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Back and middle rows from left: Rich Laufenberg, Ron Mayo, Bob Campbell, Dick Kostyrka, Tom Coull, Jack Dice, Michael Bloomstein, Dick Vaughn, Ellis Langley, Pepper Wardle; Front row from left: Mary Lou Blumer, Darwin Marable, Debbie Koo, John McGhee, Dan Hagan, Leslie Schriener, John Di Palermo and Chuck Blay Photo Andy Scheck

Muffin People Always Rise to the Occasion

When you combine 52 pounds of butter, 80 dozen eggs, cheese, milk, 12 boneless legs of lamb, salmon, chicken, 192 kosher turkeys, three dozen cases of orange juice, Beckmann's Bakery bread, dairy, produce and flowers, it sounds like quite a party. But these groceries do not stay in Lamorinda.

This donated food which has approached its "sell by," but not "use by" date has been removed from grocery shelves at Di-

ablo Foods, Lunardi's, Orinda and Lafayette Safeway, Lamorinda Starbuck's, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and Oakland's L C Food International, and is destined for shelters and non-profits in Oakland, delivered with a smile by volunteers who call themselves the Muffin People.

Six to seven days a week volunteers load up their own trucks and vans with hundreds of pounds of food, use their own gas and

make the drive to Oakland, delivering groceries to St. Mary's Center, A Friendly Place, Mother Wright Foundation, St. Mary's Gardens, St. Vincent de Paul and Oak Center Towers.

Several days a week each organization gladly accepts donations. "They're great people; they love doing what they do," says Joel Wright, of Mother Wright Foundation.

... continued on page A12

Quote of the Week:

"Obama vs Romney isn't the only story come this November." Lamorindans weigh in on local elections; read Letters to the Editor, page A9.

Advertising

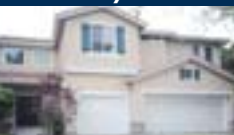
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Orinda Olympian Honored



Heather Petri and Orinda Vice Mayor Amy Worth smile in front of the new Tesla Model S. Photo Ohlen Alexander

Orinda's own golden girl, Heather Petri, was given a rousing welcome at Orinda's 8th Annual Classic Car Show. Vice Mayor Amy Worth presented the Miramonte grad and four-time Olympic medalist in Water Polo (2000, 2004, 2008, 2012) with a proclamation declaring September 22, 2012 as Heather Petri Day for her gold medal-winning performance at the 2012 London Olympics.

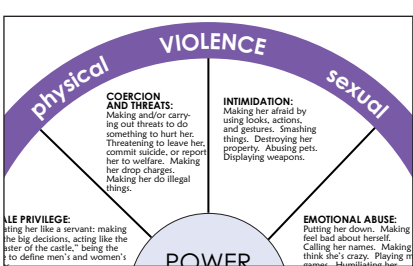
Petri's swimming career began in Orinda at Moraga Valley Pool. She was a founding member of the Miramonte High School Women's Water Polo team, which won the North Coast Section title her senior year. She went on to UC Berkeley, becoming an All-American athlete and captain of the Women's Water Polo team.

On Sunday Petri will swim from under the Golden Gate Bridge to Crissy Field as part of a Swim Across America event to raise money for cancer research, prevention and treatment. She is also actively involved in Right to Play and Athletes for Hope, which provide athletic and leadership opportunities to disadvantaged youth. L. Snyder

Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Domestic Violence

Recent events remind us that it happens here, too. Laurie Snyder investigates. Page B1



Sports C1-C3

Cougars Pull Out Last Second Win

DFAL kicks off with a thriller. Simon Tryzna reports. Page C1



Our Homes D1-D12

Moraga Country Club Kitchen Tour

Sophie Braccini views some interesting remodels that are on this year's tour. Page D1



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Lafayette

Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, October 9, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Monday, October 1, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Tuesday, October 9, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District

Wednesday, October 3, 7:30 pm
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, October 10, 7:00 pm
Regular Board Meeting
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us
Phone: (925) 284-1968

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

Controversial Downtown Specific Plan Given Okay

By Cathy Tyson

The Community Hall was half empty by the time City Council members finally unanimously approved the controversial Downtown Specific Plan after six years of passionate discussion and conflicting views of the future of Lafayette. The Downtown Specific Plan is meant to supplement and specify goals and policies spelled out in the General Plan – clarifying for potential developers what’s allowable.

City Manager Steven Falk pointed out in a recent edition of *Vistas* that there is a substantial amount of common ground on the majority of the Plan: downtown parks, sustainability, convenient housing for young and old, walkways, and preservation of historic Plaza Way. Major friction, however, surrounded downtown building heights. Despite the debate, building heights up to 45 feet and a maximum of three stories were approved and will be added to the Gen-

eral Plan as an amendment, with two significant strings attached - only with City Council permission and with strict benefit requirements will a project be given a green light. Ultimately the City Council certified the Final Environmental Impact Report, amended the General Plan and adopted the Downtown Specific Plan.

“It’s been interesting,” said Special Projects Manager Ann Merideth, “a complex but enlightening process.” Residents once again offered input, both pro and con for roughly two hours prior to the final decision. Council members were well aware of the chasm the Downtown Specific Plan has caused among residents and tried to be conciliatory.

To set the stage for the final decision, Planning and Building Services Manager Nitroop Srivatsa explained Housing Element requirements. Cities across California are required to have a fixed number of housing

units available for low and moderate income families available through an inventory of sites that have the potential for development. The Association of Bay Area Governments is responsible for the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, or RHNA, which spells out exactly how many very low to moderate income housing units the city must provide. The Downtown Specific Plan will support the city’s ability to provide that mandated low income housing.

The requirement for the 2007-2014 cycle is 361 units spread across a range of low income categories. At one point in the long, multi-year process, the Lafayette Homeowners Council proposed a 25-foot height limit. City staff crunched the numbers and found, “it poses a significant obstacle in the delivery of affordable units,” concluded the staff report prepared for the September 10, 2012 meeting.

If the city does not meet its housing numbers, it’s deemed not in compliance. City Attorney Mala Subramanian described legal and monetary ramifications, calling them “significant.” She explained that the City of Pleasanton was recently sued for not complying; the global settlement included \$2 million in attorneys’ fees and several civic impacts.

Some residents complained that they were deeply concerned that the housing numbers are driving the Downtown Specific Plan. Others, like Larry Blodgett who was on the original Advisory Committee at the beginning of the process, said that there was input from all community groups up front; he called the Downtown Specific Plan, “necessary to fine tune our General Plan” and noted future projects, especially those with heights between 35 and 45 feet will be under a microscope.

Commission Recommends Denial of Tall Condo Project

By Cathy Tyson

Looks like the gravel parking lot behind Panda Express is going to stay there – at least for now. At last week’s Planning Commission meeting the applicant, KB Home, had a public hearing on its proposed five-story, 74-unit condominium project called Town Center III.

For a variety of reasons, Planning Commissioners couldn’t support the project as is. Their primary concerns were the reconfigured fifth story and circulation in and out of the parking area. While all Commissioners agreed that multi-family housing at this site is the best use of the parcel with its prox-

imity to BART, many believe that this proposed structure is still too high, measuring 71 feet tall at its apex.

KB Home Senior Vice President Ray Panek recapped the project’s journey as it went through several Design Review sessions and was scaled back in response to concerns about height and mass. Originally the project had 81 condominium units, this last version had shrunk to 74 with high quality finishes and more parking stalls than required. “We worked with the Design Review Commission

to understand what is approvable,” said Panek, summarizing KB Home’s position.

While there are several documents governing this contentious parcel, City Attorney Mala Subramanian, who unfortunately had a conflict and couldn’t be in attendance, prepared a letter outlining the City’s legal responsibilities, given its convoluted history with a Settlement Agreement, Development Agreement and Process Agreement.

Senior Planner Christine Sinnette

summed up the situation in a staff report, “What this means is that this current project is to be reviewed based on the 1974-2002 General Plan which does not establish a height limit for development in the Downtown, 1998 Zoning Ordinance (through Ord. 468) which does not require grading or tree permits, and 1986 BART Block Specific Plan (BBSP) which established a three-story maximum height limit.”

Not all of the Planning Commissioners saw eye to eye on the governing documents. ... continued on page A8

Police Report



Lafayette Police Summary Week of September 9-15, 2012

- Animal:**
3500 block Mt. Diablo Blvd
Pleasant Hill Rd. @ Taylor Blvd
- Battery:**
1000 block 2nd St
3500 block Moraga Blvd
- Burglary:**
900 block Leland Dr
1000 block Dolores Dr (proowler heard)
4000 block Mt. Diablo Blvd—twice (auto)
3400 block School St (auto)
- Disturbances:**
Boswells
100 block Reliez Valley Ct
500 block Arrowhead Dr (harassment)
800 block Acalanes Rd (juvenile)
3300 block Woodview Dr (juvenile)
3200 block Elvia St
Rahara Dr @ Upper Happy Valley Rd (music)
3600 block Mt. Diablo Blvd
Old Tunnel Rd @ Pleasant Hill
100 block Olde Creek Pl
900 block Leland Dr
Mt. Diablo Blvd @ Thompson Rd (party)
3300 block Springhill Rd
2700 block Roher Dr
Deer Hill Rd @ N Thompson Rd
1000 block Brown Ave
1000 block 2nd Street
900 block Dewing Ave (fight)
1000 block Rahara Dr
- Fraud:**
3300 block Las Huertas Rd
3900 block Woodside Ct

- Hit and Run:**
900 Block Moraga Rd
- Shooting:**
1600 block Springbrook Rd
- Suspicious:**
3100 block Rohrer Dr
700 block St. Mary’s Rd (vehicle)
Linda Vista Lane @ Old Tunnel Rd (subject)
Condit Court @ Condit Rd (circumstances)
600 block Los Palos Dr (circumstances)
3600 block Mt. Diablo Blvd (vehicle)
Bradbury @ Silverado Dr (vehicle)
3900 block Happy Valley Rd (subject)
3200 block Mt. Diablo Ct (vehicle)
El Curtola Bl @ Hwy 24 (subject)
El Nido Ranch Rd @ Pine Ln (vehicle)
Camino Diablo @ Stanley Blvd (circumstance)
3300 block Mt. Diablo Blvd (subject)
El Charro parking lot (subject)
700 block Moraga Rd (circumstance)
100 block W Arbor Wy—twice (vehicle)
Acalanes Av @ Nogales St (vehicle)
Buchan Dr @ Old Tunnel Rd (vehicle)
Acalanes @ El Nido Ranch Rd—twice (vehicle)
Mt. Diablo Blvd (subject)
800 block Reliez Station Rd (subject)
Brook St. @ Hough Ave (subject)
500 block St. Mary’s Rd (vehicle)
- Theft:**
3200 block Camino Colorados (access card)
900 block Acalanes Rd
1000 block 2nd St (vehicle)
3600 block Mt. Diablo Blvd (vehicle)
- Vandalism:**
100 block Cricket Hill Rd
3200 block Marlene Dr
3500 block Mt. Diablo Blvd
3600 block Bickerstaff St
- Traffic Stops:**
Over 92 traffic stops logged within the week.

3-day madness

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City Infrastructure 101, Chinese Delegates Explore Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson



City Manager Steve Falk explains the development of Lafayette. Photo Andy Scheck

A group of 14 Chinese government officials from the transportation department of Henan Province, lead by Mr. Zhang Changliu, Deputy Director, Charge Repayment Highway Management Center, recently took a tour of Lafayette. The international visitors are part of the SAG Economic and Technical Exchange Development Program that seeks to build economic ties and share ideas. They selected Lafayette to learn about city planning; they will also be visiting the California Department of Transportation, better known as CalTrans, and the California Highway Patrol.

The dignitaries were hoping to gather information on short- and long-term transportation challenges at the city level, along with federal, state and local transportation funding – specifically how that works. Because of the rapid development of the economy of their province, they were curious about infrastructure issues like the life cycle of a street and Lafayette’s five year capital improvement plans.

“They were just charming,” said Planning and Building Services Manager Niroop Srivatsa, who explained they were surprised to learn that voters have to approve funding for transit systems like BART. The group had a translator; and Lafayette’s City Engineer Tony Coe, who joined the visitors exploring the city, speaks Mandarin.

Called the birthplace of Chinese civilization because of its 5,000 years of history, Henan Province is the second most populous Chinese state with over 103 million people. Two important railways run through much of the province, the Jingguang and Longhai Railways. There’s an active effort to continue to build on the economy of the province encouraging transportation and manufacturing.

Be an Informed Local Voter – Meet the Candidates!

Once again, the public is invited to Candidates Forum Night, sponsored by the Lafayette Homeowners Council Thursday, October 4 at 7 p.m. in the Manzanita Room of the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary’s Road. City Council and School Board candidates will give brief presentations and be available for questions. There are five people running for the three open seats on the City Council: Mike Anderson, Rob Lobron, Mark Mitchell, Traci Reilly and Yolanda Vega. Lafayette School Board has four candidates for two seats: Jean Follmer, Quinlan Tom, Nancy Wallace and Don Wolff.

More Lafayette Civic News on Page A8



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<p>SOLD! 1043 Camino Pablo, Moraga \$1,085,000</p>	<p>SOLD! 10 Woodford Drive 3BR/2BA, 1924± sq. ft., \$665,000</p>

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Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, September 26, 7:00 pm
Wednesday, October 10, 7:00 pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, October 1, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Design Review

Tuesday, October 9, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
Tuesday, October 9, 7:30 pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us
Phone: (925) 888-7022

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Police Report

Suspicious fellow offers kid a ride, 9/19/12 A 12-year-old was walking home after school from Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School when a man who appeared to be college-age asked him if he wanted a ride home. Smart kid said, "no." The subject drove away in a brown pickup truck with a camper shell. The student reported seeing the vehicle near the school again 9/20. He now describes the vehicle as a dirty brown, or gold SUV. The student said the rear window of the SUV was down, or broken. The same individual was seen about two weeks earlier asking another student if he wanted a ride home. If you see the vehicle, notify the Moraga Police Department (925) 284-5010.

Drunk driving, 9/20/12 Driving in the half-dark. Police pulled over a 20-year-old driving on Moraga Road at 10:00 p.m. with a headlight out. Is that your cologne or perhaps the "strong odor of alcoholic beverage" as the police report suggests? After flunking a number of field sobriety tests, the underage female was arrested, and later released to a sober driver.

Hardware theft, 9/17/12 The assistant manager of Orchard Supply Hardware told police that someone left the business with three items valued at approximately \$500 and somehow forgot to pay. Surveillance footage was retrieved and cops are carefully looking it over.

Graffiti times two, 9/16/12 and 9/17/12 Three city signs on St. Mary's Road near Bollinger Canyon Road had graffiti, estimated damage \$500 – very similar to the markings found at the Skate Park. A Public Works employee told police he discovered graffiti that must have happened overnight at the Moraga Commons Skate Park – estimated damage \$1,000.

Phone Fraud, 9/14/12 A Fernwood Drive resident got a phone call from an unknown person in Canada pretending to be his grandson. The alleged grandson stated that he had been arrested and needed bail money in order to return to the states. The victim sent two money orders totaling \$5,100.

Unauthorized shopping spree, started on 7/06/12 and recently ended. A Lynwood Place resident heard from the administration of Bank of America that there had been fraudulent activity on her credit card – about \$15,000 worth via six transactions. Thankfully the bank did not hold her responsible for the charges. B of A has a fraud investigator on the case, initial reports indicate the shopper lives in Antioch.



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New Proposed Sales Tax: Questions and Impacts

By Sophie Braccini

The Town of Moraga is asking its residents to approve a local ballot measure that will increase the sales tax rate in Moraga from 8.25 percent to 9.25 percent. The one percent increase would sunset in 20 years.

The additional one percent tax would be collected on taxable items purchased in Moraga. Currently food, prescription drugs and services are exempt from sales tax. It will also be applied to items residents purchase anywhere in California that are delivered to their Moraga homes. The sales tax for vehicles is based on residence, not point of sale, so Moraga residents would be subject to Moraga's sales tax when they purchase that new car or private jet. The additional one percent will be returned to the Town of Moraga by the State and is estimated to produce over \$900,000 per year for 20 years. The tax is a General Purpose tax, which requires 50 percent plus 1 voter approval to pass. The revenue collected will go to the Town's General Fund to be spent at the discretion of the Town Council.

We asked Town staff and the Yes on K campaign a few questions – although we are aware that there are some individuals and business owners who are opposed to the higher sales tax, we could not find an organized No on K campaign.

Why does the Town of Moraga need an additional tax?

In the recent "Pot Hole" report that studied pavement condition all over the Bay Area, Moraga's roads were rated 'at-risk,' in the bottom 15 percent. The town suffers from years of deferred maintenance, and if nothing is done, 10 years from now the cost of fixing the roads will jump from \$24 million to more than \$70 million, according to the road study. The Town says it needs a local revenue stream, independent of the State's takeaway, to fix its infrastructure.

Why has Moraga not maintained its roads?

"Our Town is under-funded, the maintenance of our infrastructure is not possible with our current income," says Moraga Town Manager Jill Keimach. She explains that Moraga derives its revenue from property

tax and sales tax. "Moraga gets only 5.25 percent of what residents pay as property tax. This percentage is one of the lowest in the state; it was set once and for all when Prop 13 passed, and there is nothing we can do to change it," she adds.

Why not cut other expenses and save more for the roads?

"Our maintenance backlog would need an additional \$2.2 million per year to be completely erased," says Moraga Public Works Director Edric Kwan. "With a budget of about \$6 million, savings alone cannot be sufficient." Keimach agrees, "What we need is a long term revenue stream, to implement our long term maintenance strategy."

What if we unincorporate? Then the roads would become a County problem.

"In 1974 I was co-chair of the Moraga incorporation committee," says resident Dick Olsen who works on the Yes on Measure K campaign. "The County's attention to Moraga and its needs for public safety or infrastructure was dismal, that's why we incorporated. Today, the County has even less money than back then."

Measure K is a General Purpose tax; why not a tax just for the roads?

"A survey conducted by the Town showed that a tax measure that would require two-thirds of the votes would never pass," says John Haffner, Chair of the Yes on Measure K campaign. "A General tax requires only 50 percent plus 1 vote to pass. We need to do something now— this measure will stop the bleeding."

Since the tax is General Purpose, some residents are concerned that future Town Councils could use the money for other less pressing needs than the roads. Although he supports the sales tax, Town Council candidate Seth Freeman suggested that the money be managed by an independent Board of Trustees rather than a Town Council he does not trust.

"If the measure passes, the Council will have the option to bond part of the revenue stream from the tax," says Keimach. "According to our consultant, and depending on rates, the Town would be able to raise \$7 to \$8 million that will be serviced over

the 20- year period with about \$600,000 a year. That money would then be completely committed for the whole period."

Mayor and candidate Mike Metcalf made a pledge that he would never ask for the money to be spent on something else. "The survey that the residents' priority is fixing the roads," he says. "Spending the money for something else would not support what the people want. The Oversight Committee established by Measure K will see to it that the money is spent for that purpose only."

Won't a higher sales tax hurt local businesses?

"In July of 2011 the California base sales tax rate decreased by 1 percent—most people didn't even notice the difference," says Keimach. "We studied the effect of a sales tax increase, in local cities that passed a similar measure, since 2008. The total taxable sales varies with the economy, the variations are the same whether the cities have increased their sales tax or not." She adds that the tax will also be paid by non-residents who come to Moraga, which is fair since they use the Town's roads.

Lafayette resident and Moraga business owner Larry Pines disagrees. "Moraga must be very careful in not putting our businesses and families at a competitive disadvantage with all

other surrounding towns and cities... I've heard and read the pro-tax rhetoric that most Moragans will hardly notice the higher tax rate, but in these troubled times, more people than you might think are watching their pennies and their dollars."

However, the Moraga Chamber of Commerce has announced that it supports the passage of Measure K.

What about the impact on seniors and others who live on fixed incomes?

"Ninety-five percent of the people on the Yes on Measure K campaign are retired residents," says Haffner. "We need that revenue stream for that period of time in order to bond a significant amount up front and make a serious dent in our maintenance backlog. Repairing the roads is a safety issue, seniors are very sensitive to that aspect. They want roads that are in good shape for themselves, and also for emergency vehicles when needed."

For More Information

Measure K: www.moraga.ca.us/about/measure-k

Pot Hole Report: www.mtc.ca.gov/library/pothole_report/Pothole_Report_2011.pdf

Orinda's 10-year plan: www.orinda.waterware.com/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4827/10%20yr%20Road%20Plan_FED.pdf

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Planning for Moraga's Roads

By Sophie Braccini

Edric Kwan was hired to replace Jill Mercurio as Town Engineer and Public Works Director in July. His experience in road maintenance, garnered in several Bay Area cities, includes the use of the popular software called Street Saver. He has studied the work done by his predecessor to assess the state of each of the town's roads and project the most efficient actions to take, depending on the available budget, and design a plan to save Moraga's roads, whether or not Measure K passes.

"We will take an approach similar to El Cerrito that has been very successful in improving the state of its roads," said Kwan. "Using Street Saver we will find the most bang for

our buck, to increase the PCI (Pavement Condition Index) for the entire network of roads."

Street Saver was used to arrive at the \$24 million estimate to raise Moraga's roads from poor to good. If Measure K passes, with less money than this needed amount, Kwan is confident that he will be able to provide residents with significant improvement. "If it passes it will really help us with the backlog and that's really significant because if we do not do it now the streets will continue to deteriorate and the cost will triple within 10 years."

He detailed what he would do if the measure passes: "The first year will be focused on immediately tak-

ing on the repairs of the streets that need it the most to stop the decay," he said. "In parallel, we will do the field-work that will determine which complete remediation we can apply, depending on the specific condition of each section of road."

Kwan said he wants to make sure that the streets are done as fast as possible, and correctly the first time. He plans to spend the bond money within three or four years. "Bonding part of the money would give us a large sum up front that would maximize our impact," he said. He believes that this large influx could reduce the total envelop to fix the roads and reduce the amount needed annually.

... continued on page A8

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Moraga Candidates Night

Moraga Citizens Network (MCN) will host a forum October 4 at which the candidates for Moraga Town Council will present their programs and answer questions from the audience. Tim Farley, Director of Community and Government Relations at St. Mary's College, will moderate the event. There are five candidates for the three open seats on the Council.

"This event is one of a kind, where members of the audience can submit questions and we (MCN members) will be sorting and feeding them to Tim (Farley) - live - as the event goes on," says MCN board member Denise Duff. "Just real candidates with real answers."

Candidates Night is **Thursday, October 4, 7:30 p.m.** at the Holy Trinity Serbian Church, 1700 School Street. *S.Braccini*

Camino Ricardo Development

By Sophie Braccini



SummerHill Homes is proposing to build 28 homes on a lot off of Camino Ricardo, above Moraga Way. On September 19, the Town of Moraga held the first meeting of a roughly two-year process leading to the construction of the homes.

Doug Herring, a consultant working for the Town, made a pedagogical presentation of the process. According to California law, the environmental impact of a proposed development needs to be assessed and then certified by the Town in order for a developer to seek building permits.

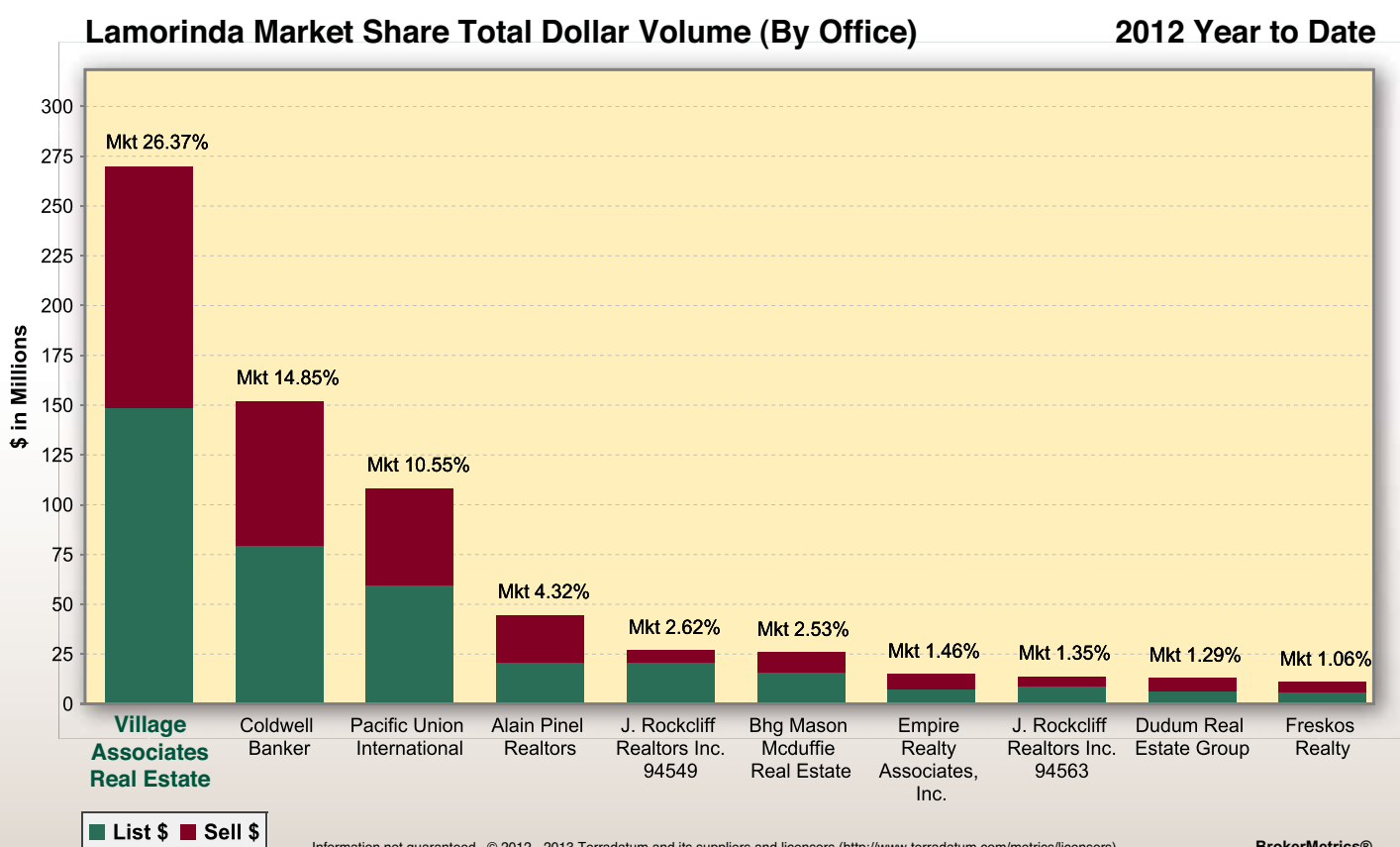
... continued on page A8

Summer Hill Development

Image provided

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Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, October 2, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, October 9, at 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, October 10, at 6:30 pm
Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22
Orinda Way, Orinda

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District
Monday, October 8, 6:00 pm
OUSD Office **NEW LOCATION**
25 Orinda Way, Suite 200
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org
Phone (925) 253-4200

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



Police Report

Fast and furious, 9/13/12

He was fast, and she was probably furious. A carjacking took place on Orinda's Camino Pablo just after midnight. A 27-year-old male wrestled the car keys away from a 20-something woman, and injured her in the process. She scraped both knees and an elbow in the fracas and the car thief nearly ran her over in his haste to get away. He traveled eastbound on Highway 24, lost control, and crashed the car. The car burst into flames; the subject took off on foot. He was faster in the car, because police caught up with him and found the man was on felony probation and driving with a suspended license. Police also found cocaine on his person (which may have explained his need for speed). We've got to wonder just how you explain all that to your insurance company.



Maureen Wilbur



Coming Soon!

Two wonderful properties, one home is in Summit Ridge with views to Benicia and the other in Beacon Ridge with hill views. The Summit Ridge home listed for \$750,000 is an end unit and has 3 bedrooms 2.5 baths with approximately 2091 square feet. The Beacon Ridge home listed for \$675,000 is an end unit and has 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths with an approximate 2240 square feet.



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Making Technology Work for Orinda

Granicus system to give citizens easier access to documents and remote streaming video access to meetings

By Laurie Snyder

Most every Orindan wanting to learn more about Orinda's City Council or Commission meetings has experienced the frustration, at one point or another, of clicking on links to staff reports and other agenda materials posted on the City's website – only to be met with error messages indicating that the documents they are seeking are currently unavailable.

At the September 19 City Council meeting, residents and Council members received the happy news that this situation will be changing for the better – and the even more exciting news that City Council meetings will soon be available to be streamed to laptops, home computers, and other remote locations early next year.

Staff have been transitioning documents from the City's DocuShare web site portal to its new system – Granicus – since March. DocuShare had been implemented

by the City in 2008, states the staff report, to allow “members of the public to view and download public meeting materials at no cost. The platform was originally selected for its ease of use and its low price point.” Problems ensued, however, as Orindans found it increasingly difficult to access key documents because the Orinda DocuShare user license was only able to grant access to 12 members of the general public at any one time.

Because the expense to upgrade the City's user license would have been too costly in light of the City's current budget constraints, “Council directed staff [in 2011] to seek alternatives to the City's online agenda packet access system. The purpose was to find a better, more effective means to allow members of the public to access City public meeting materials.” Council also asked staff “to research options to video stream

the City Council meetings to allow residents to remotely view the public Council meetings.”

Staff research showed that Granicus would offer Orinda “a complete platform to access meeting materials with an unlimited user license at a comparable price to what the City now pays for its current, limited license system. Granicus is an award winning solutions provider for government transparency leading the way in online information for over 25 years and serving nearly 1,000 local, state and federal agencies.” The system is also used by the City of Walnut Creek.

In addition to the system's capability to stream video of Council meetings, it “enhances the public's access to meeting materials by embedding links to staff reports directly into the agenda. As a result, members of [the] public will be able to quickly view a corresponding staff report

simply by clicking on the item on the agenda.”

City leaders anticipate that Orinda “will be fully supported on the Granicus platform by October 2012.” The annual cost – \$8,500 – has already been factored into the adopted budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013. “This amount includes the cost of data storage and site hosting, along with the capability to video and audio stream public meetings. Should the City decide to implement the video stream portion of the service package, the City would need to invest in a one time cost of camera equipment and installation estimated at approximately \$5,000,” which would be drawn from the Information Systems Internal Fund Budget.

“I think this looks fantastic,” said Council Member Dean Orr. “This system,” said Vice Mayor Amy Worth, “will be much more accessible.”

Orinda City Council Approves Ivy Drive Speed Cushions

By Laurie Snyder

With a 4-0 vote at its September 19 meeting, Orinda City Council approved the addition of new speed cushions for the 200 block of Ivy Drive. Mayor Steve Glazer was out of town and did not vote.

That action followed nearly a year of analysis and planning by the City's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) and Ivy Drive's Neighborhood Action Team (NAT), which resulted in TSAC's approval on March 19 of the NAT proposal to install cushions crossing Ivy Drive at residence numbers 215 and 216. TSAC's action was conditional, pending approval both by property owners abutting the cushion

locations and the City Council.

On June 28, City staff mailed informational brochures with pre-paid polling postcards to “Orinda property owners abutting Ivy Drive between Coral Drive and Moraga Way south” to solicit their input. Of the 42 residents polled, 20 responded in favor and nine were opposed. The poll had a 69 percent response rate; a minimum 50 percent response rate was required.

Benefits cited at the time in-

cluded speed reduction and low initial installation and maintenance costs. Cons identified were a 3.8 second delay to fire trucks with potentially longer delays for ambulances due to their narrower wheel bases – and the possibility that the addition of the new cushions would only divert speeders to other streets.

The operations chief for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District spoke briefly during the public forum to reiterate the depart-

ment's request that careful attention be paid to the width of the speed cushions installed to ensure that MOFD personnel will not be delayed in reaching residents in emergency situations. Vice Mayor Amy Worth responded, saying that it was her understanding that adjustments have been made to the width of cushions in response to MOFD concerns.

The cost for the installation of the new cushions and related signage is estimated at \$7,500.

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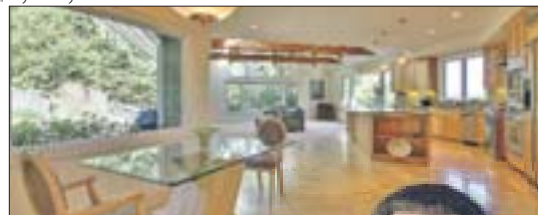
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Orinda Restaurant Tour



Never too soon to become a foodie? Orinda's culinary wizards dazzled 344 attendees of all ages yet again at Orinda's latest Restaurant Tour. Fans of fabulous munchies nibbled their way throughout Theatre Square September 18 while making new friends and helping to raise funds for the Educational Foundation of Orinda and the Orinda Chamber of Commerce.
 Photo Ohlen Alexander

Orinda Candidate Debates – Mark Your Calendar

Grab your notepad and two neighbors – and help fill the Orinda Library Auditorium to standing room only at these two important events. Get to know Orinda's candidates for public office, and get ready to vote in November.

October 11, 7 p.m.
 Orinda City Council Candidate Forum

October 15, 7 p.m.
 School Board Candidates' Roundtable Discussion

Both events are co-sponsored by the Orinda Association and the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley.

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Civic News Lafayette

Commission Recommends Denial of Tall Condo Project

... continued from page A2



Simulated view from Dewing Avenue of proposed KB Home Town Center III project. Provided

Commissioner Tom Chastain said he was not clear on the sense of direction from the city attorney, but Commissioner Patty Curtain-Tinley said, "I don't think we can legally deny this project." She explained that the Development Agreement ties their (Planning

Commission) hands, and in her opinion, the Commissioners need to make findings in context of both the Development Agreement and Settlement Agreement.

Four of the six commissioners voted in favor of denying the application, so the Planning Com-

mission will forward a recommendation of denial to the City Council. "We believe we have a viable project and are committed to working with the City Council," said Director of Corporate Communications for KB Home, Craig LeMessurier.

Civic News Moraga

New Corporals for Moraga Police

By Sophie Braccini



Town Clerk Marty McInturf swears in Corporals Mary Ann Grubb, Will Davis and Randy Pacheco under the watchful eye of Chief Robert Priebe. Photo provided

Three Moraga police officers, Mary Ann Grubb, Randy Pacheco and William Davis, were recently sworn in as new Moraga Police Corporals. "I'm very happy to promote these three outstanding officers," said Chief Robert Priebe. "Each of them has demonstrated

leadership in different areas and deserves to continue to grow professionally." Town Manager Jill Keimach added, "I'd like to congratulate Chief Priebe for training and promoting officers in his staff and preparing for the future."

Planning for Moraga's Roads

... continued from page A5

Street Saver's calculations indicated that to maintain the roads at their current level, the cost will be \$1.55 million per year; raising the level from at risk to good would cost \$2.55 million per year. Even with the large benefit of the sales tax, Moraga will need more money. "We need to build trust with the public, for them to see that the money is put right into the streets," said Kwan, "then they may be willing to do more in the future; the voters will decide."

If the tax does not pass, "that would be a very sad story," said Kwan. "The costs will increase ex-

ponentially. It costs \$5 per square yard to add a slurry seal every 3 or 4 years on a road in good shape, while it costs more than \$100 per square yard to repair it when it is failed. Without Measure K, 70 percent of our roads will be failed in 10 years." Currently six percent of Moraga's roads have failed.

Kwan acknowledges that deferred maintenance is a common problem. "If the measure does not pass I will still do my best, focusing on putting band-aids all over the place, but the reality is that (the roads) will continue to deteriorate," he concluded.

Camino Ricardo Development

... continued from page A5

These impacts can be in the area of air or water quality, geological or archeological impacts, traffic, and noise, among other things.

This first public meeting was held so the community could weigh in about environmental concerns. The Town will investigate each of the aspects and assess how the proposed development will impact the environment. It will be up to the developer to mitigate these impacts.

The piece of property is the first chunk of land to be developed as part of the Moraga Center Specific Plan that was adopted in January, 2010. This document, which is available on the Town's website, authorizes types of development and density for the large downtown area that lies roughly between Moraga Way and Moraga Road. It includes the Moraga Shopping Center as well as many undeveloped parcels such as the pear orchard east of Camino Ricardo.

In the Specific Plan, the SummerHill property is defined as a "transition" area between the existing single family neighborhood on Camino Ricardo and higher density development authorized in the pear orchard. The density is defined as three dwelling units per acre.

Most of the land addressed in the downtown specific plan belongs to the Bruzzone family, but not the lot where these 28 homes are proposed. This oddly-shaped lot belongs to the Che family, who also owned the land

that became the Sonsara homes.

Some of the neighbors who came to that first meeting are veterans of the Town's planning process. They offered comments and weighed in when Sonsara was developed and when the Specific Plan was approved. On September 19, many of the concerns they voiced referred to that development.

"When Sonsara was developed, the final design was a result of a compromise between all the parties, and it succeeded in preserving the semi-rural character of the town," said one neighbor. "This is not what we have here; these are tract homes like in Daly City."

The design presented by SummerHill is, at first glance, of a much higher density than the 3 dwelling units per acre authorized by the Specific Plan. This results from massing the homes on the eastern portion of the lot, leaving a large expanse of land for a park and permanent open space.

This visual impact was only one among many concerns of residents, including traffic, safety, noise, a potential health hazard, grading, wild life, parking, visibility from the scenic corridor and more.

The first joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Design Review Board regarding this project will be held on October 1st. It is a public meeting that starts at 7 p.m. For the location check the Town's website, moraga.ca.us.

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community.
Send a letter to the editor: letters@lamorindaweekly.com



EFO says

"Congratulations and Thank You to Clark Thompson"

who won the Real Estate Agent Donation Competition for the largest donation made by an agent to EFO for the 2011-2012 year.

Clark Thompson contributed \$2,550.00



EFO says Congratulations and Thank You to Village Associates Real Estate for winning the Real Estate Office Donation Competition. This office had the most agents who donated to EFO for the 2011-2012 year.

Ann Sharf, April Matthews, Clark Thompson, Joan Cleveland, Linda Ehrich, Margaret Zucker, Patricia Battersby, Sue Layng and The Olsen Team.

Honorable mention and a big Thank You goes to The Olsen Team for donating \$2500.



The 2012-2013 EFO donation year has started and the contest is being held again. Which agent will donate the most money this year? Which office will have the highest number of contributing agents?



Letters to the Editor



Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis.
email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Editor:
 All five candidates for the Moraga Town Council support the proposal for a one percent local sales tax to be voted on in November. However, many Moragans are not aware of it. Those of us who recognize how important it is should take every opportunity to explain it to others. We should point out that our streets and storm drains naturally deteriorate and that the Town needs an ongoing stream of revenue to keep up with maintenance. Unlike the state sales tax, this is a local tax and the money will stay in Moraga. Technically, the Town isn't required to spend the money for this pressing need, but realistically it will. After all, for the past three years we have been trying to figure out how to finance the infrastructure maintenance required to avoid getting into a deep hole of unaffordable costs. This little tax is the least painful way to generate much-needed funding. Please talk it up. And don't forget to point out that sales taxes are not charged on groceries or medications.

Dale Walwark
 Moraga

Editor:
 I'm always inspired and impressed by the many people who so selflessly give of their time to serve our community. And no area in our community is in greater need of good people than our educational system. So it is with great pleasure that I endorse Jean Follmer for the Lafayette School Board.

I have served with Jean in many capacities over the years and I am always struck by her thoughtful approach, her depth of knowledge, and her ability to tackle the difficult issues with integrity and conviction. Serving on the school board is not an easy task -- it is a job that requires a thorough knowledge of our district's inner workings, a keen understanding of local and state funding issues, a willingness and openness to listen to the community whose interests are represented and above all, a deep desire to fundamentally improve our children's quality of education. Jean's extensive experience in many areas across our school district makes her uniquely qualified for just such a job. We face challenging times ahead and this will require a highly-qualified and competent candidate -- I can think of no better person to help lead our school district forward than Jean Follmer.

I hope you will join me in voting for Jean this November.

Sincerely,
 Shannon Tague
 Lafayette

Editor:
 There is a major hazard in the proposed Moraga Adobe development

which has not been addressed. The previous owners of the Adobe property proposed a development. The City of Orinda rejected the proposal because the property consists of slide-prone land with underground springs.

The current proposed development has only one access road which starts at the bottom of the development. This road will fail in a moderate earthquake. If a fire breaks out from a broken gas line, the residents can't escape and the fire trucks can't get in. Not only will wind-blown embers from the fire ignite the neighborhood, but also they will ignite the adjacent wild lands which have never had the brush cut and which can't be accessed by fire trucks. A firestorm will develop and, as the Great Oakland Fire showed, it will jump over Highway 24 and both south and north Orinda will burn.

It is essential that a second access road be required, and the road must access the top of the development. One such route can connect to nearby Dolores Way.

It should be an emergency access road.

The absence of this second access road endangers all of Orinda.

If you are interested in the Moraga Adobe development and its hazards to Orinda, plan to attend the Orinda Planning Commission review of the development plans on Tuesday, October 9. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the New City Library in Orinda. I urge you to speak and to applaud other speakers with whom you agree.

Clyde Vaughn
 Orinda

Editor:
 In June of 2011 Orinda City Council Member Amy Worth advised the Council that they should create an emergency services task force to review how Orinda is being served by Moraga Orinda Fire Dept. fourteen years after its formation. The majority of the Council disagreed, even after being presented with a petition requesting the task force signed by 220 residents. Despite numerous fruitless efforts of the past, the City Council continued to instruct citizens with concerns to deal with MOFD directly.

In response, some of the petitioners formed their own Task Force and have spent the past year collecting data . the operations and finances of MOFD, specifically how they affect Orinda's residents and taxpayers. The report is ready for release (www.OrindaTaskForce.org) and some of its findings are worthy of the public's attention:

- 40% of all time critical incidents in Orinda are not responded to within the 6-minute industry standard.
- the District has accrued \$700 million in deferred employee benefit liabilities

and currently only has \$110 million in assets to offset them.

• to fully fund the employees' future benefits could cost between 40 and 50 percent of MOFD's total revenue for a couple of decades.

Service cuts or realignment may be necessary to ensure MOFD's future financial stability and City officials need to be involved in the process to advocate for Orinda's taxpayers. The City needs to assure its citizens' safety by fully understanding the issues and working with MOFD and Moraga to provide for the community's emergency services needs.

We have an upcoming election with three candidates running for Orinda City Council. The voters should understand where each candidate stands on this crucial issue.

Diana Stephens
 Orinda

Editor:
 Orinda needs a steady hand and strong vision to meet the challenges ahead. This is why I am actively supporting Victoria Smith for the Orinda City Council.

My personal experiences working with Victoria have always proven that she truly puts Orinda first and has been deliberate and conscientious in her decisions. There are so many hot button issues facing our small community, that affect our quality of life, and Victoria always sought to gather the facts and move forward based on them. Her proven leadership and experience making the tough decisions facing the city council are what give me the confidence that she is the right choice for Orinda!

Please join me in proudly voting for Victoria Smith!

Brook Mancinelli
 Orinda

Editor:
 Please do all residents of Orinda a favor and vote for Victoria Smith for re-election to the Orinda City Council. I have known Victoria for close to fifteen years, both personally and professionally. Whether volunteering at school and as a leader with Boy Scouts when her sons were younger, or serving as mayor of our city, Victoria is consistently hard-working, level-headed, practical, and efficient. Our City Council needs Victoria's respectful manner and considerable skills and intellect now more than ever as it continues to face the challenges of applying limited resources to the most pressing needs of our community in innovative ways to maximize their impact.

In addition to her extensive work with City commissions that benefits us all, including Citizens Infrastructure Oversight, Parks & Recreation, Traffic Safety Advisory, Planning, and Historic Landmarks, Victoria assists organizations dedicated to providing

resources to meet the needs of special members of our community such as youth and seniors. She brings a thoughtful approach to the many issues that come before the Council, including her enthusiastic support for improvements to our downtown area which balance the advantages of additional housing, shops, and restaurants with preserving Orinda's small town atmosphere.

Please re-elect Victoria Smith so all citizens of Orinda will continue to receive the highest level of representation of our interests.

Dana Dumas Sankary
 Orinda

Editor:
 Measure K is a one percent sales tax to fund roadway repair in the Town of Moraga. If this measure is passed, our town council will vote to issue municipal bonds that will provide immediate funding for roadway repair, rehabilitation, and maintenance.

In preparation for this, our town hired Edric Kwan in July as Town Engineer and Public Works Director. Mr. Kwan is an experienced municipal engineer who is adept at pavement management. A few weeks ago Edric took the time to explain some of the technical aspects of pavement assessment and management to me and answer my questions. He utilizes the latest software tools to assist him making the best decisions -- decisions that are objective, cost effective and timely.

Our meeting left me confident that our town is following the right path, at the right time with the right people. They are focused on delivering recognizable improvements to our roads in the short term and establishing a comprehensive maintenance program for the long term.

Good roads benefit all in our community and Measure K is the first step. I support Measure K.

William Faoro, PE Civil
 Moraga

Editor:
 Obama vs Romney isn't the only story come this November. There are

many other stories that will make a huge impact here in Moraga for years to come. Our Town Council has three seats open, five candidates running and only two of those, incumbents. Our Moraga School District Board has two seats open, three people running and only one of those, an incumbent. Also up for vote is Measure K for our roads and Propositions 30 and 38 that are vying for your votes and which will impact our local schools for years to come. Moragans have some very big decisions to make!

What can residents of Moraga do? First, make sure you and all those in your household 18+ are registered to vote. The deadline is October 22. Next, get informed! As a board member of the Moraga Citizens Network, whose goal is promote involvement in the Moraga community, I urge you to do just that -- get involved and get informed. MCN is hosting its fourth Candidates Night on Thursday, October 4th at the Holy Trinity Serbian Church at 7:30 p.m. This year will be moderated by Tim Farley, Director of Community and Government Relations at St. Mary's College. All 5 candidates for Town Council will be present or represented. Residents are encouraged to bring their questions to be answered live. There is a lot to talk about with ridgeline development, winery regulations, budgets, roads, and let's not forget dogs and parks -- all deserving more than a written sentence or two from candidates.

The local PTAs are hosting two local forums for School Board candidates: Monday, October 1, 9:30-11am and Thursday, October 11, 7-8:30pm, both at the JM Library. They are also working to put together an event regarding the ever-confusing Education Funding propositions (30 and 38). Keep an eye out for that date and let your neighbors know too.

Life is pretty good here in Moraga. Let's keep it that way by making informed decisions for the right leaders and the right taxes.

Denise Duff
 Moraga

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Community Service

Local Girls Benefit from Tech Trek Camp

Submitted by Sandy Fox-Sohner



Lamorinda Tech Trek Campers, from left: Maya, Audrey, Cara, Caroline, Anna, and Morgan. Photo Provided

Thanks to scholarships from Orinda/Moraga/Lafayette (OML) AAUW, six Lamorinda intermediate school students recently returned from their week-long Grace Hopper Tech Trek camp with a renewed sense of enthusiasm about science and math, and shared their stories at a reception September 11 sponsored by the AAUW Tech Trek committee.

The camp, which is designed to encourage seventh- and eighth-grade girls to "persist with their excitement about science and math through high school, college, and into their careers," was held at Stanford University and featured hands-on activities in math and science as well as a chance for the girls to meet professional women in

science and math-related fields.

This year, core classes at camp included Oceanography, CSI forensics, 3D Math, and Design Engineering and Physics. Participants built functional robots, made a working model roller coaster from rolled up newspapers, engaged in bridge-building contests using only uncooked spaghetti, attended field trips to medical research laboratories and wildlife preserves, and met numerous professional women scientists and engineers.

One student, Anna, went on a field trip with her forensics class to the world-renowned Stanford Blood Center. "The man who spoke with us created the first FDA approved vaccine for cancer, and his lab was the

first lab that screened blood for HIV," she said. Another student, Caroline, said her favorite experience was dissecting a squid with two of her classmates. "We cut up the mantle of the squid and saw all of the internal organs, including the stomach and the ink sac."

Each student was grateful for the opportunity to attend the camp. "I have always wanted to be a scientist," said Maya, "but this has been an eye opener."

AAUW OML is planning a fundraising event, the Walnut Creek Restaurant Walk, from 6 to 9 p.m. October 9 to help raise money for additional Tech Trek scholarships. For information, call Sandy Fox-Sohner at (925) 631-0668.

OCF Expands Board

Submitted by Sue Severson



Photo provided

Orinda Community Foundation has expanded their board and selected new trustees including Erik Andersen, Mark Roberts and Ted Urban. They join founding trustees Dick Burkhalter, Carol Penskar, Sue Severson and Richard Westin.

OCF in its third year is now accepting grant applications for 2012 through October 15. All dollars raised the prior year through its main fundraisers, including community donations, Everyday Heroes golf tournament and Nor-

Cal Kids Triathlon, go directly to meet our mission of "Enhancing the Quality of Life in Orinda." To download an application or get more information visit www.orindafoundation.org.

Back to School Backpack Drive a Success

Submitted by Elizabeth Lewis



NCL members, from left: Alyssa Wright, Macall Rempp, Kirsten Sibley, Meg Newton, Olivia Carver, Lucy Fellner, and Katja Brewer. Photo provided

Right before the school year started, the Acalanes Chapter of National Charity League (NCL), a mother-daughter philanthropic organization, was busy making sure everyone could have new school supplies this fall. Several girls from throughout Lamorinda in grades 7-12 spent three days collecting supplies for Foster A Dream, a non-profit organization in Martinez that opened its Dream Store September 15 to distribute back-to-

school items including new clothing, shoes, backpacks, and school supplies to Bay Area foster children.

The non-profit's goal was to provide over 1,500 Bay Area foster children with backpacks and supplies needed for this school year. The Acalanes NCL leadership team (run by the officers of each grade level) planned the collection events and worked with CVS and The Dollar Store in Moraga to collect needed items. With everyone's gen-

erosity, the girls were able to provide over 60 backpacks to Foster A Dream as well as buy loads of additional supplies for the Dream Store. NCL members thank the retailers and shoppers who generously donated backpacks and school supplies.

For more information about Foster A Dream, visit www.fosteradream.org. For information about NCL, visit www.nationalcharityleague.org/nclacalanesarea.

Lafayette Art & Wine Festival

Photos Linda Foley and Andy Schreck



Orinda Classic Car Show

Photos Ohlen Alexander



MOFD Approves 2012/2013 General Fund and Capital Projects Budget

Board approves deficit budget for second year

By Lucy Amaral

Working with budget figures that are nearly \$2 million lower than they were two years ago, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Board of Directors approved the 2012/13 General Fund and Capital Projects budget. The General Fund budget has expected revenues of \$17,781,231 and projected expenses of \$18,586,035, which means the budget will run just over \$800,000 short.

According to MOFD Fire Chief Randy Bradley's staff report, a series of staffing and program cuts have been made over the last two years in order to present the Board with a balanced budget without reducing service levels. He said that because of the continuing decline in revenue, presenting a balanced budget for 2012/2013 without service level reductions and/or interruption was not possible.

Bradley cited that property tax revenue growth was essentially flat, with actual 2012/2013 assessments coming in at a .40 percent increase over last year. He stated in his report

that with overall District revenues decreasing by one percent, combined with increased pension costs, as well as a deficit carry-over of more than \$250,000 from last year's budget, the projected General Funds deficit for the 2012/2013 fiscal year is estimated at \$804,804. The Board approved the budget with the deficit and called for the shortfall to be covered with Reserve funds.

In addressing the challenge of balancing the budget going forward, Bradley said that he has been working on an updated long-range financial forecast, which not only addresses the operational shortfalls, but long term pension liabilities. He added that he is close to completing the draft but could not present it to the Board because the District is still in negotiations with its labor union, and he is reviewing what effects the newly passed pension reform law will have on the forecast. Bradley said he hopes the draft can be presented at the next Board meeting.

The Board also approved the 2012/2013 Capital Projects Fund Budget. This fund is used for replacing fire-fighting equipment, building upgrades, and the acquisition and construction of major capital projects. Projects currently budgeted are the rebuilding of Station 42 in Orinda, remodeling of Station 41 in Moraga, functional upgrades for Station 45 in Orinda and installing communication network switches. The fund held nearly \$3.5 million at the start of this fiscal year. The staff report states that it expects to receive an additional \$1.07 million with expenditures of just over \$2.5 million. The Board agreed that while the individual budget items are approved, there will be opportunities for the Board to review each project again and make adjustments if necessary.

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Moraga Orinda Fire District

Board of Directors Meetings
Meetings of the MOFD Board of Directors are open to the public and take place on the third Wednesday of each month at the Hacienda de las Flores, Mosaic Room, 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga

Next meeting:

Regular Board Meetings:

October 3, 2012
7:00 P.M.

(go to www.mofd.org as the meeting date approaches for more information)

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Muffin People Always Rise to the Occasion
... continued from page A1



Ray Casabonne loads his pickup with food for Oakland Shelters Photos Cathy Dausman

"My mom (founder Mary Ann Wright) would be very proud of them." Sister Deanine Medina, director of A Friendly Place says her shelter treasures its daily deliveries from Muffin People, calling it "a lifeline of food" and "a wonderful ministry."

We never know what's going to be in [the delivery boxes]," she says.

Muffin People was founded 26 years ago by John McGhee, who enlisted a men's fellowship group from Moraga's St. Monica Church, but current administrator Jack Dice emphasizes "this is not a Catholic organization, it is an organization of people wanting to do good." At one stop years ago, a shelter client anticipating a breakfast treat noted the volunteers' arrival by announcing, "Here comes the Muffin Man," and the name stuck.

Since its membership has grown to include roughly 30 percent women, the organization rebranded itself Muffin People. Muffin People volunteers range in age from 50 to 70-something, and work at least one four-hour shift in the morning each month.

Dice estimates the group collects about \$1.25 million in donated food annually. The present staff of 40 volunteers includes school teachers, doctors, an engineer and a contractor. They are, says Dice, a "well educated and very dedicated group," who become friends with fellow volunteers.

Although volunteers are not reimbursed for their gas and time, Dice says "there is a satisfaction when you finish the day that is indescribable." Trader Joe's Store Captain Patrick Address says the Muffin People he has met are "diligent and very professional. They do a wonderful job."

On a recent Wednesday at the Trader Joe's loading dock Andrew Brainerd helped Muffin People Ray Casabonne, David Caraska and Rich Laufenberg load the day's food contribution. The contents of more than a dozen grocery crates and several full-sized shopping carts were packed into two pickup truck beds and overflowed into the back seat.

"We're just happy someone can use this food," says Brainerd, adding the alternative would be to throw it

away. Laufenberg estimated his open truck bed held 1,500 pounds of food. "If I see a highway patrol car following me with its wipers moving frosting off the windshield, I'll know I didn't tie the load down," he jokes. Sometimes the load really does overwhelm.

There are days when food delivery drivers approach Dice directly to take excess food, and he tells them, "I can't take any more."

It's one reason why Muffin People are always looking for new volunteers.

Dice pairs potential volunteers with a current Muffin People driver until they learn the route. He says six or seven weeks into the work they are "hooked for life."

"People treat us so nice," Dice says, adding in the end the work "gets into your soul."

For information about Muffin People, call Jack Dice at (925) 376-7189. To learn more about packaged food viability, visit the USDA fact sheet at www.fsis.usda.gov/FactSheets/Food_Product_dating/.



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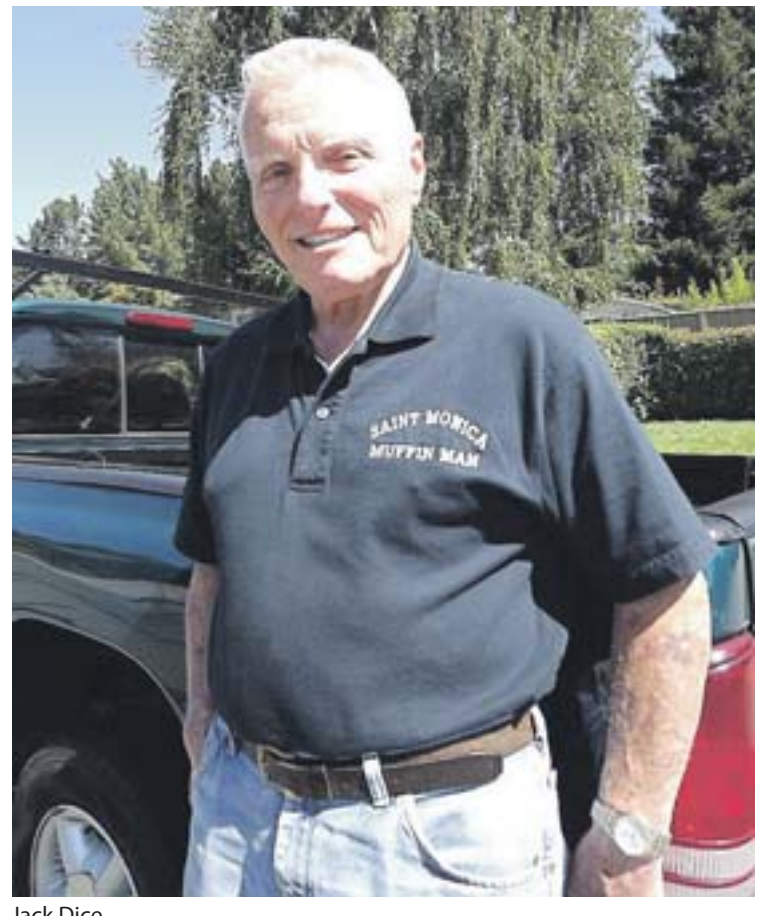
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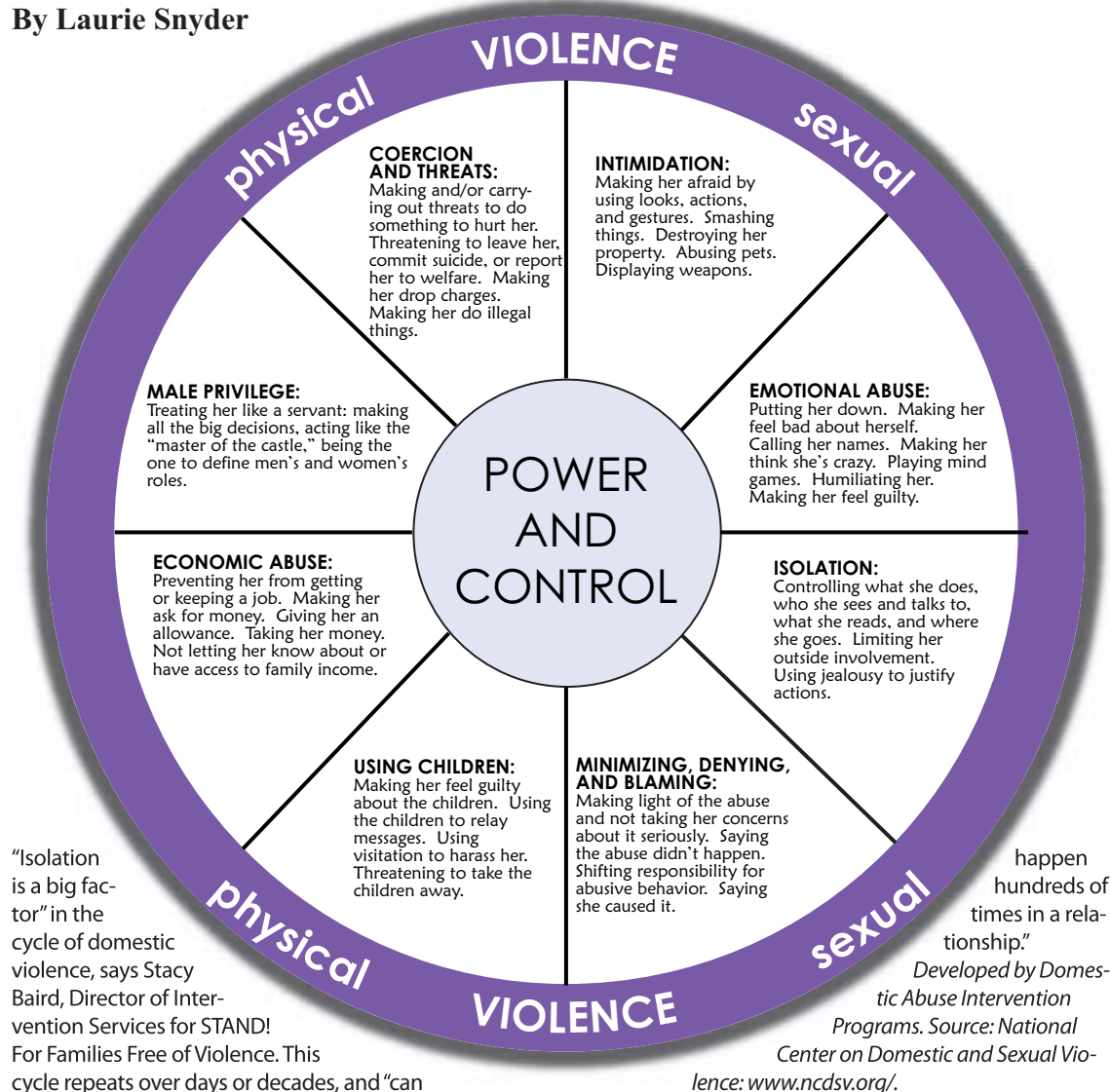
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It Doesn't Have to Be This Way - Taking a Stand Against Domestic Violence

By Laurie Snyder



An unwelcome media spotlight was turned on Lamorinda yet again this summer as news broke regarding back-to-back domestic violence incidents. Arrested for allegedly injuring his wife at their Moraga home June 25, Joseph Sienkiewicz then made a grab, during his booking, for a police officer's gun.

On June 26, Evangeline Cumbe Devera was allegedly murdered by James Collin, the Miramonte High School graduate with whom she had lived on Moraga Way for roughly 10 years. In 2006, Collin pled no contest to charges for battering Devera's head with a telephone. In 2012, his weapon was a machete.

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, nearly "one-third of female homicide victims ... are killed by an intimate partner" annually; a significant percentage of their batterers also physically and mentally harm children. Boys witnessing domestic violence are "twice as likely to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults."

"Even the less extreme violence ... takes its toll," says Gloria Sandoval, CEO for STAND! For Families Free of Violence. "Victims of domestic violence and children grow-

ing up in violent homes may turn to drugs or alcohol to help deal with their emotional and physical pain ... violent partners and those who are abused may neglect or behave abusively toward their children. Victims may miss work to hide injuries."

Moraga had 17 cases of domestic violence from January 2011 to June 2012, according to Moraga Police Chief Robert Priebe; partial figures for 2010 and 2009 show five and seven cases, respectively.

Lafayette has recorded 63 calls for service this year alone, and had 59 in 2011, 86 in 2010, and 85 in 2009, but it should be noted that these Contra Costa Sheriff's Office numbers combine data for domestic battery, domestic disturbances, and domestic violence.

In Orinda, 16 cases of domestic violence were reported to police in 2010, 14 in 2009, and 17 in 2008. Each call, says Orinda Vice Mayor Amy Worth, represents the impact of violence on our neighbors.

Citing national figures that one in four women and one in 13 men will experience domestic violence in their lifetimes, and young women are the most likely targets, Orinda City Council Member Victoria Smith says, "Too often we are told that because

women have, undeniably, made great progress in our society in recent decades, that we don't need to focus on issues that primarily affect women; but these statistics prove that that is just not true."

So Why Don't Victims Just Leave?

The primary reason victims fail to seek help is fear, says Stacy Baird, STAND's Director of Intervention Services. They doubt police will believe them, and feel ashamed. "Calling the police means other people are going to know." Socioeconomic concerns are major factors - even in affluent areas like Lamorinda.

... continued on page B2

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It Doesn't Have to Be This Way – Taking a Stand Against Domestic Violence

... continued from page B1

"People often don't realize that the very attributes that make a town like Orinda an attractive place to live may contribute to a person's ability to exercise abusive control," explains Sandoval. "Houses may be quite separated ... reducing the chances that a neighbor will overhear arguments or violence ... public transportation is scarce, requiring access to a car in order to participate in the community. Neighbors respect each other's privacy, so they may overlook warning signs as not being any of their business ... these factors may serve to increase a victim's isolation, especially if a partner controls the finances, the car, and uses threats of physical violence."

For immigrants, there are additional hurdles. Knowing they fear deportation, their abusers often hide or destroy documents and threaten to report them to Immigration and Naturalization Services.

Take Action

Lamorinda takes "domestic violence very seriously," emphasizes Worth. "As a county, we have a zero tolerance policy." Police are well trained and "are tied in to all of the resources."

Baird wants those thinking about taking their children to a secure loca-

tion to know that STAND! facilities are "very home like" – individual family units with comfy couches, kitchens, and playgrounds where kids will be safe. But because it can be dangerous to leave batterers, she urges victims to work with STAND! to create safety plans.

And if you're the violent one? "Ask for help," says Baird. The crisis line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"As members of the community,"

says Sandoval, "we must play a role if we want to see an end to family violence: Get to know your neighbors. If you haven't seen someone in a few days, check to see if she or he needs anything. If you see something that doesn't seem right, tell someone. If you hear repeated loud arguments, or objects being thrown, call the police."

Says Smith, "By shining a light on this simply unacceptable conduct, we hope to reach out to all those at risk and that help is available."

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month Get Educated

Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda are all issuing proclamations supporting October's National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. On October 4, STAND! will host its 20th Annual Rebuilding Lives Luncheon at 11:30 a.m. at the Concord Hilton. Co-chaired by Orinda resident Nadia Costa and emceed by ABC7 news anchor Cheryl Jennings, the event will feature a talk by actor and domestic violence advocate Victor Rivers. For tickets, contact: (925) 676-2845.

On October 14, the Orinda Community Church will present a special service with dance and music at 10 a.m., followed by a Forum on Domestic Violence. The free event will include an 11 a.m. screening in OCC's 200-seat Fellowship Hall of "Telling Amy's Story," plus a discussion with experts from Kaiser, OCC and STAND! All are welcome. For information, visit www.orindachurch.org.

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Bugs in the Garden?



This first-generation VW "Bug" spotted in neighboring Canyon is veritably woven into the landscape under a thick blanket of ivy. Its owner says it was maroon, in its "road worthy" days. No telling how long it has rested there, but the owner stayed loyal to the brand – she still drives a slightly newer, if ivy-free Bug!

Photo Cathy Dausman

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Questions with home care?

Hiring a caregiver...what route should I take?

DEAR VANESSA,

My parents have gotten to that time in their lives where they are needing to have in-home care other than the help from family and friends. I know that there are options to choose from when hiring an in-home care provider including finding a private caregiver as well as going through an agency. Which is the better route? Why should I work through a home care agency? Wouldn't it cost less to hire an independent contractor? I appreciate any advice and answers you can give me to make a wiser, easier, and informed decision. Thank you. ISABEL

Ask Vanessa



Vanessa Valerio, RN

VP and COO for Patient Care
(925) 317-3080

vanessav@careindeed.com

DEAR ISABEL,

Recognizing that it's time to look at sources beyond the family to assist with your parents so they can remain in their own home is not easy. Each caregiving situation is unique and you may face many challenges as you search for information and make decisions about how best to provide care to your aging parents. There are several factors to consider such as cost, legal issues, and other valid concerns.

The cost of hiring an independent contractor is typically lower than that of an agency. You can hire based on your best judgment. You may have more control and choice in the care plan which may provide more flexibility in terms of the caregiving schedule. If you choose this route, be prepared to locate potential caregivers, screen applications, conduct interviews, run background checks, and administer payroll, unemployment, social security and other taxes. You become the employer and the caregiver becomes your employee. Although hiring an independent contractor is less expensive, it involves more risk and is where most fraud and abuse are likely to occur. Many home care workers represent themselves as independent contractors--thereby relieving the hiring family or individual of tax obligations. It is your responsibility to make sure that the home care worker truly is an independent contractor and is therefore paying his own taxes and carrying his own liability and worker's compensation insurance. If the aide is not meeting these obligations, you (the employer) become responsible for him or her. Hiring through an agency is more expensive but involves less risk. On top of the time-saving advantage that this route offers, an agency will handle all legal requirements of being an employer and help you avoid having trouble with the IRS. An agency who hires its own employees pays the payroll taxes, files tax returns and has workers compensation insurance, with liability insurance. These are all necessary to ensure that you and your family are protected.

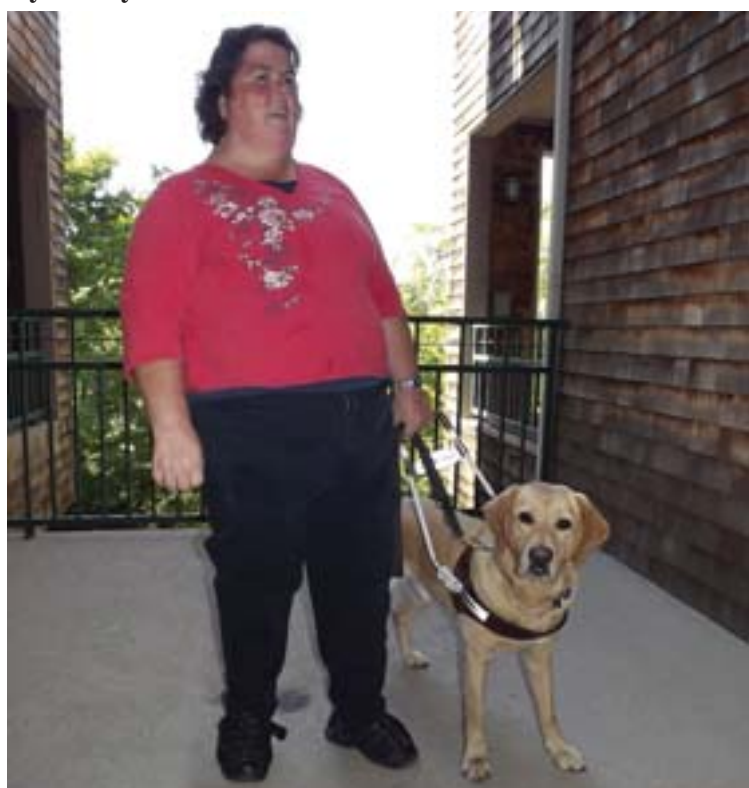
Another concern is exploitation. While the vast majority of people who become home care workers do so out of a desire to help others and serve the needs of seniors in their community, there are always those who see this type of work as an opportunity to take advantage of those who are frail, functionally limited, or cognitively impaired. This most often occurs when there is no one (agency or individual) to provide proper supervision of the home care worker. A licensed home care agency is required to supervise their aides, have their performances evaluated periodically by an RN, and provide ongoing in-service training. This can reduce a lot of extra work, save you time, and alleviate some anxiety.

A third concern is continuity of care. When you hire someone privately, what happens when they become sick or have family obligations elsewhere? Not having back-up help when your caregiver is unavailable is a disadvantage. If a home care worker comes from an agency, that agency can provide another worker in such cases to make sure that your parents' needs are met without undue interruption.

Working through an agency is not foolproof. But most agencies work diligently to make sure that their clients get the best possible care experience from the best of caregivers. In the long run, this is a safer and more cost-effective option as an agency assumes responsibility and liability for their caregivers. Whatever route you choose to take, I hope you will be fortunate enough to find a devoted caregiver with a kind and caring attitude. VANESSA

A Four-Footed Guiding Light

By Cathy Dausman



Laurie Van Allen with guide dog Danville Photo Cathy Dausman

Lafayette resident Laurie Van Allen is always in good company when she goes out. Her companion is a handsome young male named Danny. He is a former model – a 2009 “Mr. October” – who loves to hike and run, loves kids, and is “gaga over babies.” Van Allen and Danny are literally and figuratively “connected at the hip,” she says, because Danny, or Danville, is her guide dog.

Van Allen, who has retinitis pigmentosa, a condition which prevents her from seeing faces or colors, moved to the East Bay to attend the California School for the Blind. “I was a cane user for 22 years,” she says, “until I fell down the stairs at county hospital.”

She first applied for a guide dog in October 1999, and underwent rigorous medical testing and a home evaluation with a trainer. After acceptance to the program, Van Allen entered San Rafael’s Guide Dogs for the Blind school in 2000, and lived on campus to train for a month, learning techniques to work with her guide dog as a team and how to care for her companion. She was paired with Auckland, a male yellow Labrador retriever and the two worked together more than six years, until the dog was retired due to health issues.

Van Allen reapplied for a second dog and again underwent medical exams and a home evaluation, as she will do each time she requests a dog. She was given a female yellow Labrador named Prima, but Van Allen said Prima was a “poor fit.” After only six months Van Allen relinquished the dog, and it was retired from active

service. Van Allen waited 18 months for her next dog, Danville, because he was originally paired with someone else. While Danville was bred at the Guide Dogs for the Blind campus in San Rafael, he was raised in homes in Nevada and Oregon. Van Allen and Danville trained together at the Boring, Oregon Guide Dogs for the Blind campus.

Danville, whom Van Allen nicknames “Tigger” or “Mr. Houdini” when he jumps or misbehaves, was one of a litter of five yellow Labrador retriever puppies. Danville’s brother Duncan (littermate names all start with the same letter) is also a guide dog; brother Damon fathered several guide dog litters.

On the job, Danville wears a leash and a harness, and enjoys doing his work, says Van Allen, and he knows the location of every crosswalk button in Lafayette. The hard part is training the public to allow her guide dog to focus. People still want to interact with the dog even when Van Allen requires his full attention. “Always ask first. When my hand is on his harness, he’s working,” she says.

While Van Allen searches for employment she and Danville spend their days volunteering at Oakland’s Lion’s Center for the Blind and socializing with friends from Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program and the Foggy Doggies group. Whether working, walking, riding busses or BART, the two are always together.

“I would be lost without him,” Van Allen says.

September is National Guide Dog Month

Guide Dogs for the Blind operates campuses in San Rafael and Boring, Oregon. The San Rafael campus breeds Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, and Labrador Retriever/Golden Retriever mixes for the guide dog program. A host of professional staff members, trainers, vets and volunteer host families work with the dogs from puppyhood through retirement. Over 10,000 teams have graduated from the program since its inception in 1942. For more information about Guide Dogs for the Blind, visit www.guidedogs.com. You can also read the 2007 Lamorinda Weekly story about guide dog puppy trainers at www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0108/pdf/LamorindaPuppyRaisersGiveofSelvesforGreatCause.pdf.

Lamorinda Weekly

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Behind the Scenes:

Cal Shakes Director Finds New Take on Classic for Season's Final Performance

By Lou Fancher



Mia Tagano as the Player Queen, Danny Scheie as the Player King, and the cast of *Hamlet* in California Shakespeare Theater's production of *Hamlet*, directed by Liesl Tommy. Photos Kevin Berne

Born in apartheid South Africa, raised in America from her teenage years into young adulthood and traveling the globe ever since, Liesl Tommy is haunted by her other self – which makes her the ideal candidate for directing Cal Shakes' season closer: William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, running September 19 through October 14.

"One of the shocking things is to experience freedom, then have it taken away. I was aware of what I didn't have, but that other people do have. A part of myself always felt like I was less in a place. There was a refrain of this other place I'd left behind," she says.

Hamlet's brooding politics, tortured memories and dark family tragedy has transfixed audiences, directors and academics in both theater and film. Cal Shakes last presented Director Karin Coonrod's *Hamlet* in 2000 and mounted the work in 1978, 1982, and 1993.

Determined to find her own take on the masterpiece, Tommy avoided looking at other productions and consulted a former college professor. He told her to forget about finding the play's "definitive version" and instead, to seek a *Hamlet* that sprang from her personal history and perspective.

Still, the cutting, the process of selecting which lines in a script will be excised, was intimidating.

"I had to do it, because we don't want to be in the theater for over four hours!" she laughs. "But I thought, *Who am I to cut this?* When I was in school, I learned how to deliver Shakespeare's text. It shaped how I approached language in every play that I do."

Eventually, when she let go of the burdens and simply responded to it, the play opened up – only to reveal another struggle. "There are dated words, like 'bodkin.' It's important that the audience knows it means 'dagger,' but dagger isn't the same and it affects the scansion [the metric patterns in a line of poetry], so you have to find a proper substitute," she worries.

Compromise and worry are not a part of the actors Tommy has cast. "The actor playing Hamlet (LeRoy McClain), I've worked with before," she says. "I would never dare embark on this play without someone who wasn't a parallel thinker with me. He came into the first reading profoundly prepared, which is what you need."

Calling the rest of the company, which includes actors Zainab Jah as Ophelia, Nick Gabriel as Horatio and Julie Eccles as Gertrude, "incredibly skilled," Tommy says, "I looked around and realized I could do exactly what I envisioned."

As a director, Tommy considers a play to be a conversation with an audience and draws inspiration from her environment and the community.

"As an artist, I have to respond to the play as honestly and personally as I can. I don't cater to age, or economic demographic, but I take into consideration the city or area," she explains. "I decided not to make it period and to not put it in a castle. It's set in a large mansion, [embedded] in a hill. Where do you think I got that?"

The outdoor Orinda amphitheater is thrilling Tommy. "It speaks to me of ancient drama," she says. "There's nothing I love more than hearing a skillful actor deliver poetry that lands in a beautiful place."

Three primal elements also attracted Tommy to the play. "Vio-

lence: I enjoy exploring it onstage just because it's such a part of every conversation a civil society engages in. Grief: I am always interesting in how we deal with death, pain, loss. And magical realism: the beauty and romance of theatricality," she concludes.

When she hits "director's block," or just the end of a long rehearsal day, Tommy takes walks, admires Bay Area homeowners' gardens, or indulges in her secret vice. "I watch Reality television," she confesses. "Project Runway, Top Chef, National Geographic; anything without a story, without script analysis."

Embracing both Shakespeare and pop culture, Tommy carries on the grand traditions of The Bard in a dichotomous life, traveling easily "from the ridiculous to the sublime."

Hamlet, presented by California Shakespeare Theater, runs through October 14 at the Bruns Amphitheater, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way (off Highway 24), Orinda. For information, call (510) 548-9666 or visit www.calshakes.org.



Mia Tagano as Ensemble, Danny Scheie as Osric, Jessica Kitchens as Ensemble, Julie Eccles as Gertrude, and LeRoy McClain as Hamlet in California Shakespeare Theater's production of *Hamlet*, directed by Liesl Tommy.

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It's The Year of The Gael!

Saint Mary's College of California to Celebrate 150th Anniversary

Submitted by Mike McAlpin



Photo Andy Scheck

In 1863, in the wake of the California Gold Rush and in the middle of the Civil War, Saint Mary's College first opened its doors in San Francisco. Since 1868, the College has been

guided by the Christian Brothers, the Catholic Church's oldest order dedicated exclusively to teaching. Saint Mary's moved to Oakland in 1889 and operated there until 1928, when it re-

located to its current location in Moraga. The College is now celebrating — no, make that "Gaelebrating"— its 150th anniversary.

During the 2012-13 academic year, the College will mark the Year of the Gael. Throughout the year, a host of free public events, forums and performances will take place at the college to honor Saint Mary's sesquicentennial.

Gaelebration — the College's massive free public festival and open house — will be held from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. October 6. Attractions will include a campus carnival featuring children's rides and attractions — including a seven-story Ferris wheel — campus tours and interactive programs from various academic departments. Afternoon entertainment features performances by California acoustic soul band Alma Desnuda and the College's music, theater and dance departments, along with athletic demonstrations, live bands and, of course, great food. Gourmet food trucks from Off the Grid

will provide delicious offerings as Gaelebration fare.

Public transportation is encouraged as Campus parking is limited, however, satellite parking will be available, with free continuous shuttle services at Lafayette BART, the Rheem Shopping Center in Moraga and the Moraga Commons Park. Gaelebration tents will be at each location, and handicapped parking is available on-site.

The College launched a new website, Year of the Gael (yearofthegael.com), and will be rolling out new interactive features throughout the sesquicentennial year. The public can also sign up for weekly updates to get the latest on new events, programs and performances.

**Gaelebration
October 6
11 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

Philip Michaels' No Fortunate Son Transports Readers to Time of Turmoil, Transformation

By Jennifer Wake



Author Phil Litchenstein
Photos provided

It is present day when protagonist Patrick Golden reads in a New York Times obituary that his good friend has died. A memorial service across the country, and a woman from his past awaiting him, sets the mysterious backdrop for Lafayette author Phil Litchenstein's historical fiction *No Fortunate Son*, written under the pen name Philip Michaels.

On his way to Boston, Golden takes readers on a journey into his past and to the turbulent times as a UC Berkeley college student in the late 1960s. Readers follow Golden, for example, along Telegraph Avenue as he is "squeezed through a disorderly mob of placard-carrying war protestors, hippies, dancing Hare Krishnas, panhandlers, and doorway drug dealers — its habitués. Over the pounding of their jungle drums and the clashing of their finger cymbals, he could hear their chants, mantras and supplications as he hurried past."

Litchenstein captures the essence of the period, incorporating the many events that rocked the nation and shifted the perceptions of its youth.

"I wanted to recreate that unique social and political era right down to the events, sights, sounds, and ideas that led to the counterculture of the youth," Lichtenstein says.

Throughout the book, Litchenstein builds upon the dichotomy between the working middle class and the super-rich Harvard elite, the Republican right and the liberal left. The book's engaging characters are believable in both voice and depth, with most taken from Litchenstein's own life and experiences.

"I think it was easier having lived the book," says Litchenstein, who earned his bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley in 1970. "For example, some of the characters didn't need to be invented, only described on paper. 'Hank Golden' was my father right down to the huge forearms and extraordinarily heavy use of blue language. 'Charles' was patterned exactly after my socially well-connected roommate who was, as described, brilliant. Every one of the bizarre things that happened to 'Bary Reuben' really happened!"

Litchenstein describes running from riot police at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, and the Selective Service draft lottery with Golden and friends gathered around the television in the living room as the member of the House Armed Services Committee "prepared to reach his hand into a glass cylinder and extract the first light-blue plastic capsule containing a date." The author brings readers back to the moments when the nation first learned about the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy, and of the Kent State riots. Golden and his girlfriend, Morgan Thackeray, the daughter of an extremely wealthy and politically powerful man from Martha's Vineyard, listen to songs from the Beatles' *Abbey Road*, and Credence Clearwater's new album *Willy and the Poor Boys*.

While the subtext of the novel revolves around a love affair between main characters Golden and Thackeray, *No Fortunate Son* brings those of us who "lived it" back to a day of peace signs and protests, and to those of us who have only heard of it, to a better understanding of the time.

Nostalgia aside, however, *No Fortunate Son* is well written and is an enjoyable read.

If you're interested in more work by Philip Michaels, you can read his articles in L.A. Splash Magazine at www.lasplash.com. Litchenstein is currently working on a WWII spy novel with FDR, J. Edgar Hoover, and "Wild Bill" Donovan (Head of the OSS) as significant characters, called *The Enigma Code*, which he hopes to finish within a year.

No Fortunate Son can be found at bookstores or online at Amazon.com.



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St. Mark's Nursery School Turns 50

Submitted by Bibiana Azuero-Collins



Students from the early days at St. Mark's Nursery School listen intently to their teacher.

Photo Provided

In 1962, a small group of parents formed a committee interested in starting a nursery school at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Orinda and requested a \$2,000 loan from a church member to get the school started. Since then approximately 1,500 children have graduated from St. Mark's Nursery School.

The school was launched with one director, one teacher and 20 students after many volunteers donated their time, installed a play yard and stocked inside cabinets with necessary supplies, said St. Mark's original director Irene Wickland in a letter dis-

cussing the history of the school.

"Our nursery school immediately went off the chart," Wickland wrote. "Additional families were soon pleading with us to take on more children and staff. Coincidentally St. Mark's Church was making plans for an educational building to be added. Since I was a member of the church, I was asked to be on the design and building committee. Having worked with many schools and visiting many others, my head was bursting with ideas that had proven themselves successful at other schools. Our building committee and the architect found these

ideas much to their liking and so our beautiful school developed."

St. Mark's Nursery School currently has one director, three teachers, and enrolls 50 students each year at the site, many of whom are children of past alumni. The school is planning a 50th Anniversary Alumni Ice Cream Social from 2 to 4 p.m. September 30.

"The community embraced our school and our dedicated staff," Wickland wrote. "To be a small part of this wonderful history was a great honor."

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Teens Talk Driving

By Youngjoo Ahn

A 16th birthday is an important milestone because it's the legal age in California when a teen is able to become a licensed driver. Driving without parental supervision offers teens a sense of freedom and responsibility.

As with anything, teens have to learn how to drive before they can even think about touching the steering wheel. The first step is to register for the online Drivers Education (Drivers Ed) courses. Drivers Ed teaches teens how to be safe through interactive videos and lessons. At the end of course, teens take a written test at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to prove they are ready for a learner's permit.

After earning a permit, teens must drive with a parent or guardian for six months, learning on the road experience. They must also complete six hours of training with a professional driver and complete 50 practice hours with an adult before applying for the actual license.

"The process is long and requires the teenager to be well organized from the start. However, the tests are fairly simple and straightforward, as long as you read the directions carefully and pay attention," said Campolindo junior, Anjali Bajaj. Her parents were supportive about her decision to start driving as she helps run errands for them.

Hollywood often presents teen drivers as reckless people who drive at insanely high speeds endangering the lives of others. Unfortunately these depictions may be far more accurate than we teens want to admit. According to the California Department of Motor Vehicles, the greatest risk of traffic accidents is among teenage drivers and the number one cause of death in teenagers is a car crash. One third of all driver deaths between the ages of 16-20 were alcohol-related accidents, notes the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Saane Halaholo, a Miramonte junior, pressured her parents into letting her drive. Through driving, she was able to land a summer job where she drives herself to work instead of relying on her parents for rides. "I

have to pay for my own gas and part of the monthly insurance bill. Driving is not cheap! I am a cautious driver but many teens are influenced by phones, and it's hard to focus on the road when you have an incoming text or call," she said.

Miramonte senior, Nick Choi, believes that being a skillful driver earns respect from peers. With the freedom to drive, he helps non-driving friends get to where they need to be. DMV regulations state that anyone under age 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian or other person specified by law when transporting passengers under 20 years of age, at any time for the first 12 months. They must also have a parent or guardian with them if driving between the hours of 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. for the first year. Teens driving with passengers, especially males, are more distracted, according to DMV research.

Miramonte graduate, Kai Shimoko believes that teens aren't always good drivers because they are in a rush. Impatience leads to violations and accidents. To be a safe and dependable driver, teens need to know and follow the rules, wear their seat belts, ignore their phones, and stay focused on the road.

As teenagers, we need to prove that we deserve the privilege of a driver's license.

Youngjoo Ahn is a junior at Miramonte High School. She hosts international teen radio program, *Express Yourself!* and enjoys photography and baking.



Teen Scene is YOUR voice. If you have something to say or have writing skills and want to be part of our Teen Scene team, email our Teen Coach, Cynthia Brian, Cynthia@CynthiaBrian.com.

The Future of Garbage and Recycling

By Sophie Braccini



Mixed-Waste Processing



In-Vessel Composting



In-Vessel Digestion



Compressed Natural Gas Trucks

Lamorinda recycles about 65 percent of its garbage today, mostly due to efforts by residential users. By 2020, the State goal is to recycle 75 percent of waste, and to include businesses in a mandatory program. The agency that manages waste collection and recycling locally, Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA), recently launched an outreach campaign to explain these goals and seek customer input.

CCCSWA's contracts with Allied Waste and Valley Waste Management will expire in February, 2015. The agency has engaged in a lengthy process that will lead to the signing of new contracts with service providers and community input is being sought.

"We cannot do it without the feedback of the community," says CCSWA Program Manager Lois Courchaine. CCCSWA has already held a series of presentations in its service area, and an online survey is available at www.wastediversion.org. Waste no time - the survey closes October 1.

Residents can't meet the State's new goals alone, according to Courchaine. "If we want to improve the quantity of what is recycled, we must

have businesses' participation," she says.

"Today businesses generate approximately 50 percent of the materials being disposed, and in our CCCSWA service area their recycling rate is only 23 percent." Courchaine does not blame businesses for the poor performance; CCCSWA used to propose a list of more than 20 different haulers, many offering only niche recycling that made recycling just too cumbersome.

CCCSWA recently reduced the number of accredited providers (six now) that can haul business recyclables, making it easier to organize. Courchaine says new technologies will help make recycling easier for everyone, such as mixed waste processing or 'in-vessel' composting.

The CCSWA is governed by a Board of Directors composed of two representatives from each member agency. Lamorinda's representatives are Lafayette Mayor Carol Federighi and Council Member Mike Anderson; Moraga Council Members Karen Mendonca and Dave Trotter; and Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer and Council Member Victoria Smith.

Project Happiness: Happiness is a Skill Teens Can Learn

By Sophie Braccini



Randy Taran Photo provided
Middle School Dean Kim Parks, of Saklan School in Moraga, wants students to be happy – not only because she cares on a personal level, but because when they aren't happy, they can't work very well. Looking for resources in this area, Parks met producer, director and co-author Randy Taran who created "Project Happiness," which offers tools and curriculum to help kids discover lasting happiness starting from within. For the past two years Parks has incorporated Taran's findings and tested her curriculum at Saklan.

"There is an epidemic of stress, every teacher has to deal with it," says Taran in an interview with Microsoft's Daily Edventures, "but there are ways for each student to be better equipped to access the happiness I feel we were born with."

According to Taran, studies show that 50 percent of happiness is a genetic trait, but 40 percent comes from intentional activities and thoughts. "Happiness is a skill set that can be practiced," she says.

The mother of a teenage daughter who had difficulty dealing with school and social stress, Taran looked for tools to help her, but only found resources for adults and college students, nothing for middle and high school kids. Through Project Happiness, she says young people have a chance to look within, to find what their strengths are, tap into those,

learn compassionate communication and learn conflict resolution.

At Saklan, Parks has been using the Project Happiness tools and curriculum with the eighth grade leadership class. "The approach is very hands-on and pro-active," says Parks. "The first weeks we start by discussing long term happiness. At first the students speak about playing games or going to parties, but we dig deeper to find what they think will be lasting in their lives." The leadership class works on other aspects, such as the boomerang effect--how what we do affects others and comes back to us--or 'monkey thoughts,' the negative self-talk.

"We teach and practice coping skills," says Parks, "and the students also apply the values we've explored with younger grades and choose a community service project that has meaning for them."

On October 11, Taran will present the project that started it all: an award-winning documentary showing the quest of three groups of kids, one from California, another from Tibet and a third from Nigeria, all looking for what it means to be happy and the skills that can be developed to increase happiness. The documentary records the quest of the students who interviewed people all over the world, from the Dalai Lama to George Lucas, Richard Gere to neuroscientist Richard Davidson, about the nature of lasting happiness. They also engaged in discussions and kept journals.

"They came out of that journey better equipped to own their skills and to access their happiness," says Taran.

After the movie, Parks and Taran will discuss ways to incorporate Project Happiness findings into the school curriculum and into the home. The free presentation will begin at 6 p.m. October 11 at the Holy Trinity Serbian Church, 1700 School Street in Moraga. For more information, visit www.projecthappiness.org/community/events/.

Trouble with the Curve

By Derek Zemrak



Amy Adams as Mickey and Clint Eastwood as Gus in Warner Bros. Pictures' drama *Trouble with the Curve*.

Trouble with the movie! *Trouble with the Curve* is a baseball movie, and no one loves baseball movies more than I, but they are difficult to create for actors who are not baseball players and this problem is evident in *Trouble with the Curve*. *Moneyball*, *Field of Dreams* and *Eight Men Out* are successful baseball films.

Trouble with the Curve has more problems than just a lack of players. The problems include the script, lack of character development, and direction. Robert Lorenz (*Gran Torino*, *Letters from Iwo Jima*, *Million Dollar Baby*), longtime producing partner of Clint Eastwood, directed this film, which proves that a great producer is not necessarily a great director. The cast is stacked with talent: Oscar winner and Hollywood legend Eastwood, three-time Oscar nominee Amy Adams (*The Fighter*, *Doubt*, *Junebug*), three-time Emmy winner Justin Timberlake (*The Social Network*), and Golden

Globe and Emmy winner John Goodman (*Rosanne*). This is an impressive ensemble cast that does not click because the director was unable to pull them all together. A few scenes with the older Eastwood were painful to watch.

The movie focuses on aging baseball scout Gus (Eastwood), who is struggling to find the next big superstar. His eyes and health are failing, but he does not give up. Gus' estranged daughter, Mickey (Adams), comes to lend her support and love. She also meets Johnny (Timberlake), a former baseball player whom Gus scouted years ago.

Trouble with the Curve is rated PG13 and is a long 111 minutes.

Derek Zemrak is a Film Critic, Film Producer and Founder of the California Independent Film Festival. You can follow Derek on Twitter @zemrak for the latest Hollywood news.

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ASK SAM

Samira Davi is a Nurse Liaison for ManorCare Health Services in Walnut Creek. Samira has over 10 years of experience working in health care in Contra Costa County, which has gained her a wide view of what is important to the health care consumer. She will be posting common questions and comments in each issue of the Lamorinda Weekly. You are welcome to contact Samira directly at 925.270.8766

What actually happens in a Post-Acute Rehab Center? How is this different than a "Nursing Home"?

This is the most common question I hear. So many of our patients are young, active and eager to return home. Most of the patients I see are getting ready to have an orthopedic or cardiac surgery. When their surgeon recommends post-acute rehab as part of their recovery, fear often sets in—that's when my role starts. I coordinate with surgical offices to facilitate pre-op and pre-admit counseling sessions. Here we are able to discuss the details of post-acute rehab, and ideally arrange a tour of one of our Walnut Creek rehab centers. It is crucial that you feel safe and comfortable in a rehab center.

At the core, post-hospital or post-acute care is designed to improve your transition back to the community. As a post-acute patient, you no longer need the acute care setting of the hospital which includes around-the-clock physicians, surgery, emergency and ICU services, but still need a high level of clinical and rehabilitation care to hasten your recuperation. This may include skilled nursing, rehabilitation, dietary management, social services and discharge planning. All of your care is directed by your physician, and our team will be in regular contact with you, your family and your physician(s).

What you can expect are state-of-the art facilities with the most advanced clinical and therapeutic techniques. Our treatment plans are designed to maximize independent functioning and improve physical and psychological well being to help you transition back to your life. You can expect to be treated with respect and dignity, and to experience your recovery along side other patients with similar recovery needs.

Admission to a post-acute rehab center is coordinated between the hospital and the rehab center. Your insurance is verified, medications and treatments are ordered, and transportation is coordinated. I encourage patients and families to take the time to tour a few post-acute rehab centers prior to surgery or, in the case of an unexpected hospitalization, prior to discharge from the hospital. Once you visit our two Walnut Creek rehab centers, you'll see how we are different from the traditional "nursing home".

For more information please visit www.manorcare.com.
For a short video visit us on YouTube: www.youtube.com/hcmanorcare

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Sly Fox a Vaudeville Romp at Town Hall Theatre

By Sophie Braccini

Town Hall Theatre Company is opening its 2012/2013 season with a big laugh: *Sly Fox* – a very funny human comedy set in 19th century San Francisco and reminiscent of Comedia dell'Arte, with somewhat archetypal characters. The miser, the smart servant, the ingénue, the brave and virtuous soldier— all dance the ballet of the human comedy, with humor and lightness, yet still show how the obsessive pursuit of wealth can lead individuals to compromise their values and families.

Sly Fox is the farcical adaptation by Larry Gelbart of Ben Jonson's satiric play *Volpone* set in Renaissance Venice. The comedy is served by an appropriate cast, directed with precision by Soren Oliver.

"I wanted to find a play that would address the issue of greed, but with some humor," says THT Artistic Director Clive Worsley. "When I read the script I loved it, and decided it would be a great fit, and very timely. If nothing else, it will make people laugh; we don't want to hit our audience over the head with politics."

"This type of comedy is very

delicate to stage, more so than a drama," says director Oliver. "A change in tone, a miss-step, a drop in rhythm and the jokes fall flat." During a run-through of the play a few days ago, the cast was already up to the fast rhythm of the very physical performance. The actors have worked separate 'fight-calls' rehearsing the falls and special moves.

Oliver is known as a meticulous director who makes sure that every moment is earned. What the THT team presents is Vaudeville in the style of the Gold Rush era. The music incorporates banjo tunes and sea shanties. "We want to create a feel of old San Francisco," says Oliver.

There is not a minute of rest in the play. Five different sets designed by Mark Flynn are changed at lightning speed by the efficient crew. There are plans for a curtain to complete the stage, with short vignettes presented between the scenes by THT students, in the style of the period's performances.

Worsley plays the old miser Foxwell J. Sly, the central character of the play. Pretending to die, he leads the equally greedy characters



Clockwise from bottom left, Foxwell J. Sly (Clive Worsley), Simon Able (Dennis Markam), Lawyer Craven (Randy Anger), Jethro Crouch (Remi Barron), Abner Truckle (Justin DuPuis), and Simplicity Truckle (Molly Benson)

to believe they will be his sole heir. As he extracts what he wants from them, he exposes their lowness, but will he go one trick too far and will justice triumph?

Worsley's trademark slapstick is at its best. He seems to enjoy himself enormously, jumping from half dead to boisterous, changing roles; he is at the top of his game as Sly. Dennis Markam as his servant, Simon Able, is totally up to the part. More bon vivant and naive than his master, he will try his luck at trickery, too.

The cast incorporates three young graduates from Town Hall Theatre Company's teen program

who are very solid. A special mention goes to gifted and expressive comedian Justin DuPuis as Abner Truckle, the husband ready to sacrifice his wife to inherit riches.

Sly Fox will run from September 29 through October 20 with previews September 27 and 28, and a special Q&A with the cast and director on October 5. For more information and tickets go to www.TownHallTheatre.com.

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Lynn's Top Five

The New Health Care Act

Five positive benefits for your consideration

By Lynn Ballou, CFP®

Ask anyone how they feel about the new health care act (The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) often referred to as "Obamacare," and you are pretty much guaranteed a passionate response! Love or hate it, there are a few especially key benefits that Certified Financial Planners are very happy to see on behalf of their clients. Let's focus on these in this column, and in December, we'll discuss some of the tax changes that we'll be facing to help pay for them!

1) Better summaries of coverage: Hooray! As valued colleague Colleen Callahan, president of Callahan Insurance in Lafayette and an expert on health care insurance points out, beginning September 23, employers will be responsible for providing a very much improved "Summary of Benefits and Coverages" to all their employees. She explains, "The insurance company will provide a uniform document (no more than 4 pages, double sided, 12 point font), explaining the benefits and coverages. It is important that the employer provide this to their employees." I'm looking forward to that!

2) Plans no longer have most lifetime maximum limitations: As a financial advisor I really embrace the benefit of this for clients. No longer need we worry that an expensive course of treatment will completely exhaust a client's entire medical coverage for life.

3) Coverage to age 26 under parent's plans: Especially in this economy as our young adults launch facing a scarcity of jobs, let alone ones with benefits, this has been an important financial lifeline for many families.

4) Pre-existing conditions: This benefit doesn't come on line until 2014 but I can tell you in my practice alone how important this feature will be. Many clients or their loved ones are under-insured and/or pay egregious rates for their coverages now due to prior illnesses and medical challenges, even if these are no longer a fac-

tor in their health.

5) Preventive care without deductibles and co-pays: We are fortunate to live in an affluent community where that cost rarely is more than an annoyance. However for the majority of Americans, this can mean the difference between seeking out care before something becomes a crisis or having to cope with more complicated medical problems later. Colleen shares with us that going forward "preventive care is covered in network before any deductible and without any co-pays." This benefit can lead to a more productive and healthy workforce which helps us all.

The new health care act is incredibly involved and there is, of course, no way in a short column to do justice to this very complex and broad reaching legislation. However, despite the frustrations and costs that we all share, there are some excellent benefits that will be of significant and positive assistance to us personally and as members of our complicated and intertwined society. With many health care plans coming up for renewal in the fall, I hope this column helps set the stage for a thoughtful review with your advisor.



Lynn Ballou is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional and co-owner of Ballou Plum Wealth Advisors, LLC, a Registered Investment Advisory (RIA) firm in Lafayette. Lynn is also a Registered Principal and Branch Manager with LPL Financial (LPL). The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and not intended to provide specific advice or recommendation for any individual. Financial Planning offered through Ballou Plum Wealth Advisors, A Registered Investment Advisor and a separate entity. Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC.

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And an Olive in a Pear Tree...

By Susie Iventosch



Photo Susie Iventosch

The Lamorinda area is an exciting place for foodies to be over the next couple of weekends! This Saturday, September 29, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. the 14th Annual Moraga Pear & Wine Festival will take place at the Moraga Commons. This year's event will feature wineries, a variety of local vendors (businesses and community organizations), in addition to an art show, plus ... the highlight for me, the Pear Recipe Contest! The contest boasts a talented panel of judges and includes both adult and youth categories. Elaine Cable of Moraga won first prize last year for her Savory Caramelized Pear Tartlets with Chevre.

"There are so many talented cooks in our area, and we encourage them to participate, along with their kids," said Kimberley Nelson, Recreation and Facilities Coordinator for the Town of Moraga. "We have some terrific prizes lined up for contest winners!"

This year, all entries must be delivered by 11:30 a.m. to the contest tent near the bandshell. Each should be clearly labeled and accompa-

nied by an entry form, which can be downloaded from www.moraga.ca.us, along with a printed recipe for each entry. Entries are limited to two per person. Recipes will be judged at noon and winners announced at 1:15 p.m. at the bandshell. Don't miss out on this great opportunity to show off your cooking skills!

On Sunday, October 7, the Third Annual Olive Festival will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area, 350 Camino Pablo in Orinda. The proceeds of this event go to fund Nature Area activities for all Orinda students. While there is not a recipe contest for this event, there will be olive oil pressing and cooking demonstrations, as well as olive oil tastings offered by McCauley Brothers and Berkeley Olive Grove 1913. New to the event this year, vendors will be sampling and selling olive oil-based soaps and lotions.

In the next issue, we hope to feature the winning pear contest recipe as well as homemade olive bagels!

Pear, Avocado Salad with Spiced Pecans

(Serves 4)

INGREDIENTS

1 head butter lettuce, washed and torn into bite-sized pieces
1 large firm, but ripe, avocado, sliced
1 large pear, sliced (can use one extra pear, whole or halved for garnish!)

1/4 cup crumbled bleu cheese
1/2 cup spiced nuts (recipe below)

Dressing

1/4 cup pear vinegar (or white wine vinegar)
1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/2-2/3 cup of your favorite, most fabulous olive oil (use according to desired taste)

Salt and white pepper, to taste
Shake well.

DIRECTIONS

Tear lettuce into bite-sized pieces and form a layer on the bottom of a glass bowl or a serving platter. Arrange pear avocado slices on top and sprinkle nuts and cheese over evenly. Drizzle dressing over the top, or gently toss it all in a large bowl.

Spiced Nuts

(This recipe will make extra, but that is okay, because there are always snitchers lurking about the kitchen!)

INGREDIENTS

1 cup pecan halves
1-2 tablespoons olive oil
2 teaspoons granulated sugar (brown sugar is fine, too)
Spice mixture-mix well before adding to nuts
dash cayenne pepper
1/4 teaspoon cumin powder
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon cardamom
1/4 teaspoon sea salt

DIRECTIONS

In a large saute pan, heat olive oil and toss nuts in to coat. Cook over medium heat, until nuts begin to brown. Add sugar, and stir well. Continue to cook just until sugar is melted. Remove from heat and sprinkle spice mixture over all and toss until all of the nuts have been seasoned with the spices. Cool and store until ready to use.

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, www.amazon.com, and www.taxbites.net. Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. **This recipe is available on our web site** www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at 925-377-0977.



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ART

The Orinda Library September and October Art Gallery Exhibits. The exhibit for October will include Judith Feins paintings, Thomas Taneyhill paintings, Michael Berkeley pottery, and Fred Lee photos and paintings. The exhibit for September features Three-Eight Art Studio, Lucia Tsang. The library is located at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda.

Anticipation is the New Lafayette Exhibition. *Anticipation* – one of life's delights – will run through October 7 at the Lafayette Gallery, 50 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Works of art are ready for your home or garden and evoke the anticipation of pleasurable things to come. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11am to 5pm, and Sunday 11am to 2pm. Free. For more info, call (925) 284-2788 or visit www.lafayette-gallery.net.

Painting Exhibits at the Moraga Public Library. The Moraga Public Library will exhibit the art of Denise Lee and Jonathan Shum, both students of famous local Chinese brush painter, Joan Yao – a well-known Chinese brush painter, calligrapher, and teacher. Lee and Shum's exhibits will run through September at the library, 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. Yao will

also have an exhibit in the month of September. For more info, call (925) 376-6852.

Moraga Art Gallery Reimagined. *Moraga Art Gallery's* new show highlights the collective creativity, commitment and energy of the gallery's members. The show runs through Sunday, October 21, Wednesday through Sunday from noon to 5pm at the Moraga Art Gallery, The Rheem Valley Shopping Center, 522 Center Street, and will feature the work of the entire gallery artist group, in celebration of this tireless organization that has survived a challenging relocation, coming out stronger, and more creative and successful than ever before. For more info, call (925) 376-5407 or visit www.moragaartgallery.com.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art Celebrating SMC's 150th Anniversary. There will be new exhibitions on view at Saint Mary's College Museum of Art beginning Saturday, October 6 from 11am to 6pm, with two special programs: meet the artists, Nyame Brown, MFA, "The John Henry Series" at 1pm in the Studio Gallery and a slide lecture by Darwin Marable, Ph.D. "2000 Years of the Cross in Art" at 2pm in the Art Patio. The October 6 exhibits and events are free. Exhibitions include *The Art of the Cross*; Nyame Brown: *John*

Not to be missed

Henry's Adventures in a Post-Black World; *Missions of Will Sparks*, and the William Keith collection. The exhibits will be on view through December 9 and December 16, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga. Regular admission: \$5; youth, military free. Regular hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11am to 4:30pm. For more info, call (925) 631-4069 or visit yearofthegael.com.

MUSIC

The 2nd Annual Orinda Jazz Festival is soon underway. The Jazz Festival will feature free music workshops, and a Gala Reception with live music, wine, and appetizers, concerts on two stages, and a chance to meet the artists September 30 from 4 to 7pm at the Orinda Auditorium and Courtyard, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. The Festival benefits the Orinda Arts Council Community Programs. Tickets: \$20 for general admission; \$15 for students and seniors. For more info, call (925)255-5164 or visit www.OrindaJazzFestival.org.

The Cantare Con Vivo Chorale, directed by David Morales opens their 2012/2013 season with *Unclouded Day*. Concert includes Gershwin's *Summertime*, Bernstein's *Tonight*, the fun-loving *The Song That Goes Like This from Spamalot*, works by American composers and selections made popular by Bruce Springsteen, Rascal Flatts and Paul McCartney Sunday, September 30 at 4pm, Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Tickets: \$25 for general admission; \$10 youth; \$60 for a family pass. To purchase tickets or for more info, call (510) 836-0789 or visit www.cantareconvivo.org.

The New Life Band from Tanzania, East Africa is coming to Holy Shepherd Church, 433 Moraga Way, Orinda at 7pm Tuesday, October 9. Their memorable African rhythm gets your whole body moving blended with the Christian message that moves your soul. Presented with energy, humor and a little audience participation, the concerts are memorable and not to be missed. Free. Donations welcome.

The Big Band of Rossmoor Dance and Show. *Swing* to the sounds of the '40s with The Big Band of Rossmoor dance and variety show October 19 from 8 to 10pm at the Veterans Memorial Building, 3780 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. The 31-member band will entertain you with musicians spanning from 12 years old to 93. Free dance lessons by Gail Enright, a cocktail bar, and dancing. Tickets: \$10. For more info, call (925) 284-7404.

THEATER

DVC Drama 2012 - 2013 Season. *The Grapes of Wrath* by Frank Galati will be showing at Diablo Valley College October 19 through November 11, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 2:30pm, 321 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill. Tickets: \$20 general admission; \$15 for faculty, staff, and seniors; \$10 for students. For more info, call (925) 687-4445.

Orinda Starlight Village Players' 2012. *Sherlock Holmes* in The Speckled Band by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle will be showing through September 29, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30pm. The play will also be showing on Sunday, September 16 and 23 at 4pm, and Thursday, September 27 at 8pm. Regular admission: \$16; \$8 for seniors and children. For tickets or more info, call (925) 528-9225 or visit www.orsvp.org.

Lafayette's Town Hall Theatre begins another season with Larry Gelbart's Sly Fox, a hilarious adaptation of Ben Jonson's satire *Volpone*. *Sly Fox* runs from September 29 through October 20 with previews on September 27 and 28. It is rated PG13 and is approximately two hours long. Town Hall's Theatre Club will be having free wine and an actor talk back following the performance on Friday, October 5. See article page xxx. For more info or tickets call (925) 283-6673 or visit www.townhalltheatre.com.

Not to be missed

FuddyMeers presented by The Bentley School theater group. David Lindsay-Abaire's *FuddyMeers* showing from October 12 - 14 at 7pm at Bentley School, 1000 Upper Happy Valley Rd. in Lafayette, focuses on Claire, a woman in her 40s who has a rare form of psychogenic amnesia and every morning her memory is erased. Tickets: \$5 for students; \$10 for adults. This show is recommended for audiences 14 and up. For more info, call (510) 229-4128.

These Amazing Shadows, a 2011 Official Selection of the Sundance Film Festival. *These Amazing Shadows* describes how the 25 Sundance Film Festival films are chosen, discusses efforts to preserve and restore the listed movies, and celebrates cinema as an art form October 17 at 6pm in the Garden Room of the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. For more info, call (925) 254-2184 or visit www.ccclib.org.

Cal Shakes' Hamlet. *The Cal Shakes season's final performance*, *Hamlet*, directed by Liesl Tommy and presented by California Shakespeare Theater, runs through October 14 at the Bruns Amphitheater, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way (off Highway 24), Orinda. For info, call (510) 548-9666 or visit www.calshakes.org.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

Half Price Sale. There will be a half price sale at the Friends Corner Book Shop (Friends of the Lafayette Library) Saturday, September 29 from 9am to 5pm, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. For more info, call (925) 283-1967.

Book Sale by Friends of the Orinda Library. This monthly sale offers quality books for all interests and ages Thursday, October 4 from 10am to 1pm in the Bookshop and Sorting Room at the Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. For more info, call (925) 254-1358.

Bluegrass Baseball: A Year in the Minor League Life by Katya Cengel. Author Katya Cengel, who has written for *Esquire*, *Marie Claire* and *Southwest Airlines Spirit* magazine, will participate in a book signing October 13 at noon at Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, Orinda. For more info, visit www.katyacengel.com.

WORKSHOPS & ORGANIZATIONS

Common Threads Stitching Group. **Whether you are** a seasoned cross-stitcher or newbie beginner, join this ongoing, drop-in group for instruction, guidance, or simply a relaxing afternoon spent with fellow stitchers every Wednesday at the Lafayette Community Center in the Elderberry room from 2 to 3:30pm starting September 12 (except November 21 and December 26), 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. For more info or to register, call (925) 284-5050.

Volunteers needed to transcribe Braille. **Volunteers** interested in learning how to transcribe literary works for the blind or sight impaired are needed by the Contra Costa Braille Transcribers. A volunteer must complete a 7-month course to be certified by The Library of Congress. Weekly training classes are every Tuesday in Concord beginning Tuesday, September 11 from 9:30am to noon, 1201 Monument Blvd., Concord (near the 680 Freeway). For more info, call Fran Whipple at (925) 298-2344 or visit www.cbbraille.com.

Genealogy Research Series and October Family History Month. Celebrate Family History Month and discover your family tree with two special programs: One-on-One Genealogy Research Assistance by Tri-Valley Heritage Happenings on Saturday, October 6 from 1 to 3pm; and Introduction to Genealogy Research Presentation Wednesday, October 10 at 1pm at the Danville Library, 400 Front Street. Learn about print and online genealogy resources to help take your research further. For more info, call (925) 837-4889.

The Michael Chavez Center and Monument Community Partnership have merged! They are excited to share with you how they envision working with the community as a blended organization at a celebration and kick-off Thursday, September 27 from 4 to 6pm at The Keller House, 1760 Clayton Road, Concord. Appetizers will be served. For more info, call (925) 808-7392 or visit www.monumentcommunity.org.

Avoiding Falls an Anne Randolph Workshop. If you are worried about falling or are at risk of falling, you should know about activities that improve balance. Learn how to improve your balance and avoid the risk of falling Friday, September 28 from 11:30am to 12:30pm in the Sequoia Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette. For more info or to register, call (925) 284-5050.

Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 171 meets the first Wednesday monthly at Holy Trinity Culture Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. The October 3 after-lunch speaker will be Gary Bogue, Retired Pets and Wild Life Columnist for the Contra Costa Sun. For details and SIRs membership information, call Larry at (925) 631-9528.

Shape Great Kids with Positive Parenting. Louise Hart, Ed.D., a recognized speaker, bestselling author and thought leader in positive parenting, will host an encouraging and uplifting parent education workshop Thursday, October 25th from 6:30 to 8pm at Bentley's School's Student Performing Arts Center, 1000 Happy Valley Road, Lafayette. This research-based approach decreases negative emotions and behaviors, and improves relationships. For more info, call Melissa Hyde at (510) 843-2512 ext. 2402.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Lafayette Girl Scouts Registration. **Girl Scouts** provides girls and young women with the life skills that will enable them to reach their full potential. Join an existing troop, form a new troop, be a volunteer! All members must be registered and adult volunteers cleared by October 1. For more info, call (925) 389-6453 or visit www.lafayettegirlscouts.org.

FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS

The 14th Annual Moraga Pear & Wine Festival. A family-friendly event celebrating Moraga's Pear history from 10am to 4pm Saturday, September 29 at the Moraga Commons Park, 1425 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. Entertainment and activities at the bandshell include DJ RyanO, Town Hall Theatre performers, an afternoon concert by littledog2, Arbor Day tree planting, wine tasting with Lamorinda Winegrowers Association, grape stomping, pear pies, jumpies, pie eating contest, food, local artist booths, community and business booths, and the ARF Mobile Adoption Van. For more info, call the Parks and Recreation Department (925) 888-7045 or visit www.moraga.ca.us.

5th Annual Moraga Country Club Home & Kitchen Tour. Attendees will be treated to creative and well-crafted kitchen designs while enjoying wine and appetizers Thursday, October 4 from 5 to 8pm with all four homes conveniently located in the Moraga Country Club. After the tour, attendees are invited to the new Moraga Country Club Clubhouse for exciting raffle prizes and a tour of the new MCC Clubhouse Kitchen. Tickets: \$20 (advanced); \$25 (day of the tour). For info, or to purchase tickets visit www.mcchometour.com or contact Suzanne Alexander at (925) 216-7823 or Sue Olsen at (925) 200-6000.

... continued on next page

Please submit events to:
calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

Lamorinda's Religious Services



St. Giles Episcopal Church

A DIFFERENT KIND OF CHURCH!

Meeting Sundays at 9am
St. Mary's College Chapel
925 376-5770 • www.stgiles-moraga.org

INCLUSIVE, THOUGHTFUL • TRADITIONAL SERVICE AND MUSIC
YET FORWARD LOOKING & OPEN MINDED

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church

A Loving Community

Sunday Services: 8 and 10 AM

Active Youth Program, Sunday School, Nursery Childcare, 10 AM
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws

Get connected.

Grow in your faith.
Serve others.



Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church

Sunday Worship 9 & 11:00 a.m.

Programs for children & youth

49 Knox Drive | Lafayette | www.LOPC.org | 925-283-8722

The Orinda Community Church

10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org

"No matter who you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"

Join us Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

ORINDA CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CENTER

24 Orinda Way (next to the Library) - 254-4212

Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 - 11 am
Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm
Reading Room/Bookstore M - F 11 - 4; Sat 10 - 1

www.christianscienceorinda.org

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church

433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422
www.holyshepherd.org



8:15 a.m. Traditions Worship Service
9:40 a.m. Education for all ages
10:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service
Coffee Fellowship at 9:15 and 11:45 a.m.
Childcare available for ages 5 and younger
October 9, 7:00 p.m. Mixed African Gospel Concert

Not to be missed

FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS ... continued

150th Anniversary at SMC Gael-celebration! A Free Open House and Festival. Saint Mary's College of California will mark the "Year of the Gael" Saturday, October 6 with a massive Gael-celebration – a free public festival and open house from 11am to 6pm featuring musical and dance performances, rides, live bands, art, athletic demonstrations, gourmet food trucks, lectures, giveaways and more at Saint Mary's College, 1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. For more info, call (925) 631-4200.

2012 East Bay Walk to Defeat ALS. The Walk to Defeat ALS is ALS Association's signature event in which all funds directly support cutting-edge research, patient care, & public policy Sunday, October 7 at 9:30am for registration and 11am for the walk, Heather Farm Park, 301 N. San Carlos Drive, Walnut Creek. Free. For more info, call (415) 904-2572 or visit alsgoldenwest.org.

Olive Festival. Honoring the historic Olive Grove. Enjoy appetizers and live music, taste olives and olive oil, find great bargains at the Silent Auction and raffle, join local chefs in preparing yummy olive dishes and more on October 7 from 1 to 4pm at the olive grove at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area, 350 Camino Pablo. For more info, visit www.fwma.org.

20th Annual Reservoir Run. The Lafayette Reservoir Run is the city's most popular "family affair," involving kids, parents, grandparents, and hundreds of serious runners from throughout the Bay Area. The event will be on Sunday, October 28 beginning at 6:30am in Downtown Lafayette starting at Mt. Diablo Blvd. between First St. and Moraga Road. The adult registration: \$30; race day fee \$35; elementary school fee \$22. For more info, visit [www.http://lafayettechamber.org/events/reservoir-run/](http://lafayettechamber.org/events/reservoir-run/).

OTHER

Nature Walk and Bird-Watching led by Ben Petterson. Experience nature at its finest along our local trails. Delight in the beauty that unfolds around each bend, all the while learning to identify a variety of birds. Bring a water bottle; binoculars will be helpful if you have them. The walks are every Wednesday from 9 to 11am. Please call (925) 284-5050 to find out the weekly meeting place.

Hearing Screening by Audiologists from Hearing Science/Diablo Valley Ear, Nose, and Throat October 3, November 7, and December 5 in the Cedar Room at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. An appointment is required and a minimum of two sign ups are required in order for screenings to take place. Please call Lafayette Senior Services at (925) 284-5050 to sign up for one of the following appointment times: 1, 1:20, 1:40, or 2pm. Cost: \$1 for members; \$3 for non-members.

Come celebrate America's only Nobel Prize-winning playwright by visiting Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site or attending the Eugene O'Neill Festival, hosted by the park and the Eugene O'Neill Foundation during the month of September. The Eugene O'Neill Festival features art displays, guest speakers, and performances of two O'Neill plays, "Ah, Wilderness!" and "A Moon for the Misbegotten." You must take a shuttle from The Museum of the San Ramon Valley, 205 Railroad Avenue, Danville. For festival information and to purchase tickets please call (925) 820-1818 or visit www.eugeneoneill.org.

Free memory screening by Caring Solutions September 28 in the Cedar Room at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. An appointment is required. Appointments are at 12:30, 12:50, or 1:10pm. For more info or to sign up, call (925) 284-5050.

Powells' Sweet Shoppe is proud to announce they will be hosting a community blood drive. Donate a pint of blood and receive a free pint of bulk

candy of your choice at the "Pint for a Pint" blood drive Saturday, September 29 from 11am to 5pm, 3591 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette. Donors must be 17 or older to participate. Please bring your ID. For more info, call (925) 299-9866 or visit www.red-crossblood.org.

The Plight & Potential of Africa's Heart-a luncheon with the President of the Presbyterian Church of Congo. Join Congolese dancers and drummers as they welcome Rev. Dr. Joseph Mulumba Musumbu Mukundi, the General Secretary / President of the Presbyterian Church of Congo (CPC), during his visit to the U.S. as he shares about the church's work for peace and human dignity at noon October 7, Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Free lecture; \$10 for the luncheon. For more info, visit www.LOPC.org.

Project Happiness presented by Saklan School. Producer and director Randy Taran will present her documentary that follows a Senior Class in Mount Madonna School in Watsonville on a journey to discover the true nature of human happiness October 11, from 6 to 8:30pm at the Holy Trinity Servian Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga. For more info, visit www.projecthappiness.org/community/events/.

Blood Drive. Drop by and share a pint! Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, working with the American Red Cross, is sponsoring a blood drive to help save lives in our local communities October 13 from 9am to 3pm at the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane, Moraga. For more info, call Les Deane at (925) 283-5648 or visit www.red-crossblood.org.

Ageing Successfully in our Community. All of us will one day be faced with issues related to growing older, whether it is taking care of our aging parents or an older relative, or growing older ourselves. In spite of the many mental and physical challenges associated with aging, we can educate ourselves about the process, and hopefully make the experience less stressful, and even enjoyable. Find some of those tools at 8:30am Saturday, October 13 at the 4th Annual Senior Symposium Lafayette Presbyterian Church. For more info, call (925) 357-0056.

Feast of St. Francis & Blessing of the Animals at 11am Sunday, October 14 at Saint Giles' Episcopal Church, St. Mary's College Chapel, 1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. Local residents are invited to bring their animal friends - cats, dogs, rabbits, horses, pigs to the blessing. For more info, contact the Rev. Justin R. Cannon at justin@stgiles-moraga.org, (925) 376-5770, or visit www.stgiles-moraga.org.

Women Helping Women of Orinda Community Church will recognize National Domestic Violence Awareness Month through Worship and a Forum. The Service of Worship, organized by Women Helping Women, will focus on domestic violence through choral reading, prayer, dance, music and Scripture Sunday October 14 at 10am, the Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. For more info, call Lee Cruise at (925) 254-4906.

Annual Spiral Dance. A Multi-Cultural Celebration of Our Beloved Ancestors and Crones by Daughters of the Goddess. On this cool fall evening we come together to honor our loved ones who have crossed over to the other side October 26, at 6:30pm at the Orinda Masonic Temple, 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda. Bring pictures of your loved ones that have passed to be placed on the Ancestor Altar. Tickets: \$23 if paid by October 22; \$29 at the door. For more info, call (925) 787-9247 or visit www.daughtersofthegoddess.com

Visit the Be the Star You Are!® Express Yourself! Teen Radio booth at the Moraga Pear and Wine Festival sponsored by Lamorinda Weekly September 29 at Moraga Commons Park, 1425 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. Meet teen writers of Teen Scene, be inter-

viewed LIVE on the radio, get FREE potpourri from Digging Deep's Cynthia Brian, buy books and shirts, and sign up for Club Be the Star You Are! For more info, visit "events" at www.BTSYA.org.

Nathaniel Armen of Boy Scout Troop 212 in conjunction with his Eagle Scout Project is conducting a donation drive of items to be sent to impoverished children in the Dominican Republic: gently used clothes, shoes, soccer cleats and jerseys, large duffle bags and board games. Your donations will improve the quality of life of these children. Contributions may be dropped off at 85 Brookfield Dr., Moraga from September 28 through November 9, or call (925) 876-1399 for pick up.

Max Mirner of Boy Scout Troop 204 in conjunction with his Eagle Scout Project is collecting new and gently used socks (sizes Toddler-18 years) for patients and non-perishable food or paper goods for the Family House at The Children's Hospital in Oakland until Friday, October 12. Collection boxes are located in the Lafayette school offices of Acalanes, Stanley, Springhill, Burton Valley, Happy Valley, Lafayette Elementary, Bentley Middle School in Oakland, and at Our Savior's Lutheran, and Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church. The Family House is a 16 room house across from the hospital where families can stay for free and be close to their ill child. For info, email maxmimer3@gmail.com.

Second Annual Contra Costa Philanthropy Awards breakfast. The awards program recognizes individuals, businesses and service organizations that have made significant contributions of time, leadership and financial support to benefit Contra Costa residents. Honorees will be recognized at the second annual breakfast celebration November 8 from 7:30 to 10am, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 45 John Glenn Drive, Concord. For more info, call (925) 246-1880 or visit www.contracostacouncil.com.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

10 YEARS OLD AND UP \$9.00
6TH ANNUAL DARK DREAMS HAUNTED HOUSE
 OCT. 19 & 20, OCT. 26-28 2011, AND HALLOWEEN OCT. 31 - 7-11PM
 RHEEM THEATRE 350 PARK ST. MORAGA

What does....

Oscar Winner
Judi Dench

Two-Time Oscar Winner
Jane Fond

Four Time Oscar Nominee
Alexandre Desplat

Emmy Winner
Lily Tomlin

Three Time Emmy Nominee
Tyler Ferguson

Have in common?

They all have films in the 15th Annual California Independent Film Festival!
 November 8th thru 11th 2012
 at the Rheem and Orinda Theatres!
www.caiff.org



Saint Mary's College Museum of Art New Fall Exhibitions: October 6 – December 16, 2012

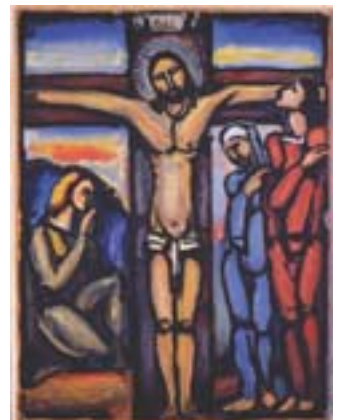


Missions of Will Sparks

The mission paintings of Will Sparks (1862-1937) are admired for their rich color and air of mystery. This rare complete series of the 37 Alta and Baja California missions once belonged to Alma de Bretteville Spreckels. On loan from Trotter Galleries, Carmel and Pacific Grove.

The Art of the Cross

An overview of the many forms and functions the cross has taken over the centuries by such masters as Jacques Callot, Tiepolo, Émile Bernard, Marc Chagall, Georges Rouault, Bernard Buffet, Otto Dix, Salvador Dali, as well as a 5th c. Constantinople coin, a 15th c. allegorical Memento Mori woodcut, Orthodox icons, and an elaborate silver and gilded Ethiopian Christian processional cross. The objects have been selected from the collections of Christians in the Visual Arts (civa.org), based on the East Coast, and Saint Mary's College.



Nyame Brown: John Henry's Adventures in a Post-Black World



Inspired by bedtime stories told by the artist's father, Brown weaves the tales of folk hero John Henry into a series of fantastic paintings and drawings. Brown is a member of the art faculty at Saint Mary's College. He holds an M.F.A. from Yale University and a B.F.A. from The School of The Art Institute of Chicago.

Museum Hours: Wednesdays - Sundays, 11 AM - 4:30 PM
 Free admission for Museum members, youth through 12th grade.
 Adult admission: \$5. Free Guide By Cell tours.
stmarys-ca.edu/museum, 925.631.4379

If you plan to attend the Museum's opening day programs, please check yearofthegael.com to learn more about October 6 SMC Sesquicentennial events schedule and satellite parking and shuttle information.

A Family Ad Venture

By Sophie Braccini



Rosylyn Stenzel (right) shows a merino wool shirt to a customer at Venture.

Photo Sophie Braccini

The first impression when entering Venture Men's Goods on Mount Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette is olfactory; it smells of wood and leather, definitely a male store. The visual input corroborates the initial feeling: the tones are subdued in the browns, beiges, blacks and greens. The softness of the colors and materials, and the quiet neatness are inviting, yet this is not a frivolous store. This is a store for men, where women are welcome.

Venture is the new quality casual

men's apparel store that Rosylyn and Tom Stenzel opened at the beginning of the month. Tom Stenzel has spent all his life in the garment industry, first at Levi Strauss, then at a start-up in the Bay Area. Unfortunately, the latter business lost its funding and Tom lost his job. He and his wife decided to take a big plunge and start their own business in the area Stenzel knows best, the clothing industry. "We opened a store where men would find the quality design and great craftsmanship for casual clothes they

couldn't find on this side of the tunnel," he says.

The couple's choice of brands has not been haphazard. "As I started researching the quality and style I wanted, I noticed that I gravitated toward a look of ruggedness and refinement, with attention to detail that is mostly designed and manufactured in California," says Stenzel. "The garment industry in California is still vibrant and is even going through resurgence," he adds.

For example, Venture carries Tel-

lason jeans that are cut and sewn in San Francisco with fabric from Cone Mills' White Oak plant in Greensboro, North Carolina. "You can't find better anywhere," says Stenzel. "When you come to our store we will fit you and send the jeans to the factory for hemming in the original stitch, for no additional cost."

Taylor Stitch shirts found at Venture are also San Francisco made. This is a very young company that recently attracted national attention manufacturing for Banana Republic. Horny Toad and SeaVees shoes are out of Santa Barbara; Marmot, which makes merino wool shirts (unbelievably soft), is from Santa Rosa. "This is the lifestyle that's good for our community, made by local guys for local guys," says Stenzel. The Stenzels even carry ties created by a Lafayette mom, Summer Albin. Some of the manufacturers are actively supporting the Lafayette couple. "Taylor Stitch felt so strongly about their new style of shirt that they told us to take some of the models on consignment; they want us to be their



Tom and Rosylyn Stenzel with their sons Aaron (left) and Colin in front of the new store. Photo provided

test store," Stenzel says. "This is our adventure, we want to be part of the spirit that drives all these local creators."

The store is not only inviting to women, who often shop for men, it is also an easy shopping spot for the whole family. "We have games for little kids, water and treats," says Rosylyn.

So far, they have been pleased with the community's response. "The sales are on target," Stenzel says.

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

business briefs



Andrea Quinn at Cake in Lafayette

Photo Sophie Braccini

A Sweet-Lovers' Paradise at Cake
35 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette
(925) 385-0202

You no longer need to make a special trip to Kaua'i to get Andrea Quinn's unique macaroons and pastries. She and her hus-

band Patrick have returned to the Bay Area where they were raised. This young business woman, who decided to become a pastry chef during an internship at Chez Panisse, opened Cake in Lafayette a few days ago in La Fiesta Square. Quinn was raised around good food and has always gravitated toward the delicious world of sweets. She spent her childhood at her family's almond orchard in Brentwood where she cooked with her mother using fresh produce from their garden and neighboring farms. After graduating from the Athenian School, where she met her husband, Patrick, she took the next logical step and enrolled in the California Culinary Academy,

graduating in 1994. Since her Chez Panisse internship, she's worked as a pastry chef at The Lodge at Lahontan, the Santa Fe Bar and Grill, and Bay Wolf, among others, before opening the award-winning Icing on the Cake on Kaua'i with her husband. Now with kids in tow, they are back in the East Bay to live closer to family. Their new sweet stop is located in the space formerly occupied by Tea Cake next to Open Sesame. "We are baking all sorts of cakes, pies and cookies and also offer special occasion cakes, using 90 percent organic ingredients," says Quinn. The shop is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Quinn says once the word gets out they may expand hours for breakfast, because Quinn also loves to experiment with drinks, too. For example she uses Sightglass Coffee's Owl's Howl espresso to make her cold brew concentrate, which she chills, adds organic milk and a hint of organic sugar and serves over ice. Quinn's macaroons that Lafayette City Manager Steve Falk describes as "Perfect" – with their moist center and chewy caramelized crust – are also available at Diablo Foods.

been named the Moraga Employee of the Month. Rosales is known for her friendly approach and cheerful attitude. "Linda has a tremendous following of our customers who always want to be seated in her station," said Amoroma's owner Hafiz Haidari. "She always has such a positive attitude and a smile on her face and she has a knack of making friends with the customers. They just seem to love her." The Rotary Club of Moraga and the Chamber of Commerce will present Rosales with a \$50 gift card to Safeway as well as a \$50 gift certificate to CVS in Moraga at the Moraga Rotary luncheon on Tuesday, October 2.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Monthly mixer at Citibank from 5:30 to 7 p.m. October 10, 3614 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette.

Ribbon Cutting for the new business The Bloom Space from 5 to 5:30 p.m. October 11, 3391 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette.

Moraga

Chamber regular members meeting Friday, September 28 at the Hacienda de las Flores starting at 7:30 a.m. with coffee and muffins, and followed by a discussion from 8 to 9 a.m. about the issues that will be on the November ballot and might impact business owners.

Orinda

The Fifth Annual Orinda Restaurant Tour held September 18 at Theatre Square was a huge success. Nearly 350 "foodies" – an increase of nearly 120 participants from last year – enjoyed appetizers and wine pairings from local restaurants, as well as live music from two bands, creating a "street party" atmosphere. Proceeds benefited the Educational Foundation of Orinda and the Orinda Chamber of Commerce.



Employee of the Month, Linda Rosales

Photo provided

Popular food server at Ristorante Amoroma, Linda Rosales, has



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Mike Rose proudly announces
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3430 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
(former Butler-Conti Dodge location)
Lafayette CA 94549
(925) 283-5600
Lafayette@mautobody.com

Approved by most major insurance companies...

2012 Marks 40 Years in Business

Visit our website for our other 7 locations
www.mikesautobody.com

If you have a business brief to share,
please contact **Sophie Braccini** at
sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Cougars Pull Out Last Second Win Against Dons

By Simon Tryzna



Brett Stephens rushed for a game-winning touchdown as time expired, giving Campo the 40-39 win. Photos Kevin Nguyen

In a highly anticipated league opener between rivals Acalanes and Campolindo, the Cougars got the final word. Brett Stephens capped off an 88-yard drive with a one-yard quarterback sneak as time expired to give the Cougars a thrilling 40-39 victory on September 21.

"(There were) no time outs left. I had to do the quickest thing, so I said 'Quarterback sneak' and I got in," said Stephens after the game.

It was a game to remember for fans of both teams. Led by Stephens, the Cougars got on board early with a 32-yard field goal by Cristian Antezana. An Acalanes fumble led to a 19-yard touchdown pass from Stephens to Mason Windatt to put Campo up 10-0.

The Dons answered back. After a huge fourth down conversion, Acalanes was 5/5 converting on fourth downs in the game, quarterback Robbie Stern ran in for a one-yard score.

After the Dons got their first points of the game, Stephens once again led his team down the field and Nicky Aikawa punched in a touchdown from the one to give Campolindo a 17-6 lead. Acalanes responded with a touchdown of their

own, but failed on the two-point conversion. Each school scored one more touchdown in the first half, which ended with the Cougars clinging to a 24-20 lead.

The Dons received the ball to open the second half and went on a touchdown march that ate almost eight minutes of the game clock and gave Acalanes their first lead of the game.

Two minutes later, Campolindo scored once more to take a 31-27 lead into the fourth quarter. With the Cougars driving once more, Acalanes was able to finally stop Stephens as he failed to convert on third down, forcing the Cougars to kick a field goal.

Then, the Dons went to work. Down one touchdown and facing fourth and two on their own 28, Acalanes went for it and Deshawn Johnson was able to find a hole in the offensive line and explode for a 42-yard run that ended in a facemask call against Campolindo, tacking on fifteen more yards to the end of the run.

The huge conversion set up a short one-yard score by Stern. Acalanes running back Peter Mitchell successfully recovered the onside kick. Mitchell scored on a 25-yard run

to put his team up 39-34.

But the Dons left too much time for Stephens and the explosive Campolindo offense. On cue, Stephens led the Cougars all the way down field, where he was able to sneak past the defense for the win.

"We made so many plays tonight and it was outstanding," said Dons head coach Mike Ivancovich. "I'm so proud of my team and I'm disappointed for my players, but I'm not sad, I'm not unhappy."

Mitchell felt the same way, but was disappointed. "(We) played well, and it came down to the last play," he said, "Moving forward, come out next week, do what we can, continue our season and do whatever we can."

On the Campolindo side, long-time head coach Kevin Macy was relieved. "After a night like this, we have mixed emotions," he explained. "Acalanes was incredible with what they did to wear us down. We were lucky to pull this one out."

Next up for the Cougars is a home match with another rival - Miramonte. The Matadors have been unable to string consecutive victories together, starting the year 2-3, which includes their loss at Dublin to begin league play.

Family Tests Tolerance in Open Water Swims

Submitted by Michael Spiering



From left; Maddy, Spencer and Jack Park. Photo provided

Four members of a Lafayette family, two brothers, one sister and father participated in an annual family tradition, Escape from the Rock, an open water swim from Alcatraz Island to Aquatic

Park. On August 25th, the Spierings, Jack (sixth grade, Stanley Middle School), Spencer (eighth grade, Stanley Middle School), and Maddy (sophomore, Campolindo

High School) all swam the 1.5 mile distance in the chilly waters of the Bay. Jack finished third in his age group with a time of 57 minutes, Spencer finished second in his age group with a time of 51 minutes and Maddy won her age group and placed fifth overall in the female division with a time of 45 minutes.

On September 9th, two weeks after their Alcatraz swim, Spencer and Maddy swam in the RCP Tiburon Open Water Mile from Angel Island, across the deep-water channel known as the Raccoon Strait, to Tiburon. Both siblings swam in the non-wetsuit division testing their ability to tolerate cold water. Maddy swam with friends from her local swim team, Orinda Aquatics, and finished with a time of 32 minutes. Spencer finished in 37 minutes.

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Girls' High School Tennis Off to Competitive Start

By Marissa Harnett



Photos Andy Scheck

The high school girls' tennis season kicked off earlier this month with back-to-back rivalry matches. All three Lamorinda schools played each other in the first two weeks of DFAL competition.

Campolindo defeated host Acalanes, 7-2, in the season opener on September 11 and then took on Miramonte two days later. The Mats took down the defending DFAL champions, 6-3. The Mats next took on Acalanes on September 18, defeating the Dons, 6-3.

Miramonte is undefeated in league play at 3-0 (8-3 overall). Campo is 2-1 and Acalanes' league record stands at 1-3 (as of September 18).

Campo treated spectators to terrific competition against Miramonte on September 13. Miramonte coach Michael McCollom was happy with the 6-3 final result. "Everyone on both teams played very well and competed beautifully. We just have a little more depth on the doubles ladder right now."

The #5 singles match was the most competitive match of the day. Campo senior Amanda Lemelin and Miramonte senior and captain, Leah See, split two hard-fought sets. In lieu of a third set, a super tie-breaker decided the match. In a battle that could have gone either way, See emerged victorious, 7-5, 4-6, 10-8.

By the end of singles play, Miramonte and Campo were dead even, 3-3, but Miramonte showed their depth in the doubles.

The #2 doubles proved to be an exciting match-up. Miramonte junior Kady Richardson and sophomore Cece Andrews battled Campo junior Tori Kallerud and senior Natalie Li. With their tenacity and fantastic angles, Richardson and Andrews found their stride in the second set and took the match, 7-6, 6-0.

Not without challenge, the Lady Mats swept all three doubles matches and finished the day with a 6-3 win

"I know that [Campo coaches] will have their team ready for the next match at Miramonte," McCollom predicted.

In Lafayette Acalanes' team has seen steady improvement with the addition of new talent and new head coach, Brent Bird. The team is especially strong at the top of the singles ladder with sophomore Isabel Von Ebbe leading the way in the #1 spot. Junior Tessa Karogocsev follows as the #2 player and senior captain Ida Barbari is strong in third position.

Bird was pleased with the outcome of their match against Miramonte. Von Ebbe edged out Miramonte's Taylor James. Three of the matches split sets, forcing the third set super tie-breaker. Acalanes lost all three of the tie-break matches, but showed strong competition. "We're going to end up just behind the top teams," Bird explained, saying they will continue to improve. "We're definitely catching up with them."

All three Lamorinda teams face off again in October.

Match results from September 13 – Miramonte at Campolindo

Singles

Taylor James (M) def. Sydney Stone (C); 6-0, 6-3
 Jen Stanten (M) def. Miranda Hill (C); 6-3, 6-4
 Mette Huberts (C) def. Anjali Majumdar (M); 6-4, 6-4
 Claire Faulkner (C) def. Haley Stanten (M); 6-4, 6-3
 Leah See (M) def. Amanda Lemelin (C); 7-5, 4-6, 10-8
 Hannah Ross (C) def. Bridget Immel (M); 6-3, 6-4

Doubles

Holly Bohuslav/Merrick Goodman (M) def. Molly Pines/Tori Perrella (C); 6-2, 6-3
 Kady Richardson/Cece Andrews (M) def. Tori Kallerud/Natalie Li (C); 7-6, 6-0
 Maddie Geary/Georgia Briskey (M) def. Grace Roberts/Silvana Moiceanu (C); 6-1, 6-3

Campolindo Volleyball Outscores Mats and Dons

Submitted by Sasan Tajbakhsh



Campolindo Varsity took second place at the Wolverine Invitational at Deer Valley High School. From left, back row: Coach Dave Chen, Kaylyn Murray, Kirstin Sibley, Emily Larrick, Rachel Hua, Sophie Seiberth, Kenzie Brown, Abbey Healey, Gaby Gryko, Annie Shurtz, Julia Partlow; front row: Natalie Meniktas, Annie Doyle, Abel Cassidy, Kelley Wirth, Maddie Browning, Lauren Gaskin, Coach John Vuong. Photo provided by Campolindo Volleyball

The Campolindo varsity, junior and freshman volleyball teams went undefeated against their Lamorinda rivals last week. The Cougars prevailed over the

Acalanes Dons in Lafayette on September 18 and at home against the Miramonte Matadors on September 20.

Campo's varsity team is currently ranked

Miramonte XC Records Top Finishes

Submitted by Alison Zamanian



Frosh/soph, from left: Chris Ramirez, Charlie O'Brien, Clay Haskell, Sid Bagga and Dennis Finger. Photos provided



Varsity, from left: Tyler Hanson, Miles McCaulou, Jeff Lee, Dillon Read, Charlie Zamanian, Asher Jaffe and Mark Tamminga

Both the Miramonte frosh/soph and varsity boys' cross country team finished in second place at the De La Salle Invitational on Saturday, September 15. The varsity team also finished second at the Ed Sias Varsity

Small School division meet on September 8. At the Ed Saisa race, Tyler Hanson finished in first place by over 10 seconds, running the eighth fastest time in the 28-year history of the Invitational.



All three Campolindo volleyball teams enjoyed a pasta-feed at lunch before taking on Miramonte last Thursday. Pictured is the freshman team, clockwise from front left: Maddie Dolan, Holly Moore, Emma Ishida, Eva Spindler, Ava Tajbakhsh, Brooke Finegold, Amanda Strang, Haley Charlesworth, Ally Ikeya, Ashley Lok, Betty Galindo; not pictured: Lauren Torres. Photo provided

number one in the North Coast Section, 22nd in the state for all schools (they are #1 in Division III) and 108th in the nation.

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Saint Mary's Volleyball Opens WCC Play

By Michael Sakoda



From left: Kristina Graven, Lauren Corp, Jordan Shaw, Gabby Jolly and Dalas Dodd

Photos Kevin Nuygen



Senior outside hitter Lauren Corp recorded 12 kills and 10 digs in the loss.

The Saint Mary's College women's volleyball team opened conference play on September 20, losing at home to Loyola Marymount. While the season record (5-7) may not reflect it, this is a strong team. The Gaels and the University of San Diego were picked as the teams most likely to win the West Coast Conference and their earlier losses mostly came against top 25 ranked opponents.

They began their season August 24, going 1-2 at the Chevron Rainbow Wahine Invitational, with losses coming against then No. 7 Stanford and No. 8 ranked Hawaii. They earned their first win against Albany.

The Gaels then recorded a perfect 3-0 record at the Sacramento State Invitational, crushing Morgan State,

Boise State and Sacramento State.

Saint Mary's finished out the pre-season 1-4, including a second loss to Stanford.

The game against the Lions of LMU was close, and with the exception of the opening set, neither team led by more than four points throughout the remainder of the match.

While LMU notched a 3-0 sweep, the second and third sets showed the level of competition fans can expect to see in the WCC for the remainder of the season.

The second set was point-for-point play, LMU winning only after overtaking the Gaels at 18-19, to lead the rest of the way.

SMC held the lead through most of the third set, but eventually lost ground to trail 23-24. Senior outside

hitter Lauren Corp (12 kills, 10 digs) fought to keep the Gaels afloat. She played recorded two big kills to tie the score at 24, and to give SMC a 25-24 lead, but the Gaels couldn't hold on and lost 26-28.

With Portland State and Pepperdine upcoming, Saint Mary's head coach Rob Browning says his team was going to have to simply push forward.

"We need to bounce back from this; we need to play better," Browning explained. "Our goal is to win the conference."

Looking ahead at a series of tough opponents in the WCC, there are hurdles the team will have to leap. The first of which is the conference itself.

"There are eight other teams... that want to win it, and almost all of them can, on any given night, beat any other team," said Browning.

Injuries have also been a large part of the Gaels' story this season. Saint Mary's has three players sidelined by injury, and still more fighting through them on the court.

Outside hitter Jordan Shaw (8 kills, 9 digs against LMU), a junior



Junior outside hitter Jordan Shaw had eight kills and nine digs.

who led the team in kills last season, missed the first few games this year with a knee injury and she is just getting back to her usual role.

In addition Missy White, a red shirt senior, has missed all games this season with a back injury. In her place, the Gaels are playing red shirt freshman Dalas Dodd, who had a strong performance in the home loss to LMU.

"But usually the biggest obstacle is your own team, getting them to perform at their best, and that's certainly our biggest obstacle right now," Browning explained. We have a bunch of good players...we just need to put it together."

Saint Mary's takes on Pepperdine at the McKeon Pavilion, Thursday, September 27, 7 p.m.

Reaching the Finish Line

Submitted by Kerwin Lee



Eric on the summit of Mt Columbia (14er #9) at 9:30am on day #2, 27 hours into Nolan's 14. Photo provided

Eric J. Lee, a graduate of Acalanes class of 2000, recently completed the "Nolan's 14." The running challenge covers 100 miles in 60 hours across 14 summits of over 14,000 feet in Colorado. There is a 15 percent finish rate. Lee is an Ultramarathoner and currently lives in Boulder.

Leg and Lung Power Sets Speed Record

Submitted by Cathy Dausman



Photo provided

Greg Thomas could get a speeding ticket on highways going the same speed he attained on a bike recently. The Orinda man, who competed in the 2012 World Human Powered Speed Challenge in Battle Mountain, Nevada, was clocked at 72.52 miles per hour aboard a recumbent bike. He was one of the top ten fastest riders in

North America and among the top 20 worldwide. "Riding a Speedbike at Battle Mountain is amazing," Thomas said. "It takes surprisingly little effort to get to 60 mph but a huge amount of effort to get over 70 mph." Thomas counts himself lucky to have had a strong, supportive crew and fast bike, so he could concentrate on riding.

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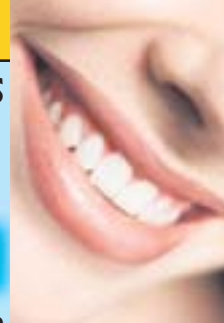
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Lamorinda Weekly Volume 06 Issue 15 Wednesday, September 26, 2012



Digging Deep with Cynthia

...read on page D6

The Moraga Country Club Kitchen Tour Promises to Delight

By Sophie Braccini



The custom-made center island adds seating and prep space to John and CJ Greenblatt's kitchen

Photos Ohlen Alexander

Every year Sue Olson enthusiastically sets out to convince Moraga Country Club homeowners to open their recently remodeled kitchens for a tour that raises money for the Moraga Education Foundation (MEF) – and every year she succeeds in convincing a handful of homeowners to do so.

This year, the 5th annual Moraga Country Club Kitchen Tour (MCCKT) is presenting four of the most interesting remodels in this large community. The tour shows how crafty architects have opened up and completely redesigned floor plans that were a bit dated, and offers a way for community members to check the latest trends while enjoying wine and appetizers at each home, and contributing to Moraga schools.

... continued on page D4



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- 234 El Toyonal, Orinda-07/25/12- represented Buyer
- 485 Woodminster Dr, Moraga-07/24/12- represented Tenant
- 94 Devin Dr, Moraga-05/29/12- represented Buyer
- 255 La Espiral, Orinda- 05/17/12- represented Buyer
- 20 Birch Ct, Orinda-05/11/12- represented Seller
- 17 El Camino Moraga, Orinda-05/01/12 represented Buyer
- 136 Spring Rd, Orinda-04/10/12- represented Seller and Buyer
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- 122 Lombardy Ln, Orinda-02/24/12- represented Buyer

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MORAGA	11	\$639,000	\$3,500,000
ORINDA	5	\$795,000	\$1,270,000

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Previous Sale: \$1,320,000, 04-03-07
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- 865 Hidden Pond Court, \$1,070,000, 4 Bdrms, 3455 SqFt, 1991 YrBlt, 8-28-12;
Previous Sale: \$570,000, 09-25-90
- 3704 Highland Road, \$415,000, 4 Bdrms, 1924 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-17-12;
Previous Sale: \$720,000, 06-16-05
- 1790 Ivanhoe Avenue, \$780,000, 4 Bdrms, 1699 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-24-12;
Previous Sale: \$177,000, - -
- 670 Jennie Court, \$1,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 1947 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 8-17-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,145,000, 06-11-08
- 3318 Las Huertas Road, \$1,200,000, 5 Bdrms, 3930 SqFt, 1937 YrBlt, 8-17-12
- 3309 Moraga Boulevard, \$777,000, 3 Bdrms, 1504 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 8-24-12;
Previous Sale: \$260,000, 01-15-93
- 3279 Mt. Diablo Court #11, \$515,000, 3 Bdrms, 1731 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-17-12;
Previous Sale: \$400,000, 06-18-09
- 1166 Oak Hill Road, \$3894 Quail Ridge Road, \$935,000, 3 Bdrms, 2057 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 8-22-12
- 100 Rodeo Court, \$1,608,000, 4 Bdrms, 3014 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 8-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,390,000, 10-14-10
- 1588 Silver Dell Road, \$900,000, 4 Bdrms, 2942 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 8-28-12
- 1710 Toyon Road, \$940,000, 3 Bdrms, 2538 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 8-27-12;
Previous Sale: \$464,000, 04-28-94
- 1006 Windsor Drive, \$740,000, 3 Bdrms, 1525 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 8-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$541,000, 05-23-00
- 1,430,000, 4 Bdrms, 2620 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 8-24-12

MORAGA

- 755 Augusta Drive, \$730,000, 2 Bdrms, 1444 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 8-17-12;
Previous Sale: \$400,000, 10-26-94
- 3 Baltusrol Street, \$639,000, 3 Bdrms, 2148 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 8-23-12
- 1844 Camino Pablo, \$825,000, 4 Bdrms, 2180 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 8-22-12;
Previous Sale: \$825,000, 08-22-12
- 2151 Camino Pablo, \$3,500,000, 8-17-12;
Previous Sale: \$610,000, 07-12-99

... continued on page D7

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

LAFAYETTE

Huston Road, 94549, HSBC Bank, 08-29-12, \$418,500, 1318 sf, 2 bd

ORINDA

Dias Dorados, 94563, Ing Bank, 08-31-12, \$925,792, 1966 sf, 4 bd

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The Moraga Country Club Kitchen Tour Promises to Delight

... continued from page D1



The Grennblatt's view from the kitchen window

One of the four homes belongs to empty-nesters, John and CJ Greenblatt, who agreed to open their home despite their daughter's wedding that same weekend. "We could not say 'no' to Sue," says CJ Greenblatt, who adds that friends will be there to answer questions.

Their home, which is set close to the sixth green of the golf course, still had the original floor plan when they bought it. The kitchen and family room had no view of the greens. "We started thinking about moving spaces around," says Greenblatt, "and when our architect, Allan Sayles, came in he had the same idea." The wall that separated the small kitchen from the dinette area was removed and the family room was moved from the front to the back of the house so the great view could be enjoyed most of the time.

In the larger kitchen, a center island was custom-made to fit the room, adding seating space, prep space and a prep sink. The Greenblatts chose two different tones of gray granite for the counter tops and the island. All of the cabinets are white and hide the appliances, including a cool built-in Miele coffee machine. The color contrasts pleasantly with the dark oak floor. The openness of the plan serves the view well, and light abounds in the house. The transitional style blends nicely with the Japanese inspiration of the garden that was redone a few years ago.

Transitional describes another home on the tour belonging to a young family with school-age children. When the Foleys bought their house a year and a half ago, the kitchen had been redone by the previous owners, but a serious leak damaged it and they turned that accident into an opportunity to remodel the floor plan to their liking.

... continued on next page



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The Foleys chose rainforest serpentinite countertops in their remodeled kitchen

Photo Ohlen Alexander

Walls were removed between the kitchen and the family room to add perspective. “My husband loves the view of the hills; by removing the kitchen wall we can now enjoy our view from the family room as well,” says Foley. They chose Premier Kitchens in Lafayette to design the space with dark cherry cabinets, quite different from the former light gray that was there before.

The countertops are made of rainforest serpentinite, a kind of marble that’s stronger than regular marble. The slabs have been very nicely cut to hug the space, with some reddish veins that match and contrast with the rest of the room’s décor.

While this event is supposed to be a kitchen tour only, visitors to this house will enjoy the three-tiered garden with decks, entertainment areas and a Jacuzzi.

The two-hour tour will begin at 5 p.m. October 4. After touring the homes attendees are invited to the new Moraga Country Club Clubhouse for raffle prizes and a tour of the new MCC clubhouse kitchen. Information and reference material will be available at each home, along with the architects, contractors or homeowners who will respond to questions and brainstorm design solutions with guests.

Last year, the MCCKT raised \$6,600 for MEF and Moraga schools. Kitchen Tour tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 the day of the tour, and may be purchased at the Moraga Country Club front desk, Across the Way or online. For more information or to purchase tickets go to www.mcchometour.com.

The Summer Sizzle

by Andi Peterson Brown

Summer 2012 was a hot one for our local housing market. While the heart of summer is historically a slower selling season, this year was an incredible exception. In fact, last month was the best August that we’ve had over the past six years in the Bay Area.

Years of pent up buyer demand, historically low interest rates, and an overall lack of supply created an incredibly competitive environment this summer that initially caught many buyers, sellers, and Realtors off guard. We typically see buyer activity drop off towards the end of July as people take vacations and become distracted with other fun family activities. But because we had a competitive spring season—with many homes receiving between 3 and 15 offers in less than a week—we still had a lot of buyers out there who had lost out in multiple offer situations and who still needed a house. Add new buyers into the mix each week and the competition only increases. While 15 offers on a home in Lamorinda is nothing to balk at, well-priced homes in Walnut Creek and Concord were getting upwards of 30 offers last month. Wow, how times have changed!

Our local housing market is faring much better than the national housing market. If you’ve been thinking about selling your home, now is an excellent time. We have buyers lined up and ready to go. The only thing missing is the house.



andi
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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Under Cover

By Cynthia Brian

“What I enjoy is not the fruits alone, but I also enjoy the soil itself, its nature, and its power.” Cicero



Mustard reinvigorates soil and is a great cover crop growing as tall as ten feet. It's edible and pretty, too. Photos Cynthia Brian

To grow healthy plants, fruits, and vegetables, we have to have hearty soil. Before we put our gardens to bed for the long winter nap, we want to blanket the beds with nutrient rich cover crops. Replenishing nitrogen, preventing erosion, building soil, increasing water absorption, cover crops are the workhorses of the late autumn and winter landscape.

It is critical to implement the correct combination of cover crops for the right job. Because all plants need nitrogen and all microorganisms depend on it, nitrogen is the most challenging material to maintain in the soil. The best nitrogen fixers are in the Legume family, as they interact with beneficial bacteria in the dirt to enhance the roots. Let's take a look at crops to plant this autumn that will help with preventing weed seeds from germinating while providing a habitat for beneficial insects as well as compost for the garden.

Hairy Vetch: An annual legume that resembles peas with a pretty purple flower, toxic to humans and chickens, vetch is a favorite food of goats and cows and one of the best sources of nitrogen for plants. It sprawls and twines around other specimens. Instead of pulling it out, till it under in spring to use as mulch.

White Dutch Clover: Sown in either spring and fall, the white flowering perennial White-flowering Dutch clover spreads by underground runners. It takes two weeks for the clover to break down in the soil.

Crimson Clover: A pretty red flower sprouts in the spring when this hardy annual is planted in the fall. Crimson clover can survive winter freezing to minus ten degrees Fahrenheit. It prefers a neutral PH soil that drains well and does better when sown thickly. The entire plant can be turned under in April, its succulent leaves and stems will decompose in only 10 days leaving

the soil nitrogen rich.

Fava Beans: For abundant green manure, plant hardy annual Fava beans. They will grow to four or five feet tall and can be planted as late as November. These hardy plants grow slowly. The tops can be cut down to the base for the compost pile. Till the roots into the soil for best results and richer planting medium.

Mustard: This is one of the most popular cover crops for home gardens, vineyards, and fields. White mustard suppresses soil borne diseases, nematodes, and common root rot. It provides some weed control, especially from rye grass. It adds lots of organic matter when tilled under and the flowers and leaves are edible. Brassica crops are not to be planted following a mustard cover.

Barley: If you have a hillside and are seeking erosion control, barley is a great solution. It's a fast growing grass with fibrous roots. It will die if the weather gets down to 17 degrees.

... continued on page D8



Final harvest of squash, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, and tomatoes—plenty for a fall festivity.

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

MORAGA ...continued

18 Hammond Place, \$751,500, 3 Bdrms, 1467 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 8-16-12;

Previous Sale: \$830,000, 03-09-05

44 La Salle Drive, \$790,000, 4 Bdrms, 2116 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 8-23-12

103 Merion Terrace, \$777,000, 3 Bdrms, 2486 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 8-23-12

1087 Sanders Drive, \$700,000, 3 Bdrms, 1608 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 8-22-12

1725 Spyglass Lane, \$755,000, 3 Bdrms, 1842 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 8-17-12;

Previous Sale: \$700,000, 07-02-01

3 Wingfoot Street, \$760,000, 3 Bdrms, 2090 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 8-23-12;

Previous Sale: \$350,000, 05-17-88

10 Woodford Drive, \$665,000, 3 Bdrms, 1927 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 8-21-12;

Previous Sale: \$337,000, 06-20-91

ORINDA

38 Mira Loma Road, \$1,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 4195 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 8-21-12;

Previous Sale: \$401,000, 04-16-86

18 Orchard Road, \$1,250,000, 6 Bdrms, 3235 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 8-17-12;

Previous Sale: \$412,500, 12-06-90

122 Scenic Drive, \$836,000, 4 Bdrms, 2039 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-20-12

92 Van Ripper Lane, \$1,270,000, 3 Bdrms, 2791 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 8-17-12;

Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 09-03-09

80 Via Floreado, \$795,000, 4 Bdrms, 2040 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 8-23-12;

Previous Sale: \$161,500,

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Michele earned a degree in Business Administration and Real Estate from Cal State, Hayward. A GRI and active in CAR, he is president-elect of WCCAR for 2013. Michele is an award-winning top producer who specializes in high-end homes as well as income properties and foreclosures. Both Leslie and Michele are life-long residents of the Bay Area and reside in Moraga with their children.

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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Under Cover

... continued from page D6

Fall Planting Ideas

Visit your nursery to find trees and shrubs boasting sensational sunset colors to compliment your fall landscape. Take advantage of the balmy days, chillier evenings, and the warm soil to plant seeds offering up greens, vegetables, and flowers through the beginning of winter. Here's what you'll want to sow now:

Peas	Endive
Parsley	Radicchio
Broccoli	Turnips
Kale	Beets
Arugula	Leeks
Lettuce	Calendulas
Asian greens	Violas
Spinach	Cilantro
Chicory	Bare Root Peonies
Chard	

Cover the planted patch with straw. Some seeds will germinate quickly followed by dormancy. In our mild climate greens and root vegetables can be harvested throughout the winter. Keep in mind that you can mix the many "foliage" edibles like lettuce, cabbage, or Swiss Chard amongst your fall ornamentals. Look for those that add color, interesting leaf shapes, varying sizes, and form. For a bigger design impact, plant in swaths. Thin when the plants are a few inches high, and add the sprouts to your dinner plate.

Engage your children in garden based learning to spark their curiosity and grow their confidence with practical skills they will use forever. In a large container



It's not fall without pumpkins and ghoulish gourds! If you don't grow them, find them at the farmers' markets.



Clematis shines as it twines with forget-me not and geranium along a fence.

Photos Cynthia Brian

at least 18 inches deep, let your kids plant a slice from their favorite red, golden, or brown potato with two or three eyes up in a manure rich soil. Leaves will sprout, the plant will flower, and about 10 weeks later the po-



Cynthia's freshly harvested red potatoes. Easy to plant and grow. Delicious and nutritious. A great project for kids!

tatoes are ready to be harvested. In most areas, tubers are planted in spring, but I plant them all year 'round with continued success as long as I protect them from frost or super cold weather. Your children will love eating their own baked potato or making fries.

Choose bulbs that will be deer and rodent resistant to plant towards the end of the month or any time in November for continuous spring color without the nibbling. Besides daffodils, consider alliums, snowdrops, bluebells, checkered lilies, and fritillaria.

Without good soil, we'll never achieve a healthy, beautiful landscape. Just as we lather creams on our bodies to moisturize our skin to keep it young, our soil needs nutrients to feed the seeds. Cover crops are the anti-aging replenishing regimen that keep our gardens growing and glowing year after year. As Franklin D. Roosevelt commented: "The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself." Take care of nature's most important organ—its earth and it will reward you a hundred fold.

Fall forward with fabulous foliage!

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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for October

"All my hurts, my garden spade can heal." Ralph Waldo Emerson

A season of great beauty, autumn is the best time of the year for planting and it is a busy time for gardeners. Raking leaves, deadheading perennials, cleaning out flowerbeds, storing patio furniture, fall provides us with plenty of exercise outdoors in the fresh air. October has historically been a notorious month for fires and earthquakes, thus it is imperative to revisit our family emergency plans. And let's not forget to harvest our ghoulish gourds and decorate our steps with fierce pumpkins for a haunting Halloween to awaken the child within us all.

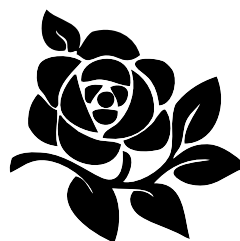
- CLEAR a defensible space around the perimeter of your home and develop an evacuation plan in case of a wildfire. October is notorious for being a fire month. Create an emergency supply list, especially if you live at the top of a canyon as fire normally runs uphill. For more information visit the Cal Fire site at <http://www.fire.ca.gov/>.
- CHOOSE fire resistant plants when considering your landscaping needs. Most fire resistant specimens are also drought resistant, a good pick to help conserve water.
- INFUSE vinegar with the final fresh picked fruits and herbs of this season in preparation for holiday gifts.
- HAND-PICK bugs off plants as a first defense, apply insecticidal soap for harder to kill pests.
- CONTROL next year's weeds with a vinegar based herbicide or corn meal gluten as a pre-emergent.
- GROW swaths of late season interest, especially grasses.
- BRANCH out with fiery leaves of gold, russet, bronze, zinfandel, and sienna hued arrangements for festive fall centerpieces.
- PICK your remaining green tomatoes as soon as temperatures start dropping. Sauté with olive oil and garlic for a tangy, tasty treat of famous fried green tomatoes.
- SEEK sanctuary in your garden by placing a bench in a tranquil, soothing location where you can watch birds, butterflies, and bees be busy. A gently engaging experience, green spaces revitalize people physically, psychologically, and emotionally.
- SPROUT seeds of arugula, mesclun, Asian lettuces, and other gourmet greens in a large container by your kitchen for easy pinching and eating throughout autumn.
- OVER-SEED bare spots in lawns at the first drops of rain, then fertilize with an organic product.
- PUNCH up the drama in your landscape with containers planted with fall colored succulents and annuals available now in garden centers.
- PREVENT garden injuries by stretching before going out to dig, and always bend from the knees, not the back.
- DIVIDE, move, re-plant deer resistant herbaceous peonies in well draining, loaming soil.
- STOP BY the Be the Star You Are!® Express Yourself!™ booth at the Pear and Wine Festival in Moraga on September 29 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. to meet me and writers of Teen Scene, be on the radio and receive free, fresh potpourri; sponsored by the Lamorinda Weekly.
- ROOT cuttings from Jacobinia for a showy next season fall performance.
- PROBLEMS with skunks, yellow jackets, or mosquitoes? Call Contra Costa Vector Control for assistance, removal, and extermination at (925) 685-9301. Sorry, they don't eradicate rats but will give you tips on how to keep your property rodent resistant.
- PLANT alliums and daffodils towards the end of the month to fill the gap between the tulip and peony spring blooms. Stagger plantings of narcissus through January for a long season of beauty.
- VISIT the local farmer's markets for the final fresh fruits and vegetables of the year. Pick up gourds, pumpkins, and fall decorations that will last through Thanksgiving.
- RAKE your fallen leaves and grass clippings to add rich nutrients to the soil. Build your own bin or buy one at selected retailers. Mowing the leaves helps them decompose faster.
- COVER fences or dress up railings by planting clematis, a super easy twining vine with fragrance and flowers.
- KEEP the birds happy in your garden by continuing to provide food, water, and shelter. Your hospitality will be rewarded.
- HARVEST your potatoes as soon as the leaves dry and curl. Dig gently to not bruise the tubers. Leave the tiniest ones to mature longer.
- EXPERIENCE and enjoy a haunted, happy Halloween.

See you on September 29th in Moraga at the Pear and Wine Festival. Wishing you Halloween Dreams of goblins, ghosts, and gourds!

Happy Gardening to You!

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ASK CYNTHIA: Reader Requests



Dear Cynthia

We are having a problem with skunks coming in the backyard and eating our plants and cat food. Sometimes they spray and it's awful. Any solution? Thanks for your help.

Susan, Orinda

Dear Susan:

Sounds like you have a smelly problem! Skunks are scavengers that invite themselves to dine wherever they smell food. They will dig in a garden for insects and they'll eat plants, too, but I believe they are coming for the cat food. First thing to do is to remove any pet food and batten down the garbage cans. Clients have used mothballs placed around the perimeter of a yard to keep the small critters away, but I personally have not had success with this method. Normally once you remove the food source, you control the problem unless they are truly attracted to your delicious garden.

The more urgent concern with skunks is the possibility of encountering a rabid animal. Vector control encourages homeowners with a skunk issue to contact them for trapping and removal. They will lend a trap to you for a first visit. You place the trap with food inside at the place where the skunks are visiting. When you've captured the skunk you call them and they arrive within 24 hours to euthanize it. To contact Vector Control in Contra Costa County, call (925) 685-9301 or visit www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us. If you have continued problems, it is recommended that you buy a trap. I ordered mine through The Snare Shop. They are called Super Tuff Trap #6, cost approximately \$50 each plus shipping and are humane ways to catch squirrels, cats, opossums, or any small critter. This company has snares for bears and mountain lions, too. Hope you don't need those! Go to www.snareshop.com.

Keep lots of tomato juice on hand until you've solved this stinky scenario.

ASK CYNTHIA: Reader Requests

Hello Cynthia:

I enjoy reading your column in the *Lamorinda Weekly*. I have a very vexing problem that hopefully you might be willing to help me solve. I have a planting bed that is lamentably overrun by oxalis. It is also oozing out into my lawn. I just can't seem to eradicate it. Short of removing the top four inches of soil in my planter, do you have any magic solution? I have tried letting the planting area go fallow and then spraying it with various poisons the nursery people have suggested but no luck killing it. Any suggestions from you would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Joy from Lafayette



Hello Joy:

As we all know, a weed is just a flower growing where we don't want it. Oxalis, a South African invasive, is one of those plants that people either love or hate. I have clients in Los Angeles who planted a lawn of oxalis and clover and are thrilled with the results. They never have to mow, they get flowers in winter, and their dog loves playing and rolling in its lushness.

Oxalis goes by many names including creeping wood sorrel, Bermuda buttercup, sour grass, good luck plant, and my personal favorite, Shamrock or lucky clover. The genus name Oxalis is derived from the Greek word meaning "sour." Oxalic acid in the plants is sour tasting and the plant is generally considered poisonous although eating small amounts of the nutrient rich leaves, tubers, flowers, and seeds are not considered dangerous when consumed raw. But I digress—obviously you are not interested in eating your Oxalis!

Getting rid of Oxalis can indeed be difficult yet not impossible. It sounds like you've exhausted the expert advice from your garden centers. You can pull out oxalis easily for a season but it will be back blanketing your garden with yellow blooms when not much else is flowering. I've had clients use a mixer of equal amounts of dishwashing detergent, water, and vinegar to drench the new shoots with some satisfaction. Spraying must be done the moment you see even one plant emerge. Diligence is required. If you are not opposed to the use of chemicals when all else fails, Weed Be Gone has a special oxalis product and Roundup is effective. I'm not advocating these methods, but it's good to have options. Removing all the dirt in your planter and replacing with topsoil, mulch, and a pre-emergent are possibilities, but you will still have to be on patrol to eradicate any seedlings that sprout. You said it's "oozing out into your lawn." Make sure you clean the mower blades or you'll have my Los Angeles clients' lawn, too.

Here's my very magic potion—get a few chickens and let them free range. Chickens love eating oxalis and they are fairly excellent at getting to those teeny tiny tubers that are almost invisible to the naked eye. With chickens your oxalis will be gone forever, your garden will be treated with free fertilizer and you'll have organic, delicious eggs.

Here's hoping you put the "joy" back into your planter and enjoy some "egg-citement" as well.

Cynthia Brian

The Goddess Gardener

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Cynthia will answer questions when space permits.

Email your comments or questions to Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com

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15 Inverleith Terrace
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Fabulous updated H.V. Trad. Dream kit., spacious mstr ste. Hwdwd flrs, custom detail Fr. doors open to priv. deck. Lush setting w/lvl lawn. Top neighborhood, walk to town.

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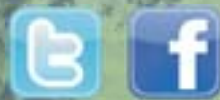
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