

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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# Orinda

### Civic News

**Public Meetings** 

#### **City Council**

Tuesday, June 21, 7:00 pm Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

#### **Art in Public Places Committee**

Monday, June 20 at 3:30 PM Orinda Library, May Room 26 Orinda Way

#### **Planning Commission**

Tuesday, June 14, at 7:00 p.m. Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### **City of Orinda:**

www.cityoforinda.org **Chamber of Commerce:** 

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association: www.orindaassociation.org



### **Police Report**

Residential burglary, 5/30/11 A Scenic Drive resident was out of town for the weekend and asked his mom to check on the house. Upon her arrival, she noticed that the place had been burglarized. Alleged thief or thieves jumped over a small locked fence and forced entry via a bathroom window. Several items were taken; an exact inventory is still being compiled.

Burglary, 5/20/11 An Estates Drive resident left home in the morning and came home in the evening to find the back door and garage door smashed. The victim is not sure if anything besides two coin iars valued at approximately \$150 were taken. Damage to doors and frames estimated at \$800.

Burglary, 5/27/11 An unknown suspect entered an unoccupied El Verano home and removed unidentified property worth approximately \$1500. No fingerprints or witnesses at this time.

5/24/1, Again an unknown suspect forced entry through the front door into a home on El Toyonal. A computer was taken, along with a digital camera, two game systems and consoles plus games. Burglar(s) took a 52" flat panel TV from the living room, but left it in the kitchen.

Burglary, 5/23/11 Someone forced entry into an El Gavilan home between 8:00 and 4:00 p.m. and removed property worth approximately \$2,000. Unfortunately nothing was seen or heard.

Burglary, 5/23/11 Once again an unknown suspect kicked in a front door of an Estates Drive home and took jewelry, electronics and a 52" TV and exited via the front door. The lower level of the home appeared to be untouched. Estimated loss \$14,800; \$1,500 worth of damage to the door.

## Burglaries and Arrests Up in Orinda

OPD launches prevention program

By Andrea A. Firth

here were 26 residential burglaries in Orinda between January and April, a fairly significant increase in property crime for a community that typically has an average of two to four residential burglaries a month. Orinda's increased number of home break-ins corresponds directly with an increase in the number of residential burglaries in several nearby cities during the same period, according to Orinda Police Chief Jeff Jennings.

The Contra Costa County Sherriff's Department was able to provide Jennings and his team with a crime map and statistical data to help them develop a plan of action. The Orinda Police Department (OPD) also reached out to the community through emails alerts to help track down leads. A tip line was also established which led Orinda Police to two separate suspects. Subsequently in April and May, the OPD made ten arrests related to commercial and residential burglaries and possession of stolen property.

found burglars working in groups of two to four. Often they choose a home where the entrance is not clearly visible from the street or by neighbors. If the perpetrators find no emergency number at (925) 254-6820.

one is home after knocking on the front door, they proceed to a side or service door and kick it in. A common denominator for homes that get burglarized is that there is no home alarm system or the alarm is not activated. "These guys are opportunists. They are in and out of the home really quick," says Jennings, noting that they take items like electronics that they can resell quickly.

To help residents better protect their homes from burglary, the OPD recently launched a program to educate homeowners and make safety recommendations for home security. Residents can request a member of the OPD visit the home, by appointment, to perform a security audit. The audit takes about 15 minutes and assesses a number of factors related to the exterior and interior security of the home. The intent of the program is to minimize the risk of burglary and make the home less attractive to potential

"Orinda is one of the safest cities in the Jennings says recently the OPD has nation," says Jennings, "Property crimes are what we deal with here."

To schedule a home security audit, contact the Orinda Police Department non-

#### **Business Watch in Orinda**

A group of Orinda business owners/representatives recently attended a meeting, hosted by Dina Zapanta of First Republic Bank, with Orinda Police Sergeant Neil Rafanan to discuss crime prevention in their downtown businesses. These new Business Watch members, supported by the Chamber of Commerce, will meet every month to discuss issues and prevention

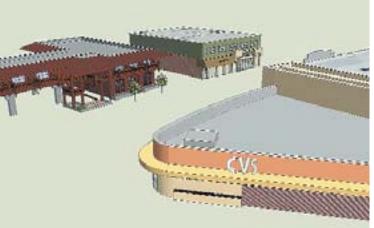
"There is much interest in this topic and I'm glad the Chamber is filling the need," said Chamber President Sue Breedlove after the meeting, "As an advocate for the business community, this is something we should definitely take the lead on."

One hot topic was the after-school crowd – apparently some of the middle school kids are creating problems. "They run into Loard's, steal candy, and run out," said Breedlove, "The toy store in Theatre Square limits (unaccompanied) kids to three in the store at one time because of the problems they create as a crowd."

The next Watch meeting is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on June 28, at Table 24. "The group expressed interest in meeting every month for these first few months and then move to quarterly," added Breedlove, "the following month we'll move to the other side of town or meet at City Hall." The meeting is open to all Orinda businesses. S. Braccini

## Miramonte Students Create Digital Model of Downtown

By Aleksandr Auzers



One portion of the virtual model of Orinda's downtown.

Photo A. Auzers, courtesy of A. Gell and M. Wilcox

eacher Aileen Gell is proud of what the students in her Architectural Design course at Miramonte High School have achieved this year. For the past several months, Gell's class has labored to produce a three-dimensional digital model of Orinda's downtown, which is now nearly 75% complete. When finished, the model could serve as an integral tool for facilitating community discussion regarding the future planning of Orinda's commercial district.

To create the model, the students have been mentored by Orinda residents Peter Hasselman, an internationally renowned urban planner, and designer Michael Woodcox; these professionals have led lectures and discussion periods, and coached students in the use of computerized modeling tools. This unique collaboration has given the Miramonte students the opportunity to work on a realworld project, and access to expertise seldom encountered outside of the workplace.

Both Hasselman and Wood- area residents. cox are members of OrindaVi-

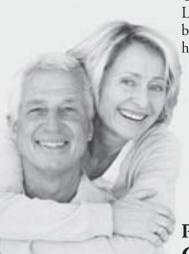
a sort of "conversation starter" for

The students' model is impression, a group which has proposed sive. Produced with inexpensive ideas for how the land- and software running on ordinary streetscape of Orinda's Cross- computer workstations, the digital roads and Village might evolve in replica of the city can be viewed the future. According to Wood- from any angle. With a few clicks cox, OrindaVision wants to pro- of the mouse, it's even possible to mote a dialogue in the get a pedestrian's view of the community, to spur residents to downtown buildings, which think about the City's architec- sprout up on both sides of a virtural future. The model, as a com- tual Moraga Way, proportionallyponent of that goal, is intended as accurate and quite lifelike.

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