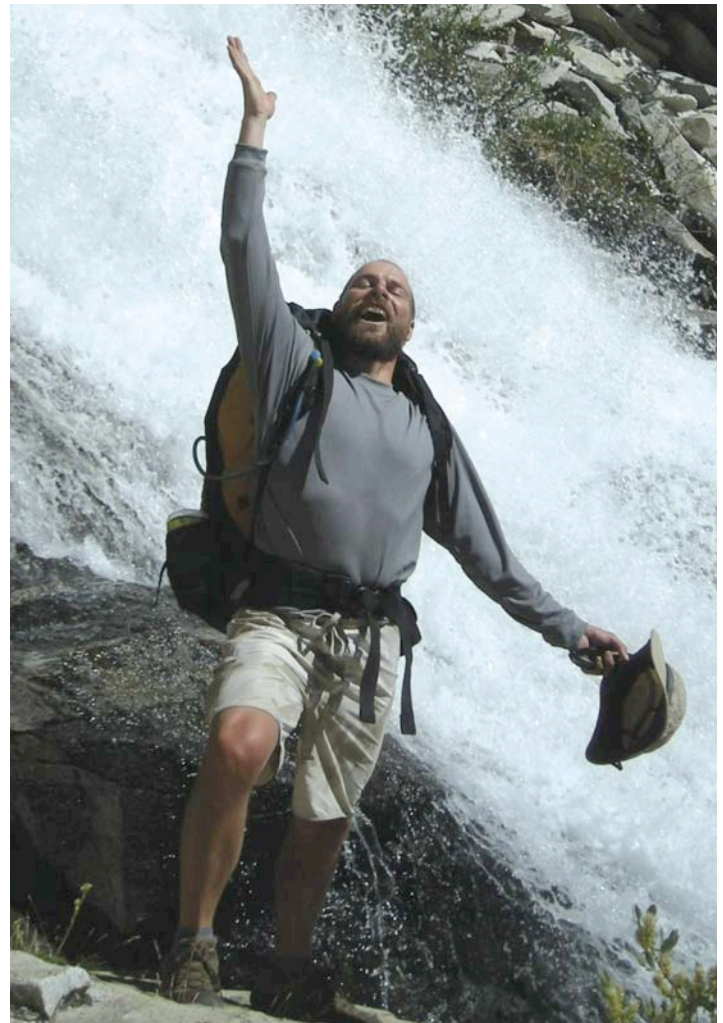
There are not enough superlatives to describe the scenery we have experienced as we crossed through Kings Canyon National Park, we are so fortunate to have this national treasure right here in our backyard. Most of the places we have traveled through are accessible by a two- or three- day hike from the end of a road; you can see for yourselves and will not have to rely on my inadequate descriptions! If you don't want to walk you can go by horseback.

All this great scenery does not come without cost. This section requires the hapless hiker to summit a pass of at least 12,000 feet once a day. This entails climbing 4,000 feet and then dropping 4,000 feet, then waking up to do it again the next day. Because it is a low snow year, the passes were easier than most years, but still dangerous at times.

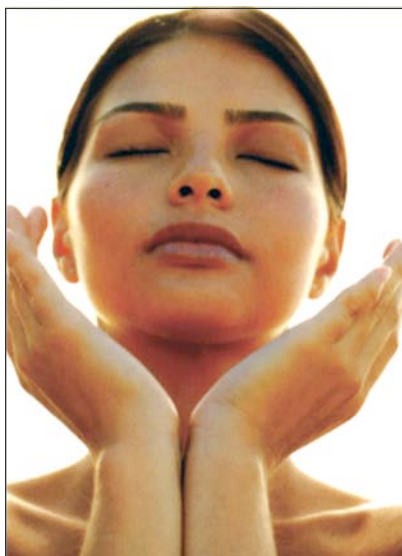
In the interest of full disclosure I must tell you that we have underestimated the physical demands of this journey as well as their effects on the body. The day before we reached Mammoth was the first I seriously contemplated leaving the trail, as my feet were killing me and my energy was non-existent no matter what I ate. I am taking an extra day off, to recharge my body and mind for the next leg. The trail becomes much easier from here on out, so we'll be fine. If I ever felt like I wasn't enjoying myself anymore I would definitely leave the trail but the rewards still far outweigh the minor discomfort I'm experiencing.

Because of the extra day, I will no longer be hiking with some wonderful friends I have made out here.....Fester, Grimace, Rocham, and Germinator. Still, I expect to meet others and my good buddy Figaro, with whom I left the Mexican border, is still with me.

Best wishes to you all, more to come in a couple hundred miles...
Paul C.



Paul Caccamo at Kings Canyon National Park



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Tieni Duro's Chris Reardon, Trevor Larsen, Anthony Reardon, Nick Jerabeck, Jason Kent and Eric Spencer



Tieni Duro



Matt McNelley



Paige Youngman



Lamorinda Cycling Club

Look for these and other Synergy racers this weekend:

- Ted Brooks, Elite 3
- Andres Caicido, Elite 4
- Mac Carey, 35+ 4/5
- Jason Hodder, Elite 4
- Christopher Kolm, 35+, 45+ 4/5
- Dave Levine, Elite 3
- Matt McNelly, Elite 5
- Bob Miller, 45+
- Steven Olechny, 45+
- Craig Stewart, 35+ 4/5 and Elite 4
- Tim Sutliff, Elite 5
- Paige Youngman, 55+

Ted Brooks says racers are inspired by a cheering crowd: "Just shout, 'Go, Synergy!' We'll hear you, even if we don't have time to smile and wave!"

A Visit with Some of the Racers

By Lee Borrowman

They're the "home team" at the Lafayette Criterium this weekend. Racing under the name of their main sponsor, the Synergy Racing Team is part of the Lamorinda Cycling Club. The President of the Lamorinda Cycling Club and Synergy Racing is Ted Brooks, a current State Criterium Champion.

"To be competitive in amateur racing today takes the same discipline required of pro racers," explains Brooks, who has a coach, a diet and supplement regimen that one of his teammates calls "insane," spends 15-20 hours per week in the saddle (200-300 miles) and is a self-described obsessive/compulsive competitor. Race training is a science, and Brooks' training routine is fine-tuned so that he will be at peak performance levels for certain key races. Brooks is soft-spoken but exudes both great strength and focused calm, and is highly regarded by his teammates.

New to racing is Moraga's Christopher Kolm. A father of four, Kolm recently moved back to Lamorinda after spending some time in Colorado. A former runner and pole-vaulter ("I got into cycling because there were no pole-vaulting clubs"), Kolm says when he first returned to the area he would stand at the corner of Rheem Blvd and Moraga Rd with his bike looking for other cyclists with whom he could ride. For serious cyclists with families, setting priorities and having the support of family is extremely important. Kolm, a quiet and thoughtful man, says that cycling is a very family-friendly sport. His wife, Christine, is a recreational cyclist who is training for her first Century ride this summer. Kolm has agreed to join the staff of the Lamorinda Weekly as an occasional cycling columnist (we are looking forward to that first column!)

A former pro tennis player, Lafayette resident Bob Miller says that for him, "Cycling is not a hobby; it's a way of life." The desire to be in top racing condition "forces you to live a certain way, and have certain habits." Miller is what some would call a fitness fanatic, living a healthy lifestyle that includes being drug, smoke and alcohol free. A single dad, Miller sometimes finds childcare during races to be problematic, and he has passed up racing opportunities to care for his six year old son. A barely-contained bolt of energy, Miller is an enthusiastic supporter of cycling at all levels, and encourages people to get out there and give it a try.

Matt McNelley and Debbie Levine prefer mountain biking to road racing. The first reason they give is "there are no cars," but both will race on the road. Levine, another former runner with a delightful sense of humor ("Cyclists are different," she says, "after all, how often do you overhear a group of grown men talk for hours about their weight?") Jockeys,



Bob Miller, Ted Brooks, Debbie Levine, Christopher Kolm

Photo by Lee Borrowman

perhaps...), says her garage cum bicycle workshop is "the best furnished room in the house." Levine and husband Dave are top Synergy racers. McNelley, an air-traffic controller by day, finds cycling to be a great stress reliever. "I get out there in the dirt, speeding down a trail, and it all just goes away."

There are other teams with local racers who will participate in this weekend's events, among them event sponsor Contra Costa Cycling Club's Pegasus Racing Team, and the Morgan Stanley Cycling Team.

Another familiar face will be that of Orinda resident and Campolindo graduate Michael Foley, a Category 2 racer and author of the book "Bicycling Beyond City Limits," which details his experience crossing the USA by bicycle with five friends.



Trevor Larsen, Anthony Reardon, Chris Reardon

Photo by Lee Borrowman

Who Are These Boys and Why Are They Wearing Spandex?

Meet Tieni Duro!

By Lee Borrowman

Not all of the cyclists who whiz past you on the streets of Lamorinda wearing brightly-colored spandex, helmets and reflecting sunglasses are of the adult variety. Some of them are kids from our own neighborhoods. Lamorinda is home to a junior cycling team that focuses on developing young cyclists into capable, safe and competitive racers.

Most of the 28 or so members of Tieni Duro live in Lamorinda. A few, including the team's only female cyclist, come from nearby communities. You may see them riding through our towns nearly every day of the week. They range in age from 11 to 18, and many of them are highly competitive in the world of Junior cycling at both the State and National levels.

Coach Jason Kent says, "I've been working with Tieni Duro for almost 5 years now. I think it's a great organization that teaches kids discipline and focus, both of which are basically required to succeed in the sport, as well as in school and life, and promotes a healthy lifestyle." Members of Tieni Duro are encouraged to maintain an acceptable GPA at school despite a training and competition regimen that has them out on the road riding or racing six days a week. The Junior racing season starts early in the year and is essentially over by the time school lets out, although the National competition is held in late June/early July.

"It's easier during the summer," says 16 year old Chris Reardon, a junior at Campolindo. "You can go out riding early in the day or later in the evening, and still have time to do other things." For Chris, other things are not far removed as he is an avid mountain-biker as well, but he says he also has time "to go to movies and concerts, and chill with friends." His brother Anthony, one of the youngest members of the team, entering 8th grade at Joaquin Moraga this fall, agrees. "I'm also into photography," he says, "so sometimes when I'm not on my bike I'll get my camera and take pictures of my brother training on his mountain bike." Anthony has also recently taken up golf. Both Reardons agree that cyclists are usually people who like to spend time outdoors, and their hobbies and activities reflect that preference.

Most of these young cyclists were drawn to the sport by parents and friends who ride. Tieni Duro mentor Lance Larsen's son Trevor is on the team. Trevor, a sophomore at Campo, is excited about catching a stage or two of the Tour de France as he and his dad cycle through the Pyrenees this month. "I'm mostly looking forward to riding the big mountain passes," smiles Trevor.

So how do you become a racer? Chris Reardon explains, "In addition to building strength, stamina and bike handling skills, you

have to learn how to ride in a group, and develop an awareness of what's going on around you. You need to learn how to stay balanced, hold a line, and communicate with your teammates. There's more strategy involved in racing than most people realize." You learn about proper nutrition, and you must have great coaches: "We have amazing coaches. They are very knowledgeable and you can ask them anything," said Reardon.

All three boys admit that it is unlikely they will ever race professionally. "That's a hard place to get," says Reardon, but they would like to make Tieni Duro's Elite team and continue to race in college. It's all about the race, whether it's bikes or cars or motorcycles, "Racing's just really cool," concludes Reardon.

It's not for everyone, but Lance Larsen says the team is always looking for talented cyclists, and would especially like to see more girls involved in the sport. For more information go to <http://www.tieniduro.org/>.

Waist Management –

The End of Diets

By Theresa Tsingis, D.C., M.S.

There are hundreds of diets to go on, but only two ways to truly lose weight – a healthy way or the unhealthy way. How can one get beyond dieting to the resolution of a weight issue? One of the keys is to pay attention to body composition instead of the bathroom scale. Body composition is the standard for gauging your quality of weight loss, because losing fat and preserving lean muscle is actually the critical health issue. Many people diet and wind up losing lean muscle, which benefits only the diet industry's annual revenues of 33 billion dollars. Muscle loss negatively affects your health and metabolism. Conversely, the preservation of fat (especially around the abdominal area) can foster the production of inflammatory chemicals which have been linked to diabetes, heart disease and arthritis.

Muscle acts as a reservoir for the immune system, providing amino acids for the production of infection and tumor-fighting cells during times of physical stress, trauma and infection. It is vitally important to your health to target the loss of abdominal fat and avoid muscle loss, especially in the 30+ age group.

Many people slowly lose muscle and gain fat over the years. They make one of the most common mistakes, that of not eating often enough throughout the day and then overeating in the evening. This triggers the body during the day to use its amino acids (from muscle) in order to raise brain blood sugar levels to normal. Then, large meals at the end of a busy day cause the excess caloric intake to be converted into fat.

Fad diets and foods, books, and commercial weight loss programs work in the short-term, if at all. What is the healthiest approach to weight loss? The best starting point is to know your individual body composition. Bio-electrical impedance analysis (BIA) is a state-of-the-art body composition test, and it is an optimal guideline for embarking on a health program. From that test many things can be determined, including one's individual protein needs, basal metabolic rate (how many calories you burn at rest), and the proportions of fat, muscle and water in the body.

Exercising and eating foods in the right proportions and at the correct intervals for your unique metabolic needs is what works on a lifetime basis. An experienced nutritionist can provide you with insight into your medical history combined with your health goals, and can help you find ways to eat better throughout your busy day.

Dr. Tsingis is the owner of Lamorinda Nutrition, at 89 Davis Rd., Orinda. Tel 254-1080.

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The Key to Dieting Success: Learn How to Cheat

By Jennifer Wake

In the past century, quick access to meals of many varieties has become the norm, and food temptations have become embedded into our culture. The bombardment of messages about food hits potential dieters from all directions – television, radio, billboards, bus stops – making the idea of waging war against the scale seem daunting.

While many dieters have found success by counting carbs, limiting fat, or joining a gym, these same dieters often see the pounds return – often bringing some friends – when their diet plan stops. If you really want long-term diet success, says Orinda resident and psychiatrist Dr. Harvey Widroe, you first need to learn how to cheat.

For more than 40 years, as Dr. Widroe has treated his patients for their various psychological issues, the topic of weight would often arise. “I saw my patients diet for a while and be successful and then they’d start to cheat. The cheating brought on negative feelings,” he said. “If we accept that cheating is part of normal life and not a character defect, we can stop burning up so much emotional energy criticizing ourselves.”

With the desire to help his patients and other discouraged dieters, Widroe wrote “The Smart Dieter’s Cheating Guide,” (Outskirts Press, 2007), which offers a way for dieters to cheat as part of a life plan, offering unique tips to help them lose weight.

The main principle Widroe underscores in his book is that calories are the same whether you choose to eat a doughnut or a large salad with blue cheese dressing. “There are no good or bad calories,” he says. “It’s simply a measurement of energy. In real life you can’t always be thinking about calories. If you want to lose weight, you just need to reduce the total calorie intake. We have stresses – husbands, wives, family – and we can’t always keep track.”

The Cheating Guide allows dieters the flexibility to choose foods that they love and to incorporate them into their eating plan. Strict calorie counting is out. Rounding up calories to the nearest hundred and lumping foods into low, medium, or high calorie content is in. By categorizing foods this way, dieters – whether at the grocery or out to dinner – develop a better understanding of which foods have the largest impact on their waistline. This allows them to more easily substitute lower calorie foods for higher ones.

“Effective cheating,” writes Widroe, “means eating in such a way that we reduce our overall daily calorie consumption. To pull it off successfully, we have to do some planning.”

First, plans should not be too drastic. “They must have the look of our normal eating behavior,” he said. “Substituting calorie-loaded food items from our cheating list, a few major eating behavior changes, and a cheating sequence taken together will help us eat a good deal less.”

One dieter highlighted in Widroe’s book was determined to cheat. Drawn to a local Burger King, he could envision the burger, fries and shake with startling clarity.

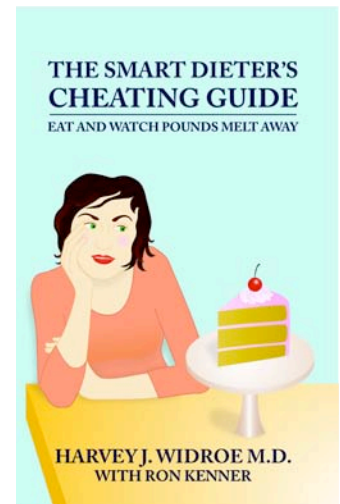
Instead of taking the normal course of action – the drive thru – he made a “major eating behavior change” and parked in the lot. The change shifted the automatic response and the dieter was able to stop and think. Understanding the substitution rule, he opted for a medium sized Snicker bar at the corner drug store instead of the burger meal, saving more than 1,000 calories.

“He still cheated,” explained Widroe, “but the negative feelings about cheating were gone. Everyone cheats. The trick is finding ways to be a better cheater.”

As weight begins to come off, Dr. Widroe reminds dieters it does not happen in a linear fashion. “The course of our weight loss will look just like a staircase, not a slide,” he explained. “As fat cells lose fat, they absorb water. At a certain state of cellular water retention, our hypothalamus signals the pituitary gland to stop producing antidiuretic hormone. With the absence of the hormone, dieters get rid of lots of water – and excess weight.”

Other tips include daily weigh-ins on a digital scale, and setting small 7 lb. achievable goals.

The key? “There’s always a response to the stopping point of a diet, but there doesn’t have to be a stop to this,” Widroe said. “If you can memorize ten different ideas that you can use in real life, you never have to stop and you will lose weight.”



Harvey J Widroe

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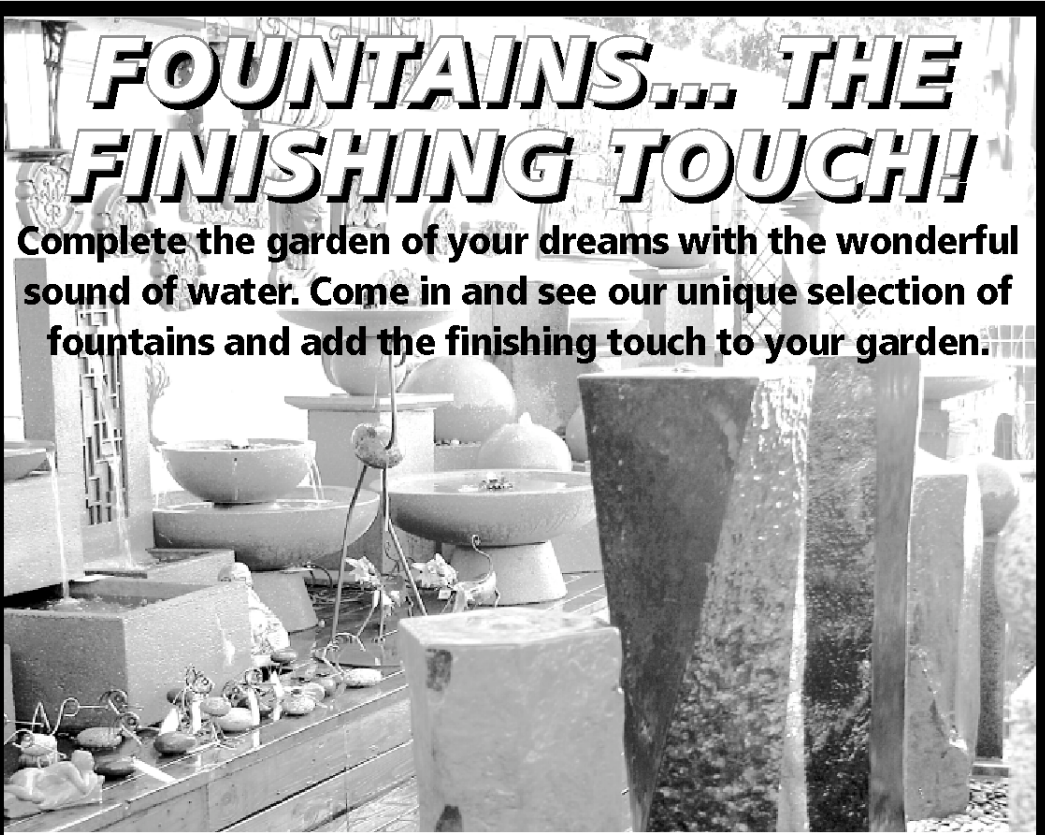
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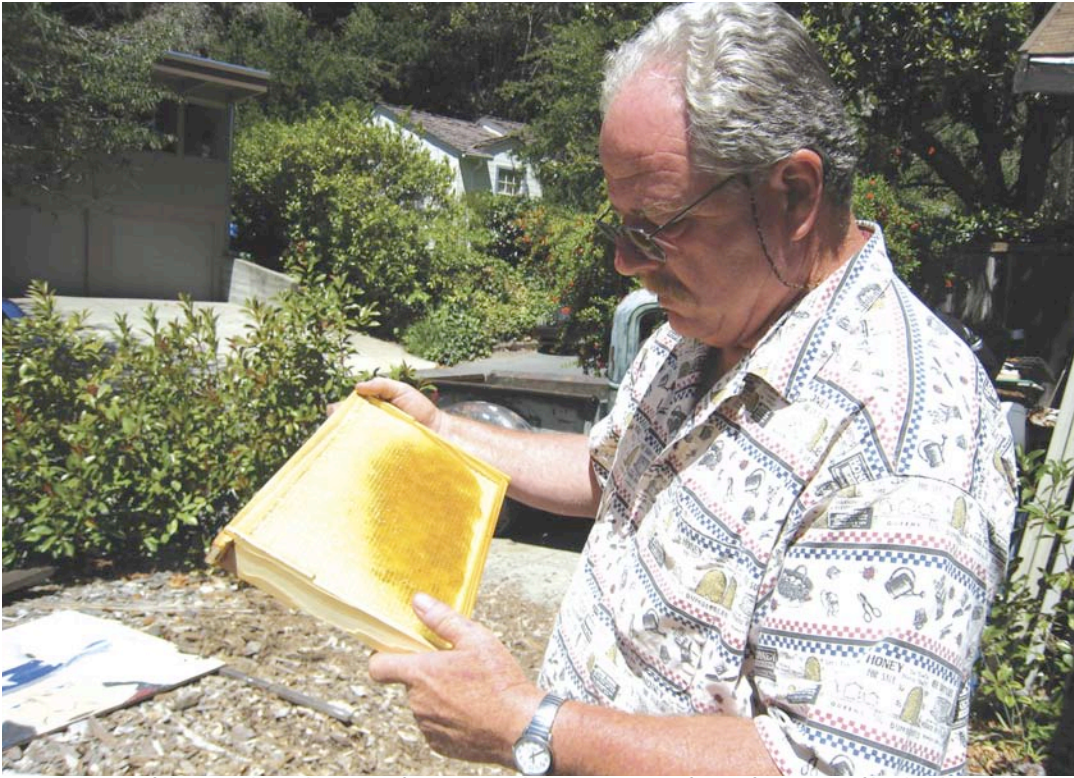
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Steve Gentry of the Orinda and Moraga farmer's markets examines a frame from one of his backyard hives

Local Bee-Keepers Finish Bountiful Harvest

By Chris Lavin

Using a special wide-bladed knife, Steve Gentry slowly pried open the lid of one of the small beehives he keeps in his back yard in Orinda. Thousands of bees buzzed around his deck and head, and one settled on the back of his hand. He distracted them with another dose of smoke from his hand-held bellows, and they immediately started to eat as much honey as they could hold.

"They think it's a forest fire," he said. "They want to store up as much energy as possible."

He lifted one of the five frames out of the box and began to examine it for healthy patterns of egg-laying by the queen.

"This one looks good," he said, as the bees ate away on the frame he held in his hand. "You can see the eggs, the larva, the cells that have already been capped – you don't really need to see the queen. You can tell she's doing well by looking at all these eggs."

Dozens of bee-keepers throughout the Lamorinda area have reached the same conclusion in the past month, as they have harvested a much more bountiful crop than usual.

"It's been a really good year," said Patty Patton, assistant bee keeper to her husband Bill Thompson's hives in Canyon. "We got at least seven gallons" from their handful of hives.

Gentry has been a regular sight at the Orinda Farmer's Market for the past 10 years, and more recently has begun to

set up his honey table and demonstration bee hive at the Moraga Farmer's Market. He harvests between 3,000 and 4,000 pounds of honey a year from his various sites throughout the Lamorinda area, including his own back yard.

And according to Gentry, it's a growing hobby here. He has watched the membership in the Mt. Diablo Beekeepers Association grow from about 30 a decade ago to more than 130 paying members today. All are just now coming off their busy season of harvesting the honey produced from the spring's plethora of blooms, when bees are their busiest.

Sporting a Hawaiian-like shirt with a bee and "honey for sale" motif – Gentry found a tablecloth with the pattern and had five shirts made out of it – Gentry does little except talk bees, think of bees, work with bees, and help other people and educational institutions set up demonstration hives so that they, too, can keep bees and learn about bees.

"This is not a job, it's a passion," he says, which to anyone who talks to him for five minutes knows, is an unnecessary statement.

On a recent visit to the UC Botanical Gardens, where he was helping to scout out a good spot to put a demonstration hive, Gentry bent down and watched a honey bee plunder a lavender flower. He pointed out the heavy beads of purple pollen on the bee's knees.

"In the hive when the bees deposit their pollen, you can tell where they have

been," Gentry said. "You get layers of colors. With lavender you can smear some right across your hand and get a purple streak." Later, at his house, he used his pocket knife to cut the wall from a tiny cell in the honeycomb. Inside, layers less than 1/16 of an inch revealed purple, white, brown and rust-colored pollens.

One big advantage of consuming local honey, Gentry and other beekeepers say, is that it can help prevent allergies. "It's like getting inoculated," Gentry said. The bees feed on local flowers, and the enzymes created in the honey-making process create a sort of vaccine, he said. If local honey is not available, honey from a similar ecosystem works too, he said.

One disadvantage is getting stung,

on occasion. "Thousands," Gentry answers when asked how many times he's been stung. "Hundreds of thousands, probably." Now he just looks at his watch and waits for 45 seconds to pass – "that's when the pain peaks," he says.

A phenomenon many people ask both Thompson and Gentry about is Colony Collapse Disorder, in which whole colonies of bees simply disappear with no sign of trouble, or even of dead bees.

"It's happening everywhere but with local bee keepers," Gentry said. "It's only the commercial hives. We're doing great."

Thompson agreed.

"We've had one of the best seasons ever," he said.

The Mt. Diablo Beekeepers Association meets the second Thursday of each month. The next meeting is July 12, and members are happy to help novices start out. For more information, call Gentry at 925-254-8063.

Where to Find Local Honey

Besides local farmer's markets, local honey is available for purchase at the following locations:

- Diablo Foods in Lafayette
- Open Sesame in Lafayette
- Whole Foods in Walnut Creek
- Whole Foods in San Ramon
- Casa Orinda serves home-collected honey on all of its fried chicken and biscuit orders



A closeup of one of Gentry's hives

Photos by Chris Lavin


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Moraga Movers Kick it Up a Notch

By Lee Borrowman

For those of us who are caught up in the whirlwind of work and family, the prospect of retirement, however long away it may be, shines like a beacon at the end of a tunnel. We imagine sleeping in every day, peaceful afternoons on the porch swing, having nowhere to go and all day to get there. But when the time comes, most of us find ourselves just as busy as we ever were, if not more so. Take for example the Moraga Movers.

The group formerly known as the Hacienda Seniors has adopted a new name and a new outlook, and is determined to position itself within the community as an advocate for seniors on many levels. President George Fisher says, "There are about 3400 people that are 55 or older in Moraga alone. We will become a voice for them." Keeping the Hacienda de Las Flores available to seniors is a high priority of the Moraga Movers, and the group works closely with the Moraga Parks and Recreation Dept. Also under consideration is potential action on the issue of senior transportation.

But it's not all work; there's plenty of fun and games. The Moraga Movers offer a wide variety of social opportunities. Members come from all over Lamorinda and beyond to attend monthly luncheons or dinners featuring interesting speakers or entertainment, take classes through Moraga Parks and Rec at a reduced fee, play bridge, become active in a bocce or bowling league, or join together for great trips and tours. A very popular Fleet Week bay cruise is planned for October, with pick-up locations in Moraga and Lafayette. Collaborative efforts with other local senior groups are ongoing.

The Moraga Movers are hoping to attract 100 new members this year, and volunteers withstood the July 4th heat at the Commons to staff an informational table. The group feels it can make a real difference in the quality of life



George Fisher and Gay Nielsen in the trenches on the 4th of July

Photo by Lee Borrowman

for Lamorinda seniors. Publicity Chairman Dan Rego, a 15-year veteran member, explains his own effort: "I won't belong to a group if I can't be involved. It bothered me that we (the Hacienda Seniors) were not as active as we used to be. For me it's all about being around people. Many seniors need this kind of opportunity, and it's a great way to get together with people."

The Moraga Movers is open to anyone 55+. Membership dues are \$15 per couple, \$10 per single.

For more information contact Dan Rego, 377-8702.



The Board of Directors (from left): George Fisher, Gary Demut, Gay Nielsen, Dan Rego, Bob Foxall, Yolande Rowe, Dotty Baker, Norma Heath, Lois Hyden, Julie Fisher

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Lamorinda Swimmers Take Gold

Submitted by Teresa Sumiyoshi

Haley Barnes and Alex Sominsky, both recent graduates of Stanley Middle School, teamed with Heidi Homma, an Orinda Intermediate School student, to win first place in their trio at the 2007 Esynchro U.S. Age Group National Championships for Synchronized Swimming. Over 1,000 synchronized swimmers from across the nation competed in this competition which was held in Oxford, Ohio from June 23 through June 30. Qualifying to swim in the U.S. Age Group National Championships is an honor for many young competitive synchronized swimmers.

Barnes, Sominsky and Homma are members of the Walnut Creek Aquanuts and swim in the 13-15 age group. In the 13-15 team competi-

tion, the three athletes, along with Lafayette teammate Samantha Golomb, and four others took the bronze while Sominsky got silver in the duet competition.

The Aquanuts were also impressive in the 11-12 age group competitions, earning first in team, solo and trio. They came in second in the duet competition by a mere three-tenths of a point. The 11-12 team is comprised of three Lamorinda residents, Marisa Tashima of Lafayette, and Grace Moran and Tori Yee of Orinda. In addition to their team gold medal, both Marisa and Grace earned other routine awards. Marisa, a seventh grader at Stanley,



received a gold medal in trio and placed fourth in duet. Grace, in her first national competition, placed seventh in solo and second duet.

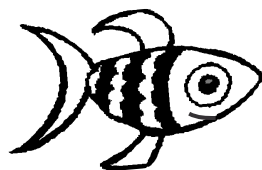
The public can watch these swimmers perform along with older and younger Aquanut swimmers in the annual swim show on August 30 through September 2 at the Clarke Memorial Swim Center at Heather Farms in Walnut Creek. The theme of this year's show will be "A Trip Down the Strip", with shows at 8 p.m. nightly.

The Aquanuts also run a summer trainee program for girls ages 6 to 11 who are interested in trying out the sport. Practices are Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Heather Farms, and swimmers get to participate in the annual swim show at the end of summer.

For more information on the swim show, the trainee program and other Aquanuts events, check out the website at www.aquanuts.org.



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Summer Youth Basketball in Full Swing

By Chris Lavin

Summer does not mean time for lazy days for more than 350 young basketball players in the Lafayette Moraga Youth Association's basketball league, because 40 teams have been fielded to play weekly at school gyms throughout the area. Their season is now well under way.

Director Judy McNeil has lived in Lafayette for 36 years, and spends much of her summer coordinating the league.

"It gives some structure to the summer for the kids," McNeil said. While swimming is a popular sport in the area, "not all kids swim," McNeil said, and basketball offers an alternative. Weekly practices and games are scheduled so they do not conflict with local swim teams, as well.

All basketball coaches are volunteer parents whose boys and girls play in the league. Organizers have no way of lowering the baskets, so the second grade league uses smaller balls, and is co-ed. Starting in the third grade and all the way up to ninth, teams are gender-specific and use age-specific balls.

Besides second graders, divisions include third and fourth, fifth and sixth, and seventh to ninth graders.

"We go for balance and parity," McNeil said. "We still have competitive games on the floor, but we try to create teams that strike a balance with player ability."

And indeed, the players work hard. All foreheads are sweaty by half-time, and water bottles are well used. Statistics are painstaking but ensure that all players get equal time on the floor, and the players work hard to make sure all players score at least a few points.

As in all youth sports, there is an occasional coach who can take things "too far," McNeil said, and focus on winning instead of fair play and equal time. Some coaches will also try to play better players consistently to raise their scores. McNeil has ways of keeping those coaches in check, however. In a list of game rules and regulations she sends out each season, McNeil includes the following Rule No. 18, "The Have Fun Rule... It is in the interest of all players, coaches and spectators to see that all players on the court are having fun and are not discouraged or embarrassed by a blow-out.

Unfortunately almost every year we must impose a slaughter rule on coaches that either don't, or don't know how, to control a game. If your team takes a significant lead over the opposing team please take control of the flow of the game. Hold back on defense and let the other team attempt clear shots; take out a dominant player—or at least tell he/she that they must have a certain number of assists before attempting a basket; or make sure that every player on your team scores a basket before any player on the floor may make two.



Coach Rob Middleton of Lafayette debriefs the Jaguars after their recent game



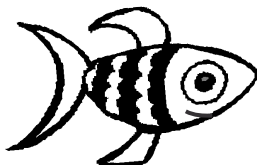
A Jaguar player in the third- to fourth-grade LMYA basketball division attempts to block Ben Fish of the Warriors as he tries to take a shot
Photos by Chris Lavin

The have fun rule is the most important rule we have. However, if this rule is not enforced we do have Draconian methods of imposing it, including Big Bruno the Enforcer."

Sign-ups for the league come shortly before school lets out for the summer. For more information call Judy McNeil at 925-284-5692.

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Gaels' Cattoni named All-Senior All-American

By Zack Farmer

Eric Cattoni, senior outfielder for Saint Mary's College, was selected to Lowe's All-Senior All-American first team. The announcement came at the College World Series in Omaha, Nebraska two weeks ago.

Lowe's has sponsored the award since 2001 and has given the award to the complete student athlete. This includes his on-the-field performance, classroom performance, and his character in the community. In his senior season, Cattoni batted .303 with three home run and 15 RBIs, led the West Coast Conference (WCC) in runs scored with 54, and placed second in stolen bases with 28.

Lowe's Senior Vice President of Marketing and Advertising Bob Gfeller explained what this award meant. "These ten players are not only among the nation's best college baseball players, they are remarkable students and community members who have worked hard to accomplish great things both on and off the field," said Gfeller. "Lowe's is proud of its affiliation with the NCAA and college athletics, and we are pleased to help honor these individuals who have displayed a commitment to excellence as true student-athletes."

On top of his on-the-field success, Cattoni was elected to the All-WCC Academic Team and ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America Second Team. This is brought upon by his 4.0 grade point average while taking p[re-med courses at Saint Mary's. Cattoni also received the CRC Press Chemistry Achievement Award, an award presented for more than 50 years.

He is also a resident advisor for freshmen on campus and provides his residents with activities and guidance for college life.

Lowe's selected 10 student athletes for the award, five for the first team and five for the second team. Cattoni was the only player on the first team selected from a west coast university.

Joining Cattoni on the first team are Bryan Henry of Florida State University, Austin Adams of Texas Christian University, and Andy DeLaGarza of Coastal Carolina University. The second team



Eric Cattoni

consists of Eric Rose of the University of Michigan, Ryan Gryskevich of Bucknell University, Brad Mills of the University of Arizona, Keanon Simon of Oklahoma State University and Aaron Ivey of Oklahoma University.

Cattoni has one year remaining at Saint Mary's but is out of eligibility in the NCAA.

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Lafayette Angels Win District Four AAA Championship

By Kevin D. Shallat

The city of Lafayette has had its share of baseball championships this year. The Acalanes Dons won the North Coast Section championships in baseball, and now we have another winner from Lafayette in the Little League age group. The Lafayette Angels beat the Albany White Sox in the AAA district four championships Saturday, June 30, at Concord American Field.

The White Sox would strike first in this game, scoring two runs in the first inning. The Angels answered right back in the bottom of the first inning by scoring four runs, and never looked back as they went on to win the game, 10-6. Although the Angels only won by four runs, they were ahead by eight runs for much of the game.

Adam Remotto, who plays pitcher and shortstop positions, got his team going by hitting a double to start off the day for the Angels. First baseman Jack Burford then hit a key triple to bring two players home, recording two RBI's on the play. Both of these players would go on to have several hits in this game.

Lafayette received good contributions all year from their combo of four pitchers, Jonathan Lee, Max Flower, Adam Remotto, and Thomas Henderson. Max Flower pitched four innings and had four hits at the plate. When asked what was working well for him on the

mound, Flower replied, "I was trying to keep the ball down in the zone early in the count, then later in the counts I would try and keep the ball a little up in the zone."

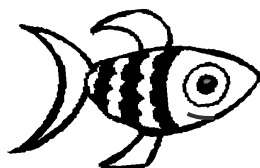
The story of the day was not just the pitching. The Angels had timely hitting in almost every inning. This allowed the Angels to pad the bases with runners throughout the day. "Every batter reached base in almost every playoff game, which was big," said Head Coach Mark Flower. The key to putting the game out of reach was the aggressive base running. The Angels took advantage of almost every miscue or passed ball by the White Sox. In the bottom of the third inning we saw Burford steal second base, allowing teammate Jonathan Lee to score from third base on the errant throw to second.

There is an old saying in baseball that the hottest team at the end of the season has the best shot at winning the championship. "We averaged almost ten runs a game in the playoffs," said Flower. Flower also mentioned how much of a contributing factor right fielder Jack Fink was to the team this year. Fink was injured at the beginning of the season, yet managed to come to almost every game and help cheer his team on. "This was a huge motivator for us," Flower said.



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Meadow Mini Meet

37th Annual Meadow Mini Meet July 15

Submitted by Carrie Daughters

Approximately 1,500 people will descend upon the Meadow Swim and Tennis Club for the 37th Annual Meadow Mini Meet to be held here Sunday, July 15. More than 600 swimmers from 11 teams are signed up to compete in this daylong fundraising event.

The meet is unique in that participation is limited to swimmers aged eight and younger. Each

swims only against children their own age, giving them opportunities for healthy competition not often available to younger swimmers. For many of the children, this will be the first time ever competing at a swim meet.

Among those who began their careers at the Meadow Mini Meet were Olympic swimmers Matt Biondi, Peter Rocca

and three members of the U.S. National Water Polo team, Kirk Everest, Colin Keely, and Rick McNair.

This year's chairpersons are Kaye Jacuzzi and Joy Braitberg. The youngest swimmers (6 years and under) will begin swimming at 9 a.m.; the 7-8 year olds will swim at 1 p.m. The meet will end around 4 p.m.

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Bottoms Up Meet a Big Hit at Miramonte

By Kevin D. Shallat



11 year Girls Heat 7 of 7 Finals: (left to right)
 1 Nishioki Julia F OCC; 2 Reshka Julia MCC; 3 Bengtsson Adrienne MCC; 4 Durant Hannah MCC; 5 Larsen Annie MEAO; 6 Schoenfeld Erin PARK; 7 Gunn Jessica MRSC; 8 Gwynn Michaela PARK; 9 Fellner Reilly F OCC; 10 Goodreault Maddie PARK

Every year the Lamorinda swim teams compete in a meet that features the youngest swimmers in each age category. For instance, only the 11-year-olds compete at the Bottoms Up, as opposed to all the 11 and 12-year-olds that normally compete in the same category. This gives the swimmers a good gauge to determine how they stack up against their own peers in their age group. The 2007 Bottoms Up Invitational was held Sunday, July 8 at Miramonte High School.

Pictured to the left is the seventh heat of the girls 11-year-olds 50-yard freestyle, where Erin Schoenfeld of Orinda Park Pool came away with the win, finishing with a time of 28.23, and smashing her original seed time. Julia Nishioki of Orinda Country Club and Julia Reshke of Moraga Country Club tied for second place with an identical time of 29.77. Moraga Ranch Swim Club's Jessica Gunn took home third place, finishing with a time of 30.16.

Jenna Pettegrew is a swimmer and coach for Moraga Country Club, who says the Bottoms Up meet is one of her favorites. "I love the Bottoms Up meet because I get to compete against people my own age,

not just graduating seniors," she said. Pettegrew made the most of her Bottoms Up experience as she coached the kids, competed in three races, and cheered on her teammates with her mom.

Seven-year-old Courtney Krause also had a positive experience at the Bottoms Up meet Sunday. She won her heat in the 25-yard breaststroke, bettering her seed time by almost five seconds. Krause was very proud of her improvement as she walked to the tent to pick up her blue ribbon. "I practiced in my backyard and at the pool for an hour each time," said Krause.



Jenna Pettegrew MCC

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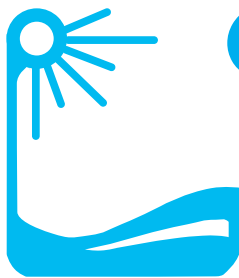
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Lafayette All-Stars manhandle Walnut Creek's finest

By Zack Farmer

In the first round of the California District 4 10-11 Division, the Lafayette Baseball All-Stars won in convincing fashion over Walnut Creek 11-0. The mercy rule was imposed in the bottom of the fourth inning when shortstop Zach Remotto lined a triple down the rightfield line to score two runs.

Lafayette and Walnut Creek were tied in the bottom of the first when a ball hit by Denis Karas sailed over the head of the Walnut Creek rightfielder and allowed AJ Franklin to score putting Lafayette up 1-0.

In the top of the second inning with a runner on first, Walnut Creek tried to get the offense started and attempted to steal second but was thwarted by catcher Tyler Luckhurst who threw a strike to Remotto to tag out the runner and end the inning.

The offense broke out in the bottom of the third inning when Lafayette exploded for seven runs. The turning point was a bases loaded single by Franklin to centerfield which skipped under the centerfielder's glove which allowed all three runners to score on the play. The single pushed the lead to 6-0 and out of reach of Walnut Creek.

Five consecutive batters



Photo by Tod Fierner



Photo by Tod Fierner

reached base that inning, all of which scored.

Lafayette head coach Phil Remotto said, "They hadn't played a game in a couple of weeks and they came out hitting."

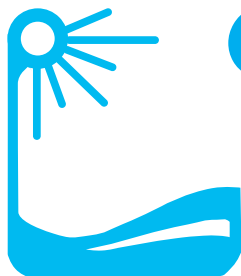
Despite the 11 runs scored, it was the pitching performance of Karas that stole the show. Karas pitched all four innings, allowing his only hit in the first inning while striking out eight batters. He struck

out the side twice.

The Lafayette All-Stars are in the International Tournament in California District 4. This is the first step towards the Little League World Series. In District 4, five wins are needed to win the district.

With the win last Thursday, Lafayette moved on to play Alameda on Monday. Results are online at <http://eteamz.active.com/California4/handouts/>.

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LMYA Dolphins Swim into Summer

By Kevin D. Shallat



Photo by Jordan Fong

With only a few short weeks passing since the official start of swim season, the LMYA Dolphins have already shown a marked improvement. Walnut Creek Swim Club kicked off their summer by coming into town Thursday, June 28, to take on LMYA in Lafayette. It is in these mid-season meets where swimmers see their hard work and dedication pay off with results.

Alec Baker continues to outmatch the competition as he once again sailed to three different first place finishes, bettering his time in two of them. For the six-and-under age group Baker and his teammates won the 100-yard medley relay with a time of 2:07.72. They won this same event one week ago at the East County meet, but with a time of 2:35.63. This week they bettered their time by almost 30 seconds. Baker went on to win the 25-

yard freestyle, and the 25-yard breaststroke against Walnut Creek. At the East County meet he finished with a first place time of 25.07 in the breaststroke. This week he also finished in first place, bettering his time with a 23.87.

Alec Baker wasn't the only Baker who was "hot" Thursday. Eight-year-old Liv Baker made a big impression on the fans and coaches as she was able to garner a few top three finishes by drastically improving her times.

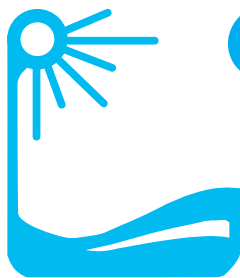
"Liv Baker has worked really hard to improve this year," said LMYA Head Coach Kristen Sissener. Soon after the meet started, Baker received her first blue ribbon for her participation in the 100-yard medley relay. The team finished with a time of 1:30.56. Perhaps Baker's most rewarding event was her first place finish in the 25-yard butterfly. She finished with a time of 22.61, more than three seconds better than her eighth place finish at the East County meet.

Seven year old Riley Smith garnered four blue ribbons Thursday. His most noteworthy finish came in the 100-yard individual medley where he posted a time of 1:47.94. Last week he finished second in this same event. This week he shaved around 15 seconds off of his time, and earned a first place finish for it.

Coach Sissener wanted to make sure that others could see the improvement of a few swimmers over the year thus far. Among those showing marked improvement are Evan Rios (age 6), Harrison Naton (age 12), and Makenzie Quinn (age 13). Rios has shaved off around ten seconds in the 25-yard freestyle. Quinn has taken off two seconds in the 50-yard freestyle. Naton has also continued to impress his coaches with his two second place finishes Thursday.

"The whole team has done a phenomenal job in trying to improve. They have been coming to practice ready to work hard," said Coach Sissener, whose philosophy on improving is simple: "They need to be aggressive from the start, from the moment they get into the water."

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