

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Independent, locally owned and operated!

www.lamorindaweekly.com • 925.377.0977

26,000 copies delivered bi-weekly to Lamorinda homes & businesses

FREE



Sunrise over Lamorinda Photo Andy Schreck

Ten Challenges for your New Year

By Cathy Dausman

The sun has risen on a brand new year – you’ve been given a clean slate, and a chance to make good on your best intentions. Here come the resolutions – fast, furious and often futile. Diet. Exercise. Clean clutter. Read more. Learn a new skill. Really... haven’t we heard it all before?

Let’s consult Time magazine’s list of most-forgotten resolutions, and tackle them all without leaving Lamorinda:

1. Lose weight

To lose weight, eat less (see #4) and exercise more. For exercise,

get outside in Lamorinda. Hike Briones Trail, Mulholland Ridge, run the Rez, or bike the St. Stephen’s or Lafayette Moraga Trail.

2. Quit smoking

With California’s “spare the air” attitude, it’s tough to even find places to smoke nowadays. Smoking is banned in most public places, including state and county owned buildings and vehicles. If you’re caught smoking where you shouldn’t, fines are \$50 to \$200, and repeat offenders are subject to \$500 fines. You may as well give it up now, and get a head start on item 5.

3. Learn something new

Take a class, for love of learning. Read something written by a local author. Head to lectures or performing arts presentations at St. Mary’s College, or by Orinda’s Starlight Players or Cal Shakes; attend a California Independent Film Festival showing or a live play at Lafayette Town Hall Theater. Enroll in a Lamorinda community center class. You could learn to play the ukulele, speak a foreign language, take an outdoor exercise “boot camp” or cook something new. ... continued on page A10

Quote of the Week:

"There are so many reasons for my abiding love for this place I call home..."

Read Letters to the Editor, page A8

Advertising

A Shared Thanks from Trusted Neighbors.

Best wishes to our families, friends and neighbors for a happy, healthy and safe 2012.

93 Moraga Way, Suite 103, Orinda, CA 94563 (925) 254-0505
www.villageassociates.com

facebook.com/VillageAssociates



LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Town News	A2 - A10
Letters to the Editor	A8
MOFD	A9
Life in Lamorinda	B1 - B10
Business	B4
Service Directory	B5
Not to be Missed	B8
Food	B9
HOW TO CONTACT US	B9
Shop Orinda	B10
Sports	C1 - C4
Classified	C4
Our Homes	D1 - D8

This Week Read About:

Meet the Mayors	A3, A4, A6
Condos Coming	A2
Rookies Sworn In	A5
Wilder Progress	A6
Art Shows	B1, B5
New Special Ed Directors	B2
Big World	B3
Reprieve for Scout Camp	B6
Best Sports Photos of 2011	C2, C3

Local Schools Transition Kindergarten Entry-Age

By Andrea A. Firth

Kindergarten teacher Bess Inzeo describes the move to raise the entry-age for kindergarten in California’s public schools to five years old by September 1st as “the gift of time.”

“Students need to be socially and developmentally ready for the academic rigors of today’s kindergarten classroom,” says Inzeo, who has taught kindergarten at Moraga’s Donald Rheem Elementary School for twelve years.

Until recently, children entering kindergarten in California could turn five as late as December 2nd, more than three months into the school year. But starting with the 2012-13 school year, Lamorinda’s schools, like schools across the state, will phase-in the new age requirement over three years. (See Table page A9)

While parents are not required to send their children to kindergarten, attendance in Lamorinda is the norm. And locally, holding back students with fall birthdays is not uncommon and happens even more often with boys. Inzeo has had a limited number of students with fall birthdays who turn five in

her classroom. She has found that many families opt for an additional year of pre-school. In fact Inzeo, whose son has a November birthday, chose this option.

California was one of just a few states remaining that had not already adopted a September 1st birthday cut-off for kindergarten. In addition to the entry age change, the California Legislature’s Kindergarten Readiness Act provides the youngest, fall-birthday students—those born after 9/1 and on or before 12/2—with a transitional kindergarten, an extra year of kindergarten that uses a modified curriculum. Like traditional kindergarten, enrollment is optional.

“Exactly how the transitional kindergarten program will be structured is still to be determined,” says Lafayette School District Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill. “Looking at the current kindergarten class [in the Lafayette School District], there were only eight students across the four grade schools who had November birthdays and turned five.” The current kindergarten population in the Lafayette

School District is 357.

How to structure the transitional program and where to house the class(es) will be driven by enrollment and the district is exploring options, says Brill. One option would be combination classes at each school with younger, transitional kindergarten students and “regular” kindergarteners in the same class. The teachers, all well versed in differentiation teaching methods, says Brill, would work with a modified curriculum for the transitional students. A second option would be to have a single transitional kindergarten class housed at a single school site. “We have to look at the enrollment numbers before we can make any decisions,” explains Brill.

“This is new for all schools in California,” say Courtney Guinn, the Director of Educational Services and Instructional Technology for the Moraga School District. “Right now we don’t know how many students in the district will qualify for transitional kindergarten.” But as Inzeo’s experience at-tests, parents have already been holding kids back.

... continued on page A9

Life in Lamorinda B1-B10

Lamorinda Teenagers on Air

Rosylyn Aragonés Stenzel talks to local teens who have an international audience. B1



Sports C1-C4

Saint Mary’s Men’s Basketball Perfect in WCC Play



The SMC men’s basketball team opens conference play by defeating powerhouse BYU. Caitlin Graveson reports. C1

Our Homes D1-D8

Starting Fresh!

Start the new year fresh by Digging Deep! D1

