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Photo Ohlen Alexander

Walking and Running on Sunshine

By Cathy Tyson

Under sparkling blue skies, the 20th annual Reservoir Run was a “pinch me” morning. Really does it get any better than happy children, balloons, the smell of sausage in the air, fabulous fall colors, and a jogging Gumby? With all the hallmarks of a great day, along with the Giants just hours away from winning the World Series, Lamorinda residents had to

wonder how we got so lucky to live in our little slice of paradise. Not only did the weather cooperate as it usually does, but everyone breathed a bit easier after the alleged long-time Reservoir mystery was solved.

Some 25 years ago, according to legend, visitors spotted an alligator in the Lafayette Reservoir. Is it perhaps our very own version of the Loch Ness Monster – or just

an urban myth? After two days of searching back in the day, the elusive beast was never seen again – maybe scared off by the hoopla – until the reptile was magically transformed into a 7-year-old charming mascot, Hunter Koch, whose little brother Cody wanted to come along as a gator hunter.

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Quote of the Week:

“Turning away is no different than endorsing discrimination by silence; a free and unafraid press should know better than that.”

Read Letters to the Editor, page A8

Advertising

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Ryan Andresen: A Message of Hope

By Lee Borrowman



Ryan Andresen's Eagle project was a Tolerance Wall at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. In September, students and school staff participated voluntarily to create tiles that reflect kindness, tolerance, and respect for all differences.

Photo provided

Andy Warhol once said, "In the future, everyone will be world-famous for fifteen minutes." From his mother's petition on Change.org to appearances on national television with Ellen DeGeneres and Anderson Cooper, Moraga's Ryan Andresen has had more than his 15 minutes of fame. The former Boy Scout was denied his Eagle award because he is gay, sparking another volley in the battle to persuade Boy Scouts of America to change its policy barring openly gay boys from membership.

That's the national angle. What's happening here at home? "In less than three weeks, Ryan's entire life changed," says his father, Eric Andresen.

Andresen describes a younger Ryan as "a shy kid who didn't know his purpose in life. In middle school, he felt that he was different. He was the boy who sat in the back of the class and kept his head down." And that made him a prime target for bullies. Ryan couldn't escape them – they were at school, at church, and in his Boy Scout troop.

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A Tale of Two Films

Cathy Tyson meets some Iron Filmmakers. Page B2



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Water Polo Titles up for Grabs

Tonight's a big night for local teams. Marissa Harnett reports. Page C1



Our Homes D1-D12

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Cynthia Brian introduces you to...dirt. Page D1



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Lafayette

Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, November 13, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Monday, November 19, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Tuesday, November 13, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District

Wednesday, November 7, 7:30 pm
Wednesday, December 12, 7:30 pm
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, November 14, 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

City Close to a Final Decision on Shorter Condo Project

By Cathy Tyson

KB Home once again came before the City Council, this time with new and improved architectural plans that completely removed the controversial fifth floor of the project slated for the parking lot behind Panda Express. “As you can see, it’s quite a bit lower than the existing development (Town Center II) next door,” said Senior Planner Christine Sinnette in her introduction to the City Council, concluding, “Staff recommends approving the project.”

Although preliminary and adjusted plans have been through the Design Review process and the Planning Commission, the height and mass of the structure that backs up to BART has always been contentious. Just this past September, the Planning Commission recommended denying the project, citing the fifth floor and parking circulation issues.

KB Home Senior Vice President Ray Panek reminded the Council how much the project has downsized from

its original iteration, commenting, “I guess I got hit in the head with a sledgehammer,” finally responding to constructive comments from the Planning Commission that they had serious concerns about the height. He displayed a selection of drawings depicting how the condominium project has shrunk. To the audience, it seemed like “now you see it, now you don’t” comparing the two versions.

Even though the current architectural plans eliminate the fifth floor,

they don’t include specifics on articulation, balconies, roof lines, paint color and material choices that still need to be finalized. City Council members were uncomfortable giving approval on a project without seeing a final product first. “You’re asking us to trust you,” said Mayor Carol Federighi.

Unfortunately the City Council is up against a deadline that governs the project.

... continued on page A9

More Senior Housing Under Construction Downtown

By Cathy Tyson



First there was the 23-unit townhouse project at the site of the former Hungry Hunter at the intersection of Pleasant Hill Road, then there was the recent ground breaking of the Eden Housing project near Bo’s Barbecue, now just down the block a new location of Merrill Gardens senior housing is under construction on Mt. Diablo Boulevard at Second Street. If

all goes according to plan the new community should be open at the end of next year with 72 independent and assisted living apartments and a 17-person memory care unit, along with underground parking. The one and one third acre site is the consolidation of six separate parcels that included Yan’s Restaurant and Keenan Heinz. This project is the only one of the

three with 6,400 square feet of retail space on the ground floor facing Mt. Diablo Boulevard and an inviting patio area that residents and the public can use. The main entrance to Merrill Gardens will be around the corner on Second Street. With over 55 facilities in nine states, this family owned and operated business has been around the block – and similar to other locations,

Image provided by Merrill Gardens the Lafayette facility will offer a variety of unique programs for residents, including an Active Living program and anytime dining. Unlike the Eden Housing project, where the vast majority of units are exclusively for low income residents, Merrill Gardens will offer market rate apartments. For more information, go to www.merrillgardens.com.



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Tuesday-Saturday 10-6

Week of October 14-20, 2012

- Battery:**
10/18 3300 block Phillips Rd
- Burglary/Theft:**
10/14 3200 Block Lucas Cr
700 block Solana Dr (auto)
3500 block Mt. Diablo Bl (petty theft)
1000 block Regio Ct (auto)
700 block Solano Ct (stolen vehicle)
10/15 1000 block Ameno Ct (auto)
100 block Beaumont Ct (grand theft)
1400 block Reliez Valley Rd
10/16 3900 block S Peardale Dr (forgery)
000 block Carol Ln (auto)
1100 block N Thompson Rd (auto)
1000 block Carol Ln (auto)
1000 block Carol Ln (auto)
3300 block Springhill Rd (auto)
10/17 1200 block Laurel Ln (auto)
1000 block Sweet Rd (grand theft)
800 block Acalenes Rd
700 block Solana Dr (auto)
10/20 3500 block Mt. Diablo Blvd (stolen vehicle)
- Drunk in Public:**
10/19 Deer Hill Rd/Sierra Vista Wy
- Terrorist Threat:**
10/18 1200 block Pleasant Hill Rd



Police Report



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Arrest at Massage Parlor

Lafayette Police and the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department conducted an undercover investigation and recently arrested an employee at Pacifico Massage Parlor at 3555 Mt. Diablo Boulevard for solicitation to engage in prostitution. Along with the arrest of Fidina Wai Cheng, 41, of San Francisco, police seized cash and computers from the business.

This arrest is the next step in a concerted effort to curb prostitution in Lafayette. First there was the crafting and implementation of a new ordinance that called for business registration and state certification of all massage practitioners and therapists in Lafayette. Along with that came a

grace period in order to give businesses an opportunity to comply with the new regulations. This arrest came just one day after the grace period expired.

Then there was a blunt warning given by Lafayette Police Chief Eric Christensen and City Manager Steven Falk that illegal business would not be tolerated. "If you offer erotic services in Lafayette, the Police Department will shut you down, confiscate your records and use that evidence to prosecute the massage practitioner, the manager and the property owner. Our goal will be to send you to jail," explained Christensen in Falk's Friday Summary.

C. Tyson

Birthday Celebration for Ed Stokes



Photo provided

Ed Stokes, the legendary founder of Diablo Foods, turns 90 years old this month. Who knew when he started the store in 1968 that he'd still be there 44 years later, now joined by his kids and grandkids? Look for complimentary mini-cupcakes at the store, purchased from Orinda's Republic of Cake (at a discount), and just down the street at Postino on Tues-

day, November 13, fans, friends, neighbors and customers are invited by the family to stop by and toast Ed to celebrate this milestone birthday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. His daughter, Connie Stokes Collier, notes his actual birthday is two days before Thanksgiving, "One of the biggest grocery store days of the year." Happy birthday, Ed!

C. Tyson

Moving Adventure Documentary at the Lafayette Library



Image provided

Three bicyclists ride from northern Alaska to the tip of Argentina, 16,000 miles through 13 countries, in support of the National Brain Tumor Society in the documentary *Spinning Southward*. The film will be screened, with a discussion to follow, on Thursday, November 8 from 6:30 to 9 p.m. in the Arts and Science Discovery

Room of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. There's no charge for this event. The film answers the question of what it's like to live every day on a bicycle for 16,000 miles. The trio - brothers John and Mike Logsdon and filmmaker Nateon Ajello - were inspired by their mothers, who were affected by brain tumors. C. Tyson.

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Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, November 14, 7:00 pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, November 19, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Design Review

Tuesday, November 13, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
Tuesday, December 11, 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

Halloween hijinx, 10/31/12 The owner of a Chevrolet on Corte Santa Clara called police to report that sometime during the night on Halloween an unknown suspect smashed out the passenger side rear window. Estimated damage, about \$200. Apparently the thrill of complimentary candy is not enough.

Bike stolen, 10/31/12 A Moraga Road apartment dweller parked his pick-up inside his garage around 9 p.m. on Halloween. When he got up the next morning to leave, someone had removed a mountain bike from the pick-up bed and several tools that were inside the cab through a smashed window.

Halloween D.U.I. 10/31/12 It was 10:30 at night when officers observed a car swerving all over the roadway on Moraga Way near School Street, followed by a non-injury collision at that intersection. Cops determined that the driver was under the influence and was arrested.

Campaign signs stolen, 10/30/12 Sometime during the early morning hours, a couple of political signs were taken from the front yard of a home on Madsen Court. Estimated value \$16. No leads at this time.

Very loud party, 10/27/12 Partygoers were spilling out onto Eileen Court from a loud party. Police estimate there were 250 people at the house and in the dead end street. Turns out four tenants of the home were hosting. Cops asked them to gently suggest the party people leave. As a little remembrance of their visit, police gave the renters an official noise ordinance warning.

D.U.I. 10/24/12 A citizen reported what appeared to be a drunk driver near the Moraga Center at 6 p.m. Officers made contact with a 57-year-old exiting a local liquor store that matched the description given by the caller. Field sobriety tests were given and it was determined that with a 0.21 blood alcohol level, more than two and a half times the legal limit, that he should definitely not be driving. He was arrested and taken to the Martinez Detention Facility. Maybe he was thinking he wasn't quite happy enough at happy hour.

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Town Council Considers Joaquin Moraga Adobe

By Sophie Braccini

Will the home of the founding father of Moraga, which is actually in Orinda, be preserved as a historic landmark or will it become a private clubhouse for a 13-home subdivision? When asked that question by the Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe (FJMA), the Moraga Town Council unanimously agreed to do what they could to help preserve the historic site. But the Town arrives very late in a game that started three and a half years ago and apparently ended with the approval of the subdivision of the 20.33-acre Adobe property by the Orinda Planning Commission—until the FJMA appealed that decision.

There are many obstacles in the way of FJMA's wish to turn the Adobe into an accessible historical site: the home of the Moraga family is on private property in Orinda zoned for development; the plan approved by the Orinda Planning Commission will turn the Adobe into a private clubhouse and it considered that plan to be adequate preservation.

Even if the City of Orinda agreed that the building deserves a more historically correct fate, what sort of financial compensation could be offered to the site's current owner?

"I wish the property would have been on the other side of the border (in Moraga)," said Kent Long, President of the FJMA during the heartfelt plea he made to the Town Council October 24. According to FJMA, the Adobe is the oldest historic building in Contra Costa County – it was built by Joaquin Moraga after he and his cousin, Juan Bernal, received a land grant from the Mexican government that included what is now most of Lamorinda and Canyon. "The existing building comprises two rooms that are the original adobe rooms built by the Moragas in 1841 and where the family settled," said Long.

According to Long, the development project that creates 13 lots for single-family residences raises two main issues. First, it transforms the Adobe into a private clubhouse,

which means that the two original rooms will not be preserved as a historic site, and the public (mostly school groups) will not have access to it. Second, the view from the Adobe that sweeps the entire Lamorinda area and that was the reason the Moragas chose that specific place, will be lost, with the building of new homes and planting of trees.

Long's presentation to the Council fell on sympathetic ears. "If you give up your past, you give up your identity," said Vice Mayor Howard Harpham. "When you lose history, it's gone," agreed Mayor Mike Metcalf. But council members concurred that finding a practical solution would not be easy. Who would own the Adobe? Who would operate it if it became a public museum? Where is the money to finance such a project?

Harpham was not afraid to say that Eminent Domain could be the course of action. "The thing that should be done is just take the bull by the horns and if you want to pre-

serve your past and identity, and your children's education, then go ahead and do it." The Council recommended that FJMA continue to approach private foundations that could help fund the establishment of a public, restored facility.

"There is an opening here for the governments of Moraga and Orinda to do something. My concern is that this may not be the highest priority of the Orinda City Council," said Metcalf. A subcommittee composed of the mayor and Council Member Dave Trotter was appointed to represent the Town on this issue.

Council Member Karen Mendonca cautioned that the approach had to be respectful of Orinda since the property is located within its borders. Town Manager Jill Keimach recommended that the subcommittee work on a specific plan for this project. The Council will discuss the plan at its November 14 meeting, a few days before the City of Orinda will hold a hearing on the issue. (Read a related article on page A6.)

State of the Town Address and Volunteer Recognition

Join the Town of Moraga for the annual Moraga State of the Town Address and Volunteer Recognition Night, Thursday, November 15, at the Moraga Country Club, 1600 St. Andrews Drive, Moraga. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. with appetizers and refreshments.

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet your local elected and appointed officials and network with community groups, residents and neighbors as Mayor Metcalf shares his perspective of Town achievements from the past year and recognizes all of the volunteers who have finished their terms on Town committees, commissions and boards. RSVP by November 9, 2012 by calling (925) 888-7039 or email briones@moraga.ca.us

New Home Concept Moves Forward

By Sophie Braccini

Imagine a net-zero energy home perched on an impossibly hilly site, melting into the trees as lichen and moss organically grow on it and protect it. The latest dream of Lafayette architect James Wright for a Donald Drive property is certainly not your standard suburban home, but the members of Moraga's Design Review Board (DRB) who reviewed the plans last week were very taken with the concept and recommended the project move forward, as long as the Fire Department does not ask the owner to cut down all the trees that will shield the new home.

The 4,270.50 square foot single-family,

three-level residence on a vacant 13,203 square foot hillside parcel adjoins the Hacienda de las Flores. A circular bridge driveway off of Donald Drive will lead to the garage on the upper level. The different levels of the home will step down the hillside. A 2,647 square foot middle, or mezzanine, level will be the main living area with a cantilevered back deck; the 1,278 square foot lower level will include two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Construction requires a hillside development permit because the slope of the hillside is approximately 54 percent.

... continued on page A9

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Solar Skin for Moraga

By Sophie Braccini



Solar lighting shading analysis at 10 a.m. on Corliss Drive

Moraga may be small, but it's big on innovation. In October the Town Council approved the installation of two new off-the-grid streetlights sheathed in a 'skin' that absorbs sunlight and transforms it into electricity. The potential for savings is staggering and the two lights will be a key test. If proved efficient they could lead to more solar innovations in town.

"Technological advances are

making these types of lights more reliable and cost effective," explained Moraga Town Engineer and Public Works Director Edric Kwan. "LED streetlights require much less power, so it is easier to get them fed through solar cells."

Kwan was completing improvements to the pedestrian crossings at Moraga Road and Woodford Drive, and at Moraga Road and Corliss Drive, but no

new lights had been included in the project. "The cost estimate we received for two conventionally-powered streetlights was \$97,639; for two solar-powered, off-grid streetlights, the cost was \$28,160," said Kwan.

"The Design Series streetlights that Moraga chose are wrapped in a photovoltaic fabric," explained Inovus' Nick Kawaguchi.

... continued on page A9



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Veterans Day Celebration in Moraga



Photo Sophie Braccini

Veterans, Boy Scouts, Town officials and residents will meet at the granite memorial that stands in the Moraga Commons Park at 11 a.m. November 11 to honor our veterans. Speakers will include John Haffner, CAPT, SC, USN (ret), RADM Vince Anzilotti, and Mayor Mike Metcalf. Moraga Boy Scout Troops 212, 234, and 246 will participate. The memorial is located by the public trail that crosses the park, just west of the parking lot. Set into the stone are brass plaques engraved with the emblems of the seven uniformed services of the United States. The Moraga Garden Club maintains the flower display around the rock.

S.Braccini

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(Second row l-r): Marianne Greene, Dexter Honens II, Anne Knight, Susan Zeh Layng, Art Lehman, Charles Levine, April Matthews, and Karen Murphy,

(Third row l-r): Ben Olsen, Sue Olsen, Tara Rochlin, Jaime Roder, Altie Schmitt, Judy Schoenrock, Ann Sharf, and Molly Smith

(Bottom row l-r): Jeff Snell, Lynda Snell, Clark Thompson, Ignacio Vega, Terri Bates Walker, Ann Ward, Dan Weil, and Margaret Zucker



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Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Wednesday, November 7, 7:00 pm
 Tuesday, November 27, 7:00 pm
 Auditorium, Orinda Library,
 26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, November 13, at 7:00 pm
 Auditorium, Orinda Library,
 26 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, November 14, at 6:30 pm
 Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22
 Orinda Way, Orinda

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District
 Monday, December 10, 6:00 pm
 OUSD Office
 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:

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Old Yellow House Progresses through Historic Landmark Designation Process

By Laurie Snyder

The new owner of Orinda's Old Yellow House continues to clear hurdles in his bid to "preserve the historic character of the structure," confirmed Orinda Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu recently. Members of the City's Planning Commission unanimously agreed at their October 23 meeting to recommend that the Orinda City Council approve the application by James P. Wright to designate the building at 209 Moraga Way as a Historic Landmark.

Ursu noted that Orinda's Historical Landmarks Committee has also approved architect-owner Wright's request, adding that Wright has spent a significant amount of time researching the structure's history. According to the staff report for the Planning Commission's meeting, the home was built "in 1894 by Alexander Jenkins, a retired sea captain who sailed

with Samuel Merritt from the Bay Area to Alaska to collect ice for San Francisco residents," and later purchased by Moraga School Board Trustee Charles A. Nelson in 1918.

When Nelson's "family moved to Orinda to the historic 'old yellow house,'" reads Muir Sorrick's "The History of Orinda" – "Moraga Road was still an unpaved wagon road. Nelson often had to harness a team of horses at night to pull a stuck motorist out of the mud during the winter months, while the oldest Nelson boy held a lantern for his father." (Nelson's younger son, Ezra, shared his own recollections of growing up in the house in the June 6 edition of the Lamorinda Weekly.)

The staff report explains that the "structure is historically significant since it is largely preserved as originally built and remains one of the oldest ex-

isting homes in Orinda. The house will be repainted to reflect its original yellow color, which is thought to be the same color as the old railroad stations. The house was built near the graded track bed of the California and Nevada railroad and has doors and windows similar to those of the old railroad stations.... The structure represents a unique visual feature of the neighborhood in that it is located adjacent to a major thoroughfare and serves as a visual reminder of the historical heritage of the City."

The Orinda City Council is likely to act on Wright's Landmark status request sometime in the next several months. For more about the project, check out Cathy Dausman's June 6 article, "Greening the (Pink) Old Yellow House" – available through the Lamorinda Weekly's online archives: www.lamorindaweekly.com/html2/archive.html.

Orinda Planning Commission Moves Adobe Project Forward

Orinda City Council to hear appeals November 27

By Laurie Snyder

Orinda's Planning Commission has unanimously approved plans to subdivide a 20.33 acre site into 13 lots. That site, commonly referred to as the J&J Ranch (Moraga Adobe) Project, will be graded to repair existing unstable soil conditions and to construct the subdivision. The plans also call for "the planting of native trees, in excess of the 29 replacement trees required by the OMC [Orinda Municipal Code], and rehabilitation of the historic Moraga Adobe."

Those final six words of that description – long-smoldering embers among Adobe fans and some

Orindans living near the historic site – have flared up yet again, fanned via recent appeals filed by Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe and a newer spin-off advocacy group, PAL (Protect Adobe Lane). As a result, the Orinda City Council has scheduled a public de novo hearing for November 27 to review the Project in its entirety, determine whether or not to allow it to move forward, and determine what modifications – if any – can and should be made to the plans.

The structure at the heart of the debate – the Moraga Adobe – is described in the action state-

ment as "a one-and-a-half story dwelling built by Joaquin Moraga, a member of one of the most influential and well-established families in pre-statehood California. The adobe walls of the building date back to 1841, but have been completely covered with stucco. Two rectangular additions dating from the 1940s have been attached to the rear (south) wall. Several structures occupy a portion of the site behind the Moraga Adobe, including adobe and concrete walls, a concrete pool, a large wooden barn (removed in 2009), a one-story house, and a small garage." ... continued on page A8

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ORINDA POLICE

Police Report

An illuminating conversation. 10/28/12 Orinda police pulled over a 20-year-old female driver for failing to have her license plate properly illuminated. After the stop, the officer realized her eyes of blue were redder than normal. The woman failed her field sobriety test; she was arrested and transported to Martinez Detention Facility for booking.

Unsafe at any turn, 10/26/12 A 45-year-old male was pulled over at Hwy 24 and Oak Hill for exhibiting unsafe turning. Turns out he carried an expired California driver's license, and failed a subsequent field sobriety test. He was taken to the nearest police station (Lafayette) where he registered .18 BAC. He was cited for driving on a suspended license, transported to Martinez Detention facility and booked. His vehicle was towed.



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Theatre Square Collects Food for Food Banks



Photo Sophie Braccini

The first annual Theatre Square Haunted House was a big success and attracted lines of generous residents who came with food for local food banks. "We collected 500 pounds that we're donating," said Victory Ivry of Table 24 and Barbaoco.

Artisan Faire Returns to OCC

Submitted by Anne Bolte



The annual Artisan Faire, and complimentary wine tasting, will take place Thursday, November 15 from 4 to 7:30 p.m. at the Orinda Country Club.

Participating artists include George Lucido who, after retiring as an aerospace engineer more than a decade ago, followed his ancestors' love of woodworking by crafting wood objects; Gerry Wallace, known for her whimsical teapots, serving plates, jewelry and Christmas ornaments; Gail Solt, the vision behind the Artisan Faire, whose necklaces quickly sell out. In addition, local authors Jim Roethe and Jil Plummer will be signing their books, and Kellee Bachour will show her line of children's clothing.

Two dozen artists will showcase fashion art, glasswork, jewelry, painting, photography and gourd art. Gift wrapping by Miramonte High School students will be available on site.

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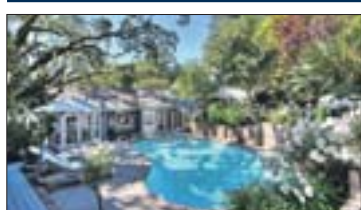
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Letters to the Editor



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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:

As one of the founders of SHSTC, I thoroughly enjoyed Laurie Snyder's well researched update on the facility. The most important job I had in the project was to contact industrialist Richard Rheem's assistant to see if he had five or ten acres we could acquire at a reasonable price. To our delight, he offered us 54.7 acres at a price of around \$20,000! Needless to say, we snapped it up, and the rest is history.

George "Dode" Hall
Orinda

Editor:

As I was driving to Church this past Sunday, I was horrified to see a sign among candidates running for office, "Defeat Mendonca" In my opinion, it stated anger and hostility. That was a "Bully Sign" that left no name of ownership. I spent my career as an educator, teaching children love and respect for each other. If one has a difference of opinion, it can be handled diplomatically. These signs were drastic and unacceptable. Is this the negative message we want to convey to our youth, our future adult citizens? How sad.

Millicent Mc Cormack
Moraga

Editor:

A plea for civility:

As I drive around bay area communities this time of year, the roadways are lined with signs of candidates running for office. Nothing unusual here. Until you drive into Moraga and see signs that single out and attack a candidate. These mean-spirited signs, and there have been various iterations over the past 6 months, have set Moraga apart from other communities—and not in a good way.

Over the years, Moraga has developed a bad reputation And for good reason. As a resident of Moraga for over 28 years, I have watched good, hard-working public officials who are trying to balance the needs of the community viciously attacked by small, vocal groups when they do not get their way. Though the issues have changed, the vitriolic responses are all too similar.

Unfortunately, the result is often stagnation or litigation. What's worse is these vicious, retaliatory behaviors have stymied Moraga's potential to raise financial and social capital.

The latest controversy is over the use of Rancho Laguna Park by off-leash dog owners. Without getting into the details of the debate, one could only hope that the behavior of the dogs is better than that of the owners. By and large Moraga residents are looking to our public officials to establish rules and conditions that consider fair and balanced access to the park and the health and safety of all that use it.

Ironically the candidate targeted, Karen Mendonca, understands the importance of civility in dialogue. Her academic career included research on the lead-

ership skills that build successful organizations through the practice of civil discourse. In March of 2011, she was invited to give a keynote address at Saint Mary's College where she delivered an address entitled, "Civility is a Choice--Even in Politics."

Mendonca is hardworking and accessible. In 2010, she instituted monthly "Ask the Mayor and Town Manager" open public meetings. Karen works collaboratively with the community and Town staff in order to make informed decisions that respect the Town's history, uphold the General Plan and positively shape our future.

We can do and must do better at working together with civility to achieve the best results for all the people who live in Moraga.

Renee Zeimer
Moraga

Editor:

I have been watching with interest and dismay, the new kerb installation on Moraga Way on the Orinda side of Miramonte High School.

Seems to me, that the whole thing has not been thought through - cyclists have no idea what is going on, and ride in the road anyway (are they supposed to ride between the kerbs and the hedge?), trash trucks can't get to the trash cans, busses now block the road entirely as they can't pull out of the traffic stream, - these kerbs have eliminated parking in front of all the residences (including Miramonte), - these kerbs will force head-on collisions as there is no way now to pull off the road in a potential accident situation, - cars will hit the kerbs by mistake and cause major damage to their cars and accidents as well.....

Do you want me to go on?

Lamorinda apparently has more money than sense when it comes to road spending - these agencies do not have a revenue problem, they clearly have a spending problem!

Colin Taylor
Moraga

Editor:

Moraga made national headlines when teenager Ryan Andresen was denied an opportunity to become an Eagle Scout in a local troop, allegedly on the basis of his sexual orientation (he is gay). He has appeared on the Ellen Degeners' TV show and 400,000 people signed an online petition in support.

I find it disappointing that the Lamorinda Weekly devoted no coverage to this story (although you covered the troop when it promoted several boys to Eagle Scout in July). Ryan's plight generated significant attention on Moraga. Apparently, when that attention is negative, the Lamorinda Weekly turns the other way. Turning away is no different than endorsing discrimination by silence; a free and unafraid press should know better than that.

Scott Bloom
Lafayette

Civic News orinda

Orinda Planning Commission Moves Adobe Project Forward

... continued from page A6

Although the City earlier designated the three remaining original walls [front and side] of the Moraga Adobe as a historic landmark, additions after 1841 are not a part of that designation.

City Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu observed recently that the Adobe has been a private residence with no public access since 1841. J&J Ranch is "moving in the direction of more public access," he said, through the creation of the "Adobe Community Clubhouse," which will incorporate the remaining Adobe elements as part of a facility accessible by the 13 J&J subdivision families.

The Joaquin Moraga Adobe Pre-Design Report prepared by Carey & Co. Inc. Architecture on September 23, 2010 for J&J project managers (available on the City's website) offers the possibility of greater public usage than current estimates project. Although ownership of and responsibility for the Adobe would rest with the future home owners who would also be its primary users, the report

leaves open the possibility that public and private groups could visit by prior arrangement.

Friends of the Moraga Adobe disagree. "The developers are proposing that the Adobe become a clubhouse for the exclusive use of the 13 homeowners of the subdivision," reads the Friends' website (www.moragaadobe.org). Others remain opposed to the Project because of concerns regarding potential damage to the environment.

Planning Commissioners in their CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) analysis determined that the "Project would have a less than significant impact on the environment and that the Project's individually limited or cumulatively considered impacts (when connected to the effects of past projects and to foreseeable future projects, such as the Lavenida Lane subdivision) are less than significant." Future home designs on the 13 proposed lots will be subject to the City's design review process, during which each home's visual impact on the scenic vistas will

be evaluated. Eighty new trees will be planted along the new roadway and around the bio-retention basins.

Additionally, there will be no street lighting or bicycle or equestrian trails in the development. The habitats of a variety of threatened species must be protected.

Three pedestrian paths are planned to allow public access to the Moraga Adobe site.

Regarding potential landslide worries, the CEQA report states, "a large area of the site will be graded to repair existing slides and to create the roadway. The finished grade will resemble the natural topography of the hill side." Ursu clarified the action statement further, noting that remedial grading will be undertaken only during the dry season -- and will be completed within one dry season. He said a smaller, similar operation north of Stein Way is successfully wrapping up.

To learn more about the Project, visit the websites for the City of Orinda and Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe.

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Civic News

Lafayette

City Close to a Final Decision on Shorter Condo Project

... continued from page A2

If a decision is not made within 45 days, "They can sue us for failure to act under the Process Agreement," clarified city Attorney Mala Subramanian.

Project Architect Jeffrey Heller responded to City Council concerns explaining that the current plans are "shorthand." Both Heller and Panek expressed a willingness to go back to the Design Review Commission, noting that it's a Catch-22 situation; they will work on much richer and refined final plans – but need to understand the parameters of the building size in general first.

As usual, comments from citizens were all over the map, some called it a "rude awakening" of a massive building in the center of town; others supported the multi-family project, saying, "Great transit oriented development – this is the center of town – it should look like a town center ... this is not a semi-rural site." With a unanimous vote by the City Council, the project will go back to the Design Review Commission and Planning Commission.

Civic News Moraga

New Home Concept Moves Forward

... continued from page A4

"This is a very eco-friendly home," said Wright. "The materials we are using include reclaimed redwood and multi-color slate." One energy efficient innovation proposed for this house is the construction of a thermal cistern that uses water to cool the house in summer and warm it in winter.

Neighbors have voiced concerns about the massiveness of the house that's 45 feet from the lowest point to the highest. "The building is actually behind the oak trees," said Wright. "The living roof is a rainscreen roof where moss and lichen will grow. This house belongs to the trees, it be-

longs in the woods." Wright added that the trees inspired the design and that is why all the sidings will be made of redwood. One neighbor came to the DRB meeting to express his opposition to the project. "You will be able to see this house from far, far away, even from Moraga Road," he said. "This project would change the hillside, there's nothing similar in Moraga; it would be something new. Eco-friendly - top, but somewhere else."

A few hours before the meeting, former Moraga mayor Lynda Deschambault sent the Board a letter detailing her concerns about this project.

Among them are the instability of the site - a property nearby slid during construction; the project's proximity to open space; the fact that the General Plan suggest that homes should meet the character of their neighborhood.

DRB members were nonetheless seduced by the project. "This is a fantastic design," said DRB member, and architect, Allen Sayles. "It is a very creative project," added DRB Member John Zhu. "I could almost see in very short time the whole thing blending into its surroundings. It will melt away," said Zhu. "Because of the materials used, the house will disappear," agreed DRB Member Gerald Kirk-

patrick. "This house is pushing the limit, and I can support it."

The Board noted that although existing oak trees will hide the house during the day it might be more visible at night when light will shine through the many windows of the facade.

They also know that the Fire Marshal could require a sizeable defensible space around this home. "If the Fire Marshal wants to cut most of the shielding trees around the house, the visual impact will be very different and we will want to see the project again before it proceeds to the Planning Department," said Sayles.

Solar Skin for Moraga

... continued from page A5

"It is a very performant product that uses LFP (lithium iron phosphate) batteries and a proprietary management system of the energy that lasts up to 11 days (or nights) of use, even without sun."

The reduced cost is not where the savings end. The energy bill for the lights will be null, there is

no maintenance and no need for additional digging and repair for connecting the lights since they're off the grid. "Dust and deposit can affect the performance of standard solar panels," said Kwan, "but here the photovoltaic surface is vertical and self cleaning with the rains."

Kwan said he used such solar powered streetlights in Richmond several years ago, but that the new products are even more attractive. "These two crosswalks are perfect test sites," he said. "The intersections are already lit so if we have a problem, the consequences won't be dramatic."

During the Council meeting, Mayor Mike Metcalf questioned the cost of repair if a driver were to run into the posts. "It is a very sturdy product," responded Kwan, "and if we have to replace it, that can be done easily because no digging is necessary."

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- Marian Nichols, Moraga

Community Service

Bob Frick and Len Holmes' Cycle of Hope 2

Cyclists Raise \$160K for Habitat Project in WC

Submitted by Jo Ann Driscoll



From left, Barbara Frick (center, blue shirt), Len Holmes (center, checked shirt), and Bob Frick (center, light blue shirt) join other volunteers at the October 27 Habitat for Humanity groundbreaking ceremony in Walnut Creek.

Photo Hau Nguyen

This is the second time that Lafayette resident and now 75-year-old cyclist Bob Frick has set out to ride his bicycle to raise money for Habitat for Humanity. His first ride in 2008 was a cross country success and he far exceeded his fundraising goal.

This time, with his friend Len Holmes, the two men rode the Lewis and Clark Trail beginning at the Pacific Ocean, across the Western states, to St. Louis, Mo. Together, they raised over \$160,000 to help support the construction of two Habitat homes which will be part of a 10-home community adjacent to at Hillside Drive and Ygnacio Valley Road, just a short walk to the Walnut Creek BART Station.

Their long journey was also made possible by Frick's wife, Barbara, who drove their support car.

Frick and Holmes successfully

completed their ride in August of this year, and on October 27, with shovels in hand, they joined civic and community leaders, donors and volunteers to begin building the new housing community.

The 10 Pleasant Creek Homes will be simple, modestly-sized two-story duplexes and triplexes that will serve the needs of low to moderate-income working families. The two, three and four bedroom Green Point-rated homes were designed by local architect Geoffrey Holton & Associates for energy efficiency. Through a generous grant from PG&E through the Solar Habitat Program, all new Habitat homes will also have solar panels.

In addition to the proceeds from Frick and Holmes' 3,000-mile trek, Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Sili-

con Valley CEO Janice Jensen said there was "unprecedented local community support through grass-roots events, bake sales, concerts and more," along with a partnership with Mayor Bob Simmons and the City of Walnut Creek, State Senator, Mark DeSaulnier, and the continued support and generosity of local family foundations.

Community volunteers and new homeowners using Habitat's sweat equity down payment program, will build their homes and the homes of their neighbors. When the development is completed in 2014, these new Habitat families will have a simple, decent and affordable place to call home with a no-profit mortgage held by Habitat.

For more information, visit HabitatEBSV.org.

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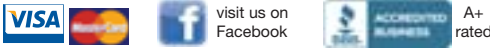
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Girl Scout Silver Award Project

Oakland Elizabeth House Hospitality Project

Submitted by Laura Clark

Girl Scout Troop 30618 members Hannah Clark and Maddie Dolan worked more than 50 hours each toward their Girl Scout Silver Award interacting with women and children at the Elizabeth House in Oakland. The Silver Award is the second highest award girls can earn in the Girls Scouts. The girls hosted two holiday celebrations for the residents of the Elizabeth House complete with cookie decorating, music sing-a-longs, games, and card making. They called upon local businesses, including: Republic of Cake, Powell's Sweet Shoppe, Orchard Nursery and Stevens Printing for party supplies and sweet treats.



From left, Maddie Dolan and Hannah Clark

Photo Laura Clark

The girls also recruited friends and family to donate books and toys for the young children living in the house. Clark and Dolan worked with the Elizabeth House volunteer coor-

ordinator to develop a 'best practices' hospitality reference book for future volunteers to utilize. Their Silver Award project was completed in August 2012.

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New Eagle Scouts Honored

Submitted by Cathy Holt



From left, Travis Cullimore, Jared Brinton, Andy Bain

Photo Provided

Boy Scout Troop 820 awarded three Eagle Scout rank awards for Jared Brinton, Travis Cullimore, and Andy Bain during the Eagle Court of Honor Sunday, October 28 at the LDS Overlook Chapel in Walnut Creek.

Acalanes High School senior Jared Brinton, who received the Advanced Placement Scholar Award and is a National Merit Scholar, made over 50 quilts for his Eagle Scout Project, which were given to disadvantaged infants and children in the area. An accomplished percussionist, he's performed three years with the Diablo Wind Symphony and six years

as the drummer for the Rossmoor Big Band, he works as a service missionary in Oakland's inner city.

Las Lomas High School senior Andy Bain's Eagle Scout Project benefited Indian Valley Elementary School in Walnut Creek. Bain raised funds to build raptor perches and owl boxes to eradicate a gopher and rodent problem on its field.

Travis Cullimore graduated from Las Lomas High School in 2012. His Eagle Scout Project was to improve an area at his high school that needed landscaping and provide an eating area for students.

Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions can be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Miramonte Alumni and Lamorinda Musicians Play for Charity

Submitted by Patrick Fearon



The Rockaholics, from left: Ken Lawver (guitar), Jody Kelley (keyboards), Tom Appelbaum (drums), Scott Evans (guitar), Dave Mauer (singer and sound engineer), Chris Lucas (guitar), Raymond Bini (bass), and Ginger - the dog. Photo provided

Seven Miramonte High School Alumni, members of the band The Rockaholics, gathered earlier this month for a charity fund-raiser, rallying to support those afflicted with cancer. The Rockaholics performed at Pacific Coast Brewing Company, celebrating friendships spanning more than four decades, the release of their first CD, and the great work being done by the International Center for Integrative Medicine (ICIM).

ICIM provides support and treatment for local cancer patients, conducts training and education for medical professionals on integrating

Eastern and Western medicine, and leads scientific trials working with Sloan Kettering and other organizations in the U.S. and China to quantify the benefits of integrative medicine.

Ken Lawver, Jody Kelley, Tom Appelbaum, Scott Evans, Dave Mauer and Chris Lucas graduated from Miramonte High School in 1970. Ray Bini graduated in 1971. Evans, Lucas and Bini were also teammates on the wrestling team. Their coach, Roger Durant was in attendance at the performance. In support of the band, Lamorinda musicians Bill Garvin, John Kirby

and Alan Thiel also performed.

The band's beginnings go back to as early as the 1960s when they played for various groups in the area. Over the years The Rockaholics played together, mostly just for fun, "practiced" occasionally, and performed as "The Reunion Band" at their 20th, 30th and 40th Miramonte High School reunions.

On Oct. 20, they "released" their first CD at the ICIM fund-raiser, with proceeds from the event going to the non-profit organization. For more information about ICIM, visit icimhealth.org or contact Scott Evans at s.evans1@sbcglobal.net.

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Walking and Running on Sunshine

... continued from page A1

Both were front and center at the start of the 8 a.m. two mile run, along with mom, Nicole Koch and Grandma Nancy Jo Swartz. "This is becoming a family thing," said proud mom Koch, who explained that they just participated in the Waterhope Walk, raising money to bring clean water to those without it.

Scores of volunteers in bright orange t-shirts donated their time for crowd control, at registration tables, for water bottle distribution, pancakes and for security that lined the route that takes over Mount Diablo Boulevard and loops around the Reservoir. Two young gentlemen from Stanley Intermediate School were posted at the finish line handing out complimentary waters; nearby, a group of slightly more mature moms from the National Charity League (NCL) joked that they were "making the rounds" having started out with the Lafayette Juniors at this event and moved over to the NCL table – now stationed at a new location. Bob



Photo Cathy Dausman

Athayde and the Stanley Intermediate School Band were providing music and the gentlemen of the Rotary Club were busy flipping pancakes most of the morning. Perhaps Mascot Hunter waived his magic tail to make sure this year's Res Run was ground zero for com-

munity togetherness. Or maybe Lamorinda residents simply like to see the friends and family who show up year after year at this fun family event, appreciate a good walk or run – and the color-coordinated orange porta-potties.

Ryan Andresen: A Message of Hope

... continued from page A1

"I decided to get more involved in scouting because of the bullying Ryan endured at a Boy Scout summer camp," Andresen recalls. "(The scoutmaster) and I took over Troop 212 together seven years ago. I started a mentoring program in response to the hazing that was occurring. We conferred almost daily." When the scoutmaster asked to meet with him last month, Andresen thought it was business as usual. "I was shocked when he told me he was not going to sign-off on Ryan's Eagle application."

"There are a dozen Councils around the country, representing 200,000 Scouts, who oppose the BSA

policy," says Andresen who believes that if enough Councils object, BSA will eventually be forced to change. He is cautiously optimistic that the local Mt. Diablo Silverado Council will decide to formally reject the policy.

Caroline McCormick's two sons are in scouting. "It's a great institution," she says. "But recent actions of BSA aren't in line with today's society."

"I have gay friends and family members," McCormick continues. "They shouldn't be discriminated against. I wouldn't want to watch them spend 12 years in scouting, work hard for their Eagles, and then be denied because of who they are." McCormick says she personally sent the Change.org petition to 600 people. "I hope parents will think about the question, 'If it's my child, how would I feel then?'"

Wendell Baker, Scoutmaster of Moraga Troop 234, agrees. "Personally, I think we need to do everything we can to change this policy at the council and national levels. Other councils have adopted non-discrimination policies and ours should too." Baker stresses that he speaks only for himself, not for his troop, the local council, or BSA.

"Within our Troop we do not discriminate based on sexual orientation or religion, and we do not ask Scouts about either issue. It wouldn't affect my willingness to sign off on an Eagle application, but the ultimate decision on Eagle awards belongs to National," Baker explains, adding, "I'd like to think that the scouts know I would consider it a non-issue; that I wouldn't care one way or the other."

Baker recently spoke to his troop about bullying: "A scout is brave," he reminded them. "Some of you probably think bravery is running into a burning building and saving a life, something you'll get an award for. It's not. Real bravery is something you can do every day." According to Baker real bravery is standing up to a bully knowing that you're making yourself a target, even if it's your friends who are the bullies, or helping out the kid who you may not even like. Real bravery is also making sure bullying is reported to an adult. "Real bravery is doing what you know is right; always."

Troop 234 presented Ryan with a letter of support.

vocal supporters is his mother, Karen Andresen, who admits that it was not easy for her to accept what was happening with her son. "I had my eyes shut," she confesses. But she came face to face with Ryan's pain—after years of being bullied and trying to come to terms with his sexual orientation in a social environment that was not ready to embrace a gay youth, Ryan entered high school a very troubled and unhappy young man.

The Andresens sought help. Ryan is now thriving in the inclusive environment of Maybeck High School in Berkeley, and his parents say they "couldn't be more proud of him for standing up for what is right."

Eric Andresen says they've received messages from all over the world and about 90 percent have been in support of Ryan; but he adds that it's been a little difficult close to home.

"It's hard (for a child) to be gay here," says Karen. "People don't like to talk about these issues. They are shocked at how much I'm talking about it, but I'm going to support my child and stick up for him. It's really hard for the kids who come out." She wants to reach out to other gay kids who may not have the support of their families.

After his whirlwind press tour, Ryan's taking a little time off from the campaign and trying to get his life back to normal. "He couldn't wait to go back to school and get caught up on his work," says Andresen, "but he's very aware that he's been given an opportunity to make a difference and could help thousands of kids, particularly scouts. New doors are opening up for him. He has always been a mentor, a good big brother, and he wants to focus on an anti-bullying message."

At the invitation of Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School principal Joan Danilson, Ryan will be a guest speaker at one of the school's anti-bullying programs, Respect All Differences (RAD) Week, at the end of January. Danilson shared an excerpt from an email that she received from Ryan regarding what he would like to say to the students: "An important message I have been sharing to middle school students is about hope; that things get better. I would share what I overcame and how despite my hopelessness back then, I became a very happy high school senior and am currently loving life."



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Lamorinda to Become Grinch-Free - Mr. Christmas Is Comin' to Town

By Laurie Snyder



Bruce Mertz, aka "Mr. Christmas," enjoys his display of lights.

Photo provided

If you believe that Christmas is about way more than what's under the tree on Christmas morning, then Nick Palmer's *Mr. Christmas* documentary is the must-not-miss flic for you at this year's California Independent Film Festival. A short film which offers a ginormous, warm fuzzy, it tells the tale of Concord's own Bruce Mertz, the former farm kid who grew up without electricity who has been lighting up East Bay December nights with his 50,000-light Christmas extravaganza for more than 30 years.

Palmer's short, but deeply touching documentary will leave you believing that it really is possible for a single individual to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Palmer grew up driving around his Concord neighborhood each year with his family, scoping out the light displays – always saving the Mr. Christmas house for last. He was, he says, utterly fascinated by the reindeer which, somehow, magically ran across the roof of the home that annually attracts visitors from all over the country.

But he had never met the display's creator until just recently. While spending a mellow holiday in Concord, he and a friend stopped by a local bar one Christmas Eve. The

mythic man from his childhood came into the establishment – decked out in what Palmer describes as "full Mr. Christmas mode." As they talked, Mertz talked about how the meaning of Christmas for him changed following the death of his beloved wife in the early '90s - and about how he found renewed purpose in life by bringing joy to others.

Palmer directed, edited and produced the documentary in collaboration with Amanda Treyz, the film's cinematographer. He began making movies in fourth grade, first as a lark with his friends - and then by turning those friends into his cast and crew as he grew into a budding screenwriter and director. Stints at Diablo Valley College and then at UCLA as an English major were followed by training at the AFI Conservatory's prestigious directing program.

While teaching Lego Robotics at his day job, his big break suddenly happened. Palmer and his writing partner sold a script to Warner Brothers. Now, they're developing additional projects for that film giant as well as for Universal, including a possible remake of *The Bodyguard*.

But deep inside, there is still that wide-eyed fourth grader – still wondering how reindeer run – and what

makes humans tick. "No matter how big the movie, it's really important to find the small story," says Palmer.

For more information on this 2012 Aspen Shortsfest Special Jury Award winner, visit www.MrChristmasMovie.com, or follow Nick on Twitter at: @HouseOfPalmer. And be sure to catch Mr. Christmas and Nick Palmer in person at the film's screening at 3:15 p.m. November 11 at the Orinda Theatre.

Proposed Veterans' Memorial Garden at SMC to Honor War Vets and Families

By Sophie Braccini



Max Crowell checks the garden's spot.

Photo Sophie Braccini

Like many young people, Saint Mary's College (SMC) students Max Crowell and Alex Dulwick want to leave their mark on the campus. The two students are not afraid to dream big and don't let difficulty bog them down. Their project is to build a beautiful and significant Veterans' Memorial Garden in a prominent location on campus, but they need to raise \$80,000 to do it.

The idea came to Crowell after he joined the SMC Republican Club in 2011. Crowell had two grandfathers who served in the military during World War II and his father fought in Vietnam; he felt that despite the three commemorative plaques that exist on the campus, he wanted a more prominent place to

show support for those who served in the military.

He and Dulwick talked to the SMC facilities staff at the end of their sophomore year, and were told it was a "great idea," but still weren't given a location. Upon returning in the fall, Crowell and Dulwick went back to the facilities staff twice.

After months of presentations and discussions, the two ended up acquiring a centrally-located area on campus where students, faculty, and staff walk by every day, right off the main arcade. "Imagine a 4.6-foot stone Obelisk in the middle of a patio with plants and benches for respite and reflection," said Crowell, pointing at a large expanse of grass across from the dining hall.

... continued on page B2

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Iron Filmmaker: A Tale of Two Films

By Cathy Tyson



Campolindo team JOLAZ, Oles Bober seated, from left Lucas Silva, Zach Foxworthy and Jonathan Rowland. Ailan Evans not pictured. Photos C. Tyson



Campolindo teacher Justin Seligman

Right after the Saturday morning briefing October 27 at the Rheem Theatre, five Campolindo High School students huddled together in the parking lot, already agreeing to construct a psychological thriller. Team JOLAZ – the name comprised from the first initials of Jonathan Rowland, Oles Bober, Lucas Silva, Ailan Evans and Zach Foxworthy – is one of 23 teams competing this year in the Iron Filmmaker contest, one of the components of the California Independent Film Festival. The teams had 24 hours to make a three-minute-maximum length film using this year's genre and theme – horror and trick-or-treat – announced at the very last minute of the mandatory filmmaker briefing.

"Show us some creativity – that's what we're looking for," said Iron Filmmaker organizer Adam Reeves, owner of event sponsor ITB Designs, as he briefed the teams on what's acceptable and what's not. While clearly spelling out that he believes in free speech, Reeves cautioned against nudity, strong profanity, graphic violence and copyright infringement. With cash prizes for first, second and third place along with "best performance" and "audience favorite," these mostly young filmmakers were off and running with the clock ticking until their 10 a.m. deadline the next morning to turn in their finished films.

Team JOLAZ was ready to rumble inside Rowland's parent's garage in Moraga. By mid-day, the team was filming with some borrowed equipment from the video department at Campolindo, the group clearly familiar with shots, lighting and more, thanks to Campo teacher Justin Selig-

man's video production class. Rowland and Bober discussed whether to use an "over the shoulder shot" or "worm's eye view" of a pivotal coin toss that decided the fate of their two captured actors, Silva and Foxworthy. Evans played the faceless murderer.

Rowland explained, "As we film, we transfer the files and do a rough edit," with Bober looking for gaps and "continuity errors." Both have been serious about film since ninth grade; now that they are juniors, they've already toured some colleges that offer film programs. "I've been working with film since freshman year, and I'm really hooked," said Bober.

Armed with Rice Krispies Treats to snack on and fake blood from the drugstore, JOLAZ worked together, combining roughly 90 shots into the one-and-a-half-minute film.

Thirty minutes after midnight, team JOLAZ's finished product "Gambling Men" was in the can, or rather on the DVD, ready to turn in.

Another Moraga contestant, Stuart Creque – a business analyst/web developer by day who enjoys writing screenplays in his free time – calls his team "Creque's Alley" after family property in the Virgin Islands. It was easy to see the direction he took from this year's prompt, creating the very short film called "All Zombies' Eve."

The making of the film was almost all in the family. Creque credits his wife with the initial idea, inspired by "Night Gallery." Daughter Hannah played a zombie, and daughter Miriam Viess-Creque and her boyfriend Steven Brom played the householders who try to fend off a zombie invasion. Creque came up

with a funny, clever concept and did all the filming which started around 10 p.m. for full darkness effect and to allow plenty of time for costuming and zombie makeup; the crew wrapped up around 11:30 p.m. "The challenging part was editing; that took until 4:30 in the morning," said the elder Creque who filmed on an iPod4 and edited on his laptop.

The end result is only 45 seconds long. Viewers should pay attention lest they miss the cow brain in the film purchased at Lunardi's which Creque describes as "very effective."

You can see how it all turns out for team JOLAZ and Creque's Alley when all of the contestants' films are screened at 9 a.m. Saturday, November 10 at the Rheem Theatre.



Iron Filmmaker Stuart Creque and his daughter Hannah Creque who plays a zombie, photographed on Halloween. Photo C. Tyson

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Proposed Veterans' Memorial Garden at SMC to Honor War Vets and Families

... continued from page B1

"This place was covered in knee-high ivy and was nicknamed 'the swamp' because it floods in winter. Alex and I cleared everything and removed dying trees, with the help of SMC's veterans; this was the first step of our project."

Saint Mary's College has many ties with the U.S. military – from those alumni who have served to its use as a pilot training school during the 1940s. Each side of the tall, four-sided narrow

tapering monument will hold a plaque commemorating the different affiliations. "One will recognize those students who have lost their lives serving our country; one will remind us of Saint Mary's past as a Navy Pre-Flight school during 1942-46; one will represent the families linked to the college who lost someone in a war; and the fourth will highlight the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) graduates," said Crowell.

Crowell and Dulwick are now engaged in the most crucial part of their project: fund raising. "SMC veterans and alumni have already expressed their interest and started contributing to the project," said Crowell. The students also contacted local service groups, and had no difficulty finding supporters.

One of the first was Moraga Kiwanis. "Graig Crossley, Barry Behr and I decided to support a project that we found worthwhile and appropriate," said veteran and Kiwanis member John Haffner. "We've met with the veteran's group on campus several times this year and Brother Glenn Bolton, their advisor. Max (Crowell) is scheduled, I believe, to talk to our Kiwanis Club in the near future."

The landscape architect who donated his time to design the project is equally enthusiastic. "My father is a veteran," said Steve Lambert of Garden Lights Landscape Design in Orinda. "This is one of the reasons I support this project. I've enjoyed meeting the two students on campus and designing a site that will match the college's character, will add to its beauty and will be meaningful." The stone patio will require the installation of a completely new drainage system, the planting of many new shrubs and trees, and will be low-maintenance.

"We are very grateful to the college for its decision to give us the 7,000-square-foot centrally-located area on campus," said Crowell. "The scenic patio that will be built here will remain a meaningful feature of the campus."

While the students are still far away from achieving their fundraising goal, Crowell – who is a senior this year – is undaunted. "I would love to see the garden finished by the time I graduate this spring," he said.

For more information about the project, visit www.stmarys-ca.edu/veterans-memorial-garden.

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Leave 'em Laf-fing: LafFrantics Cast Recalls the Good Old Days

By Cathy Dausman



Betsey Young holds a playbill from the very first LafFrantics presentation in 1956. Photo Cathy Dausman

They wanted to build a community center. What they built instead was an entertainment legacy. Lamorindans of a certain age will recall the LafFrantics and their standing-room-only Town Hall performance antics with pleasure. The rest of us would do well to listen and learn.

When Theron Nelson came to Lafayette in 1950, he and his neighbors wanted to build a community center for their as-yet unincorporated city. They formed the Community Center, Inc. (CCI) and Nelson, as president, began fund raising.

Betsey Young, who became LafFrantics' choreographer, moved to Lafayette in 1956. She soon introduced herself to neighbor and fellow dancer Geraldine "Jeri" Burnside, and the pair danced wherever they could.

Someone suggested putting on a show. Cue Judy Garland's Babes In Arms character: "We've gotta have a great show, with a million laughs ... and color ... and a lot of lights to make it sparkle. And songs - wonderful songs."

The rest is 30 years of Lafayette history. From 1956 to 1986, May through September, members of CCI, the Suburban Woman's Club, Suburban Junior Club and Jr. Chamber of Commerce brought laugh-a-minute live theater to Lafayette.

They wrote original shows, learned songs, dance steps, made costumes, and designed and built

sets. The format was a melodrama, followed by a two part olio, or vaudeville specialty acts. "Charlie Berger wrote original scripts," Nelson recalled, "and he was a pun-ster. Sometimes it would take the audience a moment or two to catch on."

LafFrantics shows bore names like Curses, Soiled Again, Fangs for the Mem'ries, The Farce Be With You, Camelittle and Medic Heir. In a video memoir recorded last year, Mary Berger recalled how her husband prepared the scripts. "He'd work all week, and come home, and spend the weekend writing. It took him a year to write a script. And when he'd finished writing one, he'd start in on the next," she said.

"Charlie Berger was fabulous," raved Barbara Abel. Abel and her husband Dick were LafFrantics cast members from 1978 to 1986. Jeri Burnside designed the sets.

Dan and Louise Welty directed the shows for the first six years; Evelyn "Ev" McLean became director in 1962. McLean also supplied live piano music throughout the show. "She was just a great lady," said Abel, of McLean, who recalled how McLean played "Alley Cat" if someone missed a cue.

To this day, Abel said she gets goose bumps if she ever hears that song.

Jan Day joined the LafFrantics in 1963, and stayed through its final curtain call.

... continued on page B4

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Kristi Reed and Betsy Young, LafFrantics production, 1984 Photo provided



Stage crew on final show - One Move Time Photo provided



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Leave 'em Laf-fing: Laffrantics Cast Recalls the Good Old Days

... continued from page B3



From left: Marge Stalker, Melba Luna, Dian Overly, Carol Finney and Dick Smith

Photo provided

After seeing their first show, Day and her husband went backstage. He saw the look in her eyes and knew she was hooked, saying, "Oh no, you want to be up there [on stage]!"

"I was always in the chorus," said Day modestly, who remembers rehearsing in Lafayette's old Veteran's Hall while her husband babysat their children.

A Tear for Tatters was the Laffrantics first production. It ran four nights, and tickets cost \$1.50. The playbill contained more than 60 local ads, including those for Moraga Record Album, Lafayette Sea Food Grotto and Les McFetridge Buick.

In 1986, after a 30-year run, Laffrantics called it quits. It was time for the final curtain call. Cast members estimate Laffrantics had 473 participants over the years. The group went out on a high note, still playing to standing-room-only crowds.

"Our group is fast depleting," explained Nelson, who is now 90. Dick Abel felt the group was getting too

old for the rigors of performing; still, his wife Barbara said, "We all cried a lot when it ended."

CCI never built the community center for which they raised funds. When Lafayette decided to convert a former elementary school into its community center, CCI deeded their parcel at 711 St. Mary's Road to the city. That land is now known as Buckeye Fields.

Fortunately, the saga of Laffrantics lives on in weathered news clippings, photographs and handbills. Former cast members keep their own thick scrap books; some, including Nelson, have donated memorabilia to Lafayette Historical Society.

A 2011 video documentary by Paul and Glenda Fillingner shows the Laffrantics camaraderie that continues to this day. Remaining cast members still meet, as they have for 26 years, for an early December reunion brunch. After a 30-year run, they certainly deserve an encore.

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Laffrantics Melodramas, 1956-1986

1956 A Tear for Tatters	1972 Curses, Soiled Again
1957 Slippery When Wet or Frost	1973 Camelittle
1958 Come Back, Jack	1974 Three for Jack and Ready to Go
1959 Search for a Penny or Tither's Long Look	1975 How the West Was Too
1960 Trial La Law	1976 ABCDCIA
1961 Hello Dere my Fren	1977 Fangs for the Mem'ries
1962 Toss Lightly and Serve, or He ain't Done Well by Nell	1978 FrantikAntiks
1963 Her Fatal Beauty	1979 The Lure of the Lumberlust
1964 Under the Gaslight	1980 The Matchmaker's Daughter
1965 Sheer Follies of 1933	1981 Tillie the Teller or The Great Bank Robbery
1966 Fireman, Save my Child	1982 The Farce be With You
1967 Up, Up and Away	1983 Camelittle
1968 Curses on my Fatal Beauty	1984 How the West Was
1969 Curse You Jack Dalton	1985 Medic Heir
1970 The Lure of the Lumberlust	1986 One More Time
1971 Bewitched	



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Goodbye, Old Glory: Scouts Retire Two U.S. Flags

By Cathy Dausman



Boy Scouts Clint Walker (left) and Greg Fellows assist in Troop 224 Flag Retirement Ceremony. Photo Cheryl Tyler

U.S. flags fly in great numbers at least several times a year – notably Memorial Day, Flag Day (June 14), 4th of July and Veteran’s Day. As Veteran’s Day approaches, take a look at the Old Glory flying on your staff. Is the flag still a fitting emblem of this country, or should it be retired?

Retirement ceremonies for humans are often joyful, boisterous events. A retirement ceremony for an aging U.S. flag is quiet in comparison. Flag retirement ceremonies may be held by Boy Scout groups, fraternal or veteran’s organizations, and all are respectfully done.

This fall, Lafayette’s Boy Scout Troop 224 incorporated a flag retirement ceremony into one of its regular weekly meetings. In accordance with U.S. code title 36, section 176: “The Flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.”

Although committed to fire, the proper terminology is a flag retire-

ment ceremony. While a U.S. flag burned abroad is intended as a national insult, a U.S. flag retired at home is laid to rest with honor befitting its status as a national treasure.

One September evening shortly after dark Troop 224 gathered to tend a small wood fire on the grounds of Happy Valley Elementary School, where the troop meets under a cooperative agreement with the Lafayette School District. Members of Contra Costa Fire Protection District were there to observe and assist if necessary.

Senior Patrol Leader Chris Lyman, acting as Chief of Flag Retirement, gathered his charges. A tangle of 20 middle school and high school-age boys, scoutmasters and several parents aligned around the fire pit. A Boy Scout Color Guard marched out bearing the troop’s U.S. flag; the group recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Chaplain aide Joey Layshock gave an invocation. Gregory Fellows read aloud U.S. flag his-

tory. Scouts unfolded, displayed, and then attached a worn cotton U.S. flag to burn poles.

The troop only retires flags made of cotton, said Scoutmaster Grant Walker. “Synthetic flags when burned give off a noxious odor,” he said, or “melt and leave a sticky mess.” They may also burn so quickly they become hazardous to those handling the flag.

To the sounds of the national anthem, scouts saluted, the retired flag was guided into the flames by its burn crew, and consumed. A second flag was also retired with a smaller burn crew when the rest of the troop re-assembled for their meeting.

After the ceremony, the ashes of the retired flags were buried. “This ceremony is the first I know of in the past five years for our troop but the response was very positive,” Walker said. “We’re considering having the event once a year.”

Joanne Layshock, whose son is a Troop 224 member, said the retirement ceremony reminded her of the Scout oath “to do my duty to God and my country.” Brian Candell thought his son had a new appreciation for the flag and the country it represents.

“Being in Scouts has given my son and our whole family, for that matter, the chance to learn the proper treatment of a U.S. flag,” scout parent Claire Phillips said.

To learn about proper flag retirement, visit www.usflag.org/flagetiquette.html.



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Three Quarter Moon - Dreiviertelmond (original title)

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

If you liked the last movie featured by the International Film Showcase (IFS) in Orinda, *Noodle*, you will also delight in this month’s presentation, *Three Quarter Moon*. “They are both wonderful movies where the relationships between people are so great,” said IFS co-founder Efi Lubner.

Hartmut Mackowiak is overwrought: his wife of more than 30 years is leaving him for another man. The aging taxi driver mulls over his resentment, and his anger is transferred to the clients who step into his taxi. Of particular disdain to him are young people and foreigners. When he discovers in his taxi a six-year-old Turkish girl, Hayat, who is completely lost and doesn’t speak a word of German, he will do anything he can to try to get rid of her. But their meeting ultimately gives new life to the lonely and disillusioned man.

The theme of this movie is a cross between *Noodle*, in which an adult gains purpose in her loveless life by caring for a vulnerable foreign child, and the very uplifting and optimistic theme that it’s never too late to change one’s life, as depicted in the Swiss

film *Late Bloomers* that was shown by IFS in August. *Three Quarter Moon* is definitely a feel-good movie, even with some serious issues touched upon along the way.

Mercan Türkoğlu (Hayat) is a delight to watch. While she and the old taxi driver have both lost important emotional bonds at the outset, the movie portrays the deepening of their relationship, beginning with a scared little girl clinging to a grumpy old man and shifting gradually as the two friends find a way into each others’ hearts.

The idea of a cantankerous man turned caretaker to a precocious and confused child is not a new idea in cinema, but there is additional depth to *Three Quarter Moon*, its concept created by German director Christian Zübert and his Turkish wife Ipek. The dimension of communality, not only between young and old, but also between people from different cultures is well done.

Three Quarter Moon opens in Orinda on November 16 for one week. For tickets and more information, visit lamorindatheatres.com/index_orinda.asp.

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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

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By Alex Pawlakos

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Alex Pawlakos is majoring in math and economics. He believes we are living in challenging social and economic times and hopes his App Rap helps readers be savvy.

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TEEN SCENE

Surveillance Cameras Installed at Stanley Middle School

By Lucy Portnoff

You walk casually out of class and grab your backpack that is sitting outside of the room. Reaching for your iPhone tucked inside the pocket, panic arises in your chest as you sift through your contents discovering only empty space. Where is the phone?

Gone – snatched from your bag which was lying vulnerable outside the classroom. Stolen... right on school property.

Sound familiar? This is a typical tale of what often happened over the past few years at Stanley Middle School in Lafayette. Honest students lost their possessions to those who steal. Lack of security at Stanley made taking valuables such as phones, wallets, and bikes unbelievably easy due to specifically vulnerable areas on campus. In locations where there was little or no adult supervision, unattended backpacks were prime targets of theft.

Vandalism was also a prominent problem for several years costing the school district significant amounts of money that could have been used for educational pursuits. Many nights per week, custodians

spent their limited time removing graffiti instead of attending to other aspects of their jobs.

This year, in the hopes of eradicating this predicament, the Lafayette School Board made the decision to install security cameras on campus. With eyes all around the school, the administration can now view and record any acts of vandalism or theft around the clock by reviewing the footage when a theft is reported or vandalism is apparent.

The hope is that the few who do steal or vandalize will be caught, penalized, and prevented from harming people and property. Cameras may also serve as a deterrent to future problems.

Most students at Stanley regard the security cameras as a great idea. Eighth grader Sara Koenigsberg agrees that the security cameras will without a doubt be the key to reducing student theft. "I think the security cameras are a good plan because they put the belongings of students at less of a risk of being stolen," she says.

While Koenigsberg seems to represent the majority of teens' opinions on the matter, there are some who have their doubts.

"Security cameras take away our privacy," states a male student at Stanley. A few like him agree that the constant surveillance may make the most innocent students feel nervous, like Big Brother is watching. School is designed to be a safe learning environment, and no child should feel insecure. But because the district has assured that footage will not be viewed on a regular basis and only at a time when a situation arises, it can be argued that invasion of privacy will be minimal.

It is unfortunate that school funding must be used to buy surveillance equipment instead of being used to more directly contribute to learning. Perhaps this is the price that our community must pay in our possession-obsessed culture.

Educators, parents, and most students agree the security cameras will be a major advantage to insuring the safety of the students and school. The ultimate goal is to fight vandalism, theft, and other crimes to allow the students to concentrate on their education instead of on their belongings.

Lucy Portnoff, a ninth-grader at Miramonte High School, is a member of Club Be the Star You Are!®, part of the Public Speaking and Mock Trial programs. Lucy enjoys art and music.



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 opinions expressed in Teen Scene are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

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Overeaters Anonymous East Bay – A Day of H.O.W.

By Sophie Braccini



Overeaters

Image provided

When one Lafayette resident learned that she was pre-diabetic 12 years ago, she came to the realization that she was a compulsive eater. Since then, the local woman has embarked on a journey with Overeaters Anonymous (OA) that has changed her life physically, emotionally and spiritually. “Twelve years ago, I was at a stage of my addiction to sugar where I started to isolate myself from others,” remembers Sharon (who asked not to use her last name). “I was looking for help online and found OA. The first meeting I attended was also online, then came the time to meet in person.”

The OA program follows the 12-step plan utilized by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) as a method of recovery from alcoholism. “The first step is really what differentiates us from AA programs,” says Sharon,

“but the other steps we have to go through are the same, whatever the type of addiction.”

On November 10, East Bay OA is inviting curious and interested individuals to join them for all or part of a day of presentations at the Veterans Memorial Hall in Martinez. “OA offers a program of recovery from compulsive eating,” says Mary, who was instrumental in organizing the upcoming workshop. “It provides a fellowship of experience, strength and hope where members respect one another’s anonymity. OA charges no dues or fees; it is self-supporting through member contributions.”

Spirituality continues to be what drives Sharon to come to the meetings. “It has opened up my life,” she says. “The men and women in the room come to seek help, and in turn are also helping others. This experi-

ence has been transformative for me.” Sharon has lost 74 pounds and has kept it off over the past 12 years. “I walk, live and breathe in a different body,” she says, “and that’s because I got rid of my addiction.”

The Overeaters Anonymous – H.O.W. (Honesty, Open-mindedness and Willingness) workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, November 10 at the Veteran’s Memorial Hall, 930 Ward St., in Martinez. It will include various presentations throughout the day regarding the behavior of abstinence, body image, and spirituality. People are encouraged to come any time during the day for information.



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Miramonte Goes Dark to Gather Environmental Data

Submitted by Samuel Shain



Sophomore Samuel Shain stands in front of a darkened classroom at Miramonte High School.

Photo provided

Miramonte High School’s Environmental Club hosted “Lights Out! Day,” an environmental awareness day on October 31, asking the campus to ‘go dark’ to compile data about the school’s energy use. “Due to the overcast weather, we did not have the full participation that we had hoped for, but still had a considerable amount of classrooms participate,” said Miramonte sophomore and Environmental Club co-president Samuel Shain. “About 40 classrooms participated in the event.”

Using mathematical equations,

the club estimated that the high school saved 448 kilowatts from being used that day, translating into a savings of approximately \$97. The event also saved 4,480 cubic feet of natural gas from being consumed to create electricity, according to Shain. “Although this may not seem like much,” said Shain, “if you multiply it by 30, you see the numbers drastically increase and if you multiply the original figure by 180, you will get an approximation of how much Miramonte could save if we held an event like this every day of the school year.”

Submit stories and story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Lamorinda Weekly

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Publishers/Owners: Andy and Wendy Scheck; andy@lamorindaweekly.com wendy@lamorindaweekly.com
Editor: Lee Borrowman; lee@lamorindaweekly.com
Associate Editor: Jennifer Wake; jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com
Advertising: 925-377-0977
Wendy.Scheck@lamorindaweekly.com
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Staff Writers:
 Sophie Braccini; sophie@lamorindaweekly.com
 Cathy Tyson; cathy@lamorindaweekly.com
 Laurie Snyder; Laurie@lamorindaweekly.com
 Cathy Dausman; cathy.d@lamorindaweekly.com
 Sports Editor: Caitlin Graveson sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com
 Teen Coach: Cynthia Brian; cynthia@lamorindaweekly.com
 Food: Susie Iventosch; suziventosch@gmail.com
Contributing Writers:
 Andrea A. Firth, Conrad Bassett, Moya Stone, Rosylyn Aragones Stenzel, Lucy Amaral, Michael Sakoda, Symon Tryzna, Rebecca Eckland, Marissa Harnett, Lou Fancher, Barry Hunau (cartoonist)
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Lamorinda Weekly,
 P.O. Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570-6133
 Phone: 925-377-0977; Fax: 1-800-690-8136;
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Bending Over Backwards to Please: Toddler Yoga at Orinda Library

By Cathy Dausman



Namaste! Beth Houghton (center) with her children's yoga students

Photos Cathy Dausman

It began with an "om" and ended with Namaste – "the spirit in me honors the spirit in you" – but this was not your parents' yoga class. The 14 students, ages 2-4, were part of a children's yoga class offered October 24 at the Orinda Library taught by Beth Houghton. The program was sponsored by Friends of the Orinda Library and arranged by Orinda Children's Librarian Lin Look.

Houghton, or "Bendy Beth," of Bendy Berry Yoga, specializes in yoga for children. Both Look and Houghton clearly love it. Who would imagine toddlers could execute up dog, happy baby, chair and hero pose stances, or learn to breathe in the Pranayama and Kapalabhati manner, lying still on a yoga mat through the course of a soft song?

Houghton actually prefers teaching children because they are more

"interactive and fun."

"I can more easily incorporate music, storytelling and games into the classes," she said.

Asked to describe a typical class, Houghton said, "High energy, musical and bouncy." And why her fruit-based business name? Because Houghton's favorite thing in the world is a strawberry. "I thought it proper to nod to the berry, while also nodding to yoga," she said.



Yoga plus toes equals "Toe-ga."

The half-hour class ran long, but participants didn't mind. The children shed shoes and socks to play "toe-ga" (yoga for toes), working to put colored fuzzy balls into containers on the ground with their feet. They sang "Wheels on the Bus," holding yoga poses. They learned how to exhale by blowing colorful scarves back and forth to Houghton.

Susan Bosch brought grandchildren Mirabelle, 4, and Emmett

Eriksson, 2, to the class. "I thought the class was fabulous and my grandchildren loved it," she said.

After a second "om" – pronounced "ahh for the doctor," then "take a bite of cookie, mmm" – it was time for Namaste, or good-bye.

"It's never too early to teach kids to think about kindness, stillness and to be in touch with their breath and bodies," Houghton said.

Back to the Table for the Holidays

By Susie Iventosch



Back to the Table on Lafayette Circle

Photo Susie Iventosch

The first thing you'll notice when entering Back To The Table Cooking School in Lafayette is an inviting dining room table, prominently situated front and center. This is no accident, as sisters Leslie Pease and Lisa Evaristo wanted their school to invoke the lost custom of dining together around the dinner table, along with the friendship and anticipation that go with it. So each and every class begins and ends at this very table. Here guests and instructors offer introductions, backgrounds, expectations and menu review. After the meal is prepared, they all gather back at the table to enjoy the meal along with a glass of wine, or two, to complement the various dishes.

"From the moment our guests walk in the door, we want them to be comfortable," Pease said. "We want them to take part in preparing every aspect of the meal, but also to enjoy a shared dining experience in a comfy, home-like environment."

I just love this, because today, far too many meals are consumed on the run— every man, woman and child for themselves. I truly believe that dinnertime, is the time of day when we can nurture our children and families in every sense of the word: nutritionally, emotionally and intellectually. Around the dinner table, we can talk about the great meal we are about to consume as well as the school day, the workday, politics, religion, and important social issues.

"We have lost generations of parents who are not cooking," noted Evaristo. "They simply reheat, and therefore, their children are not learning to cook, or love to cook."

All of the teachers at the cooking school, of which there are currently 13, have a passion for the type of cooking they do. Their pas-

sions range from baking and quick homemade meals to Sri Lankan cuisine, raw culinary arts, cooking with children, dinner parties, global cuisine, health-related diets, preserving and canning, and even how to best shop the farmers' market!

These instructors come from a variety of cooking backgrounds and include Judy Orpin-Geringer, Suzy Quenneville-Orpin, Lisa Libby Albert, Thama Brentano, Erin Caravantes, Jay Chan, Terry Chaparro, Mitch Costanza, Ruwani Jayasingha, Lizette Marx, Penny Porter, Liza Scaff, and Barbara Weikert.

"Our teachers are the kind of people that everyone loves going to their houses for dinner," said Pease.

Though Pease and Evaristo are busy managing the school, they are well-known within their social circles as masters of entertaining, and perhaps even more importantly, in their kids' circles they are well loved for their baking!

"I remember loving to bake cookies with my grandmother," Evaristo said. "It was a wonderful way to build bonds, family ties and lasting memories."

According to Pease and Evaristo, they both raised their children the way they were brought up and that meant dinner was a precious time of the day, with home-cooked meals and gathering around the table for dinner.

"When we grew up, family dinner at our house was at 6 p.m. and you were to be there!" said Pease. "We also had Sunday dinners at our grandparents' house most weeks."

The girls' father, Jack Maher, was not an avid cook, save for grilling, camp cooking and Dutch oven dishes, but he did enjoy travel and family experiences. So about

11 years ago, he and his wife, Jan, took the family to Florence for a week-long cooking class. The class started every day with an outing to peruse and shop the local farmers' market. The sisters were inspired!

"As a class we decided what we wanted to make that day, depending upon what looked good at market," Evaristo remembered. "We also went to the wine market, and then back to school to make our meal. At 1 p.m. we enjoyed the fruits of our labor for lunch, while we hashed over the day's adventures."

Pease's children have all gone on to enjoy cooking for friends and family. Her oldest son, Ryan and his wife Nicole own Paix sur Terre, a winery in Paso Robles that concentrates on producing Mourvedre, Syrah and Grenache wines. They love to cook and are always doing dinner parties for cousins, siblings and friends.

"I think it's great," Pease commented. "This is exactly what we hoped they'd take away from their family."

Daughter Megan, a student at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, often invites friends over for dinner parties, while son, Michael and wife, Claire, love to barbecue and enjoy camp cooking, even though their main business is Frisbee golf.

Evaristo's children, Nathaniel, Jessy and Jenna are all aficionados of good food. Their mom is known as the "cookie" mom in the kids' social circles, and she was also the coordinator of the hot lunch program at Burton Valley School for six years before opening the cooking school. She mentioned to me that Jenna has already won two cooking contests ... by the age of 10!

The sisters were happy to share two family heirloom recipes— Grammy's Pumpkin Muffins and Grandma Blanc's turkey stuffing, both perfect for the Thanksgiving holiday and beyond. The muffins are delicious and are said to freeze well, though I would not know, because when I shared the photo of my batch with my sons, they immediately requested a shipment! They were not disappointed.

Back to the Table Cooking School

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For more information on cooking classes, birthday parties, ladies' night out, or corporate team building events, please visit: www.backtothetablecooking-school.com

Grammy's Pumpkin Bread



Photo Susie Iventosch

INGREDIENTS

4 ½ cups granulated sugar
6 eggs
1 ½ cups corn oil
One 32-oz. can Libby's pumpkin pie filling
1 cup water
5 ½ cups flour
1 ½ teaspoons baking soda
3 teaspoons baking powder
3 teaspoons salt
1 ½ teaspoons each: nutmeg, cinnamon, allspice
¾ teaspoons ground cloves

DIRECTIONS

Mix first five ingredients (sugar, eggs, corn oil, pumpkin pie filling and water) together in large bowl until smooth. Then add flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt and spices. Mix together until incorporated. Pour batter into greased or papered muffin tins, or 2 greased loaf pans, and bake at 350 degrees, for approximate 25 minutes for muffins, and 55 minutes for bread loaves, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Makes about 4 dozen regular sized muffins, or 2 large loaves of bread. The muffins are extremely moist and they freeze beautifully.

Grandma Blanc's stuffing

(Stuffing for a 20 lb. turkey)

INGREDIENTS

2 packages Jimmy Dean sausage (brown and drain)
1 chopped onion
1 stalk celery, chopped
1 granny smith apple, cored and chopped
1 cup chopped parsley
1/2 cup chopped fresh sage
1 package corn bread stuffing (Pepperidge Farms has a good one)
1 package seasoned bread crumbs (I used Emeril's Italian Seasoned Panko Bread Crumbs)
½ cube butter, melted
1 cup, or so, turkey or chicken stock, to lightly moisten stuffing

DIRECTIONS

Sauté onion, celery, apple, parsley, and sage together with the sausage until vegetables are translucent. (Add a little butter, if needed.) Mix together with corn bread stuffing and bread crumbs. Pour melted butter over stuffing mixture and stir to incorporate. Add enough chicken or turkey stock to lightly moisten. Use to stuff the turkey (bake at appropriate time for size of turkey), or bake in a 9x13 pan for 35 minutes at 350 degrees.

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.



Family Focus

Helping Your Overweight Child

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

The Wisconsin anchorwoman in the news who was accused by a viewer of being overweight and a bad role model for children is a poignant reminder that weight continues to be a controversial issue in our society. In health-conscious, high-achieving communities like ours, parents of a child with a weight problem have special concerns. It's natural to want our children to blend in easily – socially, athletically, scholastically, and physically. And we want them to have healthy levels of self-esteem and self-confidence, in addition to all our other aspirations for them.

Weight is one of many issues that can set our child apart from others, cause a drop in self-confidence, and contribute to family tension. Most overweight children experience hurt feelings not only from comments and behaviors from their peers and community, but more cuttingly from well-intentioned remarks from their own family members.

Helping children under the age of seven who are overweight

At this age parents have more influence and control. Without saying a word about your child's weight, you can structure her environment to include more exercise, fewer unhealthy snacks, and less sedentary activity. You can eliminate tempting foods from the pantry and not emphasize food in the household. But you can also provide small amounts of sugary or fatty foods so that your approach doesn't become extreme, and you can help your child learn to make choices and find balance. You can be a good role model for her, and use positive reinforcement to encourage her to develop and maintain healthy habits.

Helping older children, teens, and young adults

I advise parents to suggest early on in your child's life that treats be limited to one or two small ones per day. Since you can't always monitor food consumption as they get older – and you don't want to put yourself in this position anyway – you can at least recommend a balanced plan to

your children. It will be obvious to your older child if you eliminate all tempting foods, but you can reduce the amount you keep on hand. Large family-size packs of chips or cookies or ice-cream are ill-advised. Instead, you may need to shop more often and pay more for smaller quantities, but limiting the quantities of junk food on hand is essential. It is important that everyone in the family get some sort of exercise. This can be a forced choice where you have each child pick at least one sport or activity. You can limit the amount of time spent with TV and other electronic devices in the home to encourage a healthy lifestyle. You can try to promote active family outings when you have time together.

When I work with overweight children, teens, and young adults, they invariably say that they want to be treated like everyone else at home. In other words, at times they want to spontaneously go for ice-cream with the family or order pizza, and be able to relax with food and their families. They have enough of a burden at times because of their weight, so it is liberating to have occasions where they can forget and enjoy. Parents of older children and young adults sometimes ask me if it is okay to bring up the subject of weight with their child. They think they can help motivate their child to lose weight if they bring up the topic under the guise of health or exercise concerns. Unfortunately, their underlying intent is usually highly transparent. Addressing weight with an overweight child is almost always a disastrous mistake. Almost every child over the age of six or seven (and even younger) is very aware if she is overweight. We're all bombarded with images of thin models and celebrities, and with television shows and commercials and magazine ads and stories featuring weight loss remedies and strategies.

Overweight children or young adults are already highly sensitive about their appearance. They feel

their own constant pressure to lose weight, so any external pressure just adds to their unhappiness. What a child needs most from family members is unconditional acceptance. She is typically hurt and angered by judgments, criticism, pressure, unsolicited advice, and attempts to control her weight. And as we know, negative feelings can easily sabotage any hope for self-improvement. Unless she is in medical jeopardy and under a doctor's care, an overweight child needs to be the one to decide on her own that she wants to lose weight. If she feels positive about herself in other ways and in enough control of her own life and body, she will be in a good place to begin. When that time comes, you want to have the kind of relationship where she can come to you for help and moral support.

Fortunately, the Wisconsin anchorwoman and many supporters fought back against the mean, bullying tactics of her accuser. At some point, your child may need to count on you to be her most ardent supporter. This can only happen if you provide her with unconditional acceptance of who she is and how she looks.

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Margie Ryerson, MFT, is a marriage and family therapist in Orinda and Walnut Creek. Contact her at 925-376-9323 or margierye@yahoo.com. She is the author of *Treat Your Partner Like a Dog: How to Breed a Better Relationship and Appetite for Life: Inspiring Stories of Recovery from Anorexia, Bulimia, and Compulsive Overeating.*

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Once a Raiderette - Always a Raiderette!

By Sophie Braccini



Raiderettes from the '60s perform at their 50th reunion. Photo Provided

Cathy Corsi, owner of Moraga's Si Si Caffe and C.C. & Co. Hair Designs, danced in the center of the Oakland Coliseum Sunday, October 21, in front of thousands of Oakland Raiders fans during a recent halftime show as part of the 50th anniversary celebration of the Raiderettes. "This is how something you do at 14 and a half can impact you for the next 50 years of your life," says Corsi with a broad smile.

Corsi joined the very first group of Raiderettes in the early 1960s, which started in San Francisco. At age 14, Corsi accompanied her childhood friend JoAnn Stooksberry, who had been asked at her dance studio to a Raiderettes tryout. "At the time they (the Raiders) were not as popular as today; they re-

cruited a group of cute young girls to attract more spectators," she jokes.

Stooksberry is still her friend, and she also came to the reunion. "It was a very well organized affair," says Corsi. The ladies worked on the new routine for five hours the day before their performance to the music "These Boots Are Made For Walkin'," had dinner together, then rehearsed again on Sunday with the other age groups all together.

"The announcer presented the ladies by age group," says Corsi. "We were in the very center of the stadium, the very first Raiderettes." Corsi said that some 400 women from the different age groups came – 28 were from the '60s. Corsi plans to stay in shape for the 60th reunion.

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ART

The Orinda Library Art Gallery Exhibit. The exhibit for November will feature the Kumstanke group. The Gallery is located adjacent to the library at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda. For more info, visit www.orindaartscouncil.org/community_library.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art Celebrating SMC's 150th Anniversary. New exhibitions on view at Saint Mary's College Museum of Art include The Art of the Cross; Nyame Brown: John Henry's Adventures in a Post-Black World; Missions of Will Sparks, and the William Keith collection. The exhibits will be on view through mid-December, 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.

Flora and Fauna. This art show will highlight artwork of the painter Leslie Swarts' expressionist paintings of trees from around the world and jeweler Laura Paige's fine beadwork cre-

ated with stone beads through Saturday, Jan. 11 at Moraga Art Gallery, 522 Center Street, Moraga. For more info, call (925) 376-5407 or visit www.moragaartgallery.com.

Irresistible – The Gift of Art is the new exhibit at the Lafayette Gallery. You'll find a winter wonderland of sparkling jewelry, handcrafted ornaments, elegant ceramics and a wide array of prints, paintings and sculpture Nov. 13 through Dec. 29. There will be a free reception from 6:30 to 8:30pm Friday, Nov. 30 with wine, hors d'oeuvres and live music! The event is at the Lafayette Gallery located at 50 Lafayette Circle in Lafayette. For more information please call (925) 284-2788 or visit www.lafayettegallery.net.

MUSIC

WCSA Lafayette Songwriters' Competition. Come join the Lauras for the inaugural Lafayette WCSA Songwriters' Competition! You do not have to be a songwriter to attend this event. The meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month, with the in-

augural event at 7pm Nov. 14 at Lamorinda Music, 81 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Cost: \$5. For more info, contact Laura Zucker at zuckers@aol.com or visit www.westcoastsongwriters.org/become-a-member.

Our Voices to End Slavery. This is an annual benefit concert at 7pm Friday, Nov. 9 at Willow Spring Church, 1675 School Street, Moraga, is designed to raise awareness of human trafficking and to raise funds for a program called New Day for Children that rescues young girls 11 to 18 years old from this horrific evil. Tickets: \$30. For more info, call (925) 631-1894 or visit www.willowsspringchurch.org.

Solo and chamber music concert. The Performing Arts Society's concert will open with Nancy Amini, soprano, and she will be accompanied by pianist Joellen Pikitel, pianist, Ted Rust, Oboem, and Viva Knight Piano at 7:30pm Tuesday, Nov. 13 at Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek. Free. For more info, visit www.ccpas.org.

The Campolindo High School Music Department will present their fall concert at 7:30pm Thursday, Nov. 15 in the Campolindo Performing Arts Center, 300 Moraga Road, Moraga. The concert will feature performances by the Campolindo Symphony Orchestra, Concert and Symphonic Bands under the direction of Johnny Johnson. Free. Viva Verdi! Amici Lyric Opera presents Elena Yakoubovsky, lyric spinto soprano in a concert of Giuseppe Verdi's arias from La forzadestino, Aida, Ernani, Il Trovatore, and Don Carlo. There will also be lyric songs by Bellini, Donaudy and Vivaldi at 3pm Sunday, Nov. 18 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Tickets: \$20 for seniors and students; \$25 general. For more info, call (925) 964-9994 or visit www.amicylyricopera.com.

An Evening of Fellowship & Spiritual Music. Alex Cook and Ben Vaughan, Christian musicians from Boston and Canada, with original songs celebrating and defending spiritual identity at 7:30pm Friday, Nov. 23 at the Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. For more info, call (925) 258-9442 or visit www.csorinda.org.

Annual Holiday Concert presented by the Walnut Creek Concert Band at 7:30pm Nov. 27 at Leshler Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. Tickets: \$12-\$17. For more info, call (925) 943-7469 or visit www.lesherartscenter.org or www.walnutcreekband.org.

THEATER

Spring Awakening presented by Saint Mary's College Performing Arts Department from Nov. 8-10 and Nov. 15-18, LeFevre Theatre at Saint Mary's College, 1928 St. Mary's Rd., Moraga. Spring Awakening is a rock musical featuring live music, stunning design, and world-class choreography, and celebrates the unforgettable journey from youth to adulthood with power, poignancy, and passion that you will never forget. Tickets: \$15 for general admission; \$12 for seniors; \$8 for staff and students. For more info, call (925) 631-4670 or visit www.brownpapertickets.com.

DVC Drama 2012 - 2013 Season. The Exonerated by Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen will be showing Nov. 30 through Dec. 9, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 2:30pm at DVC, 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.

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. This upcoming fall play will be showing from Nov. 7-10 at Orinda Intermediate School, 80 Ivy Drive, Orinda at 4:30pm Nov. 7 and 8, and 4:30pm and 7:30pm Nov. 9 and 10. Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$3 for students (17 and under) on Wednesday; \$10 for premier seating, \$8 for standard seating on Friday and Saturday. For more info, call (925) 258-3090 or visit www.ShowTix4u.com.

15th Annual California Independent Film Festival. Films in this year's fes-

tival opening includes Body Complete, One Small Hitch, and Lore. The festival will run Nov. 8-11 at The New Rheem Theatre, 350 Park Street, Moraga and at the Orinda Theatre, 4 Theatre Square, Orinda. For more info, visit www.caiff.org.

Three Quarter Moon. This is the November selection for the International Film Showcase showing Friday and Saturday Nov. 16 - 20 at Orinda Theatre (see related article on page B5).

To see or not to see? Should not be a question. The talented Miramonte Players are performing one of Shakespeare's most brilliant works, Hamlet. Come enjoy their rendition of the play at 7pm Nov. 7-9 at Miramonte High School, 750 Moraga Way, Orinda. Tickets: \$5 students; \$8 adults, online or at the door. For more info, visit www.accalenes.k12.ca.us/miramonte.

Town Hall Theatre Sneak Peak: It's a Wonderful Life from 10:30am to noon Wednesday, Nov. 14 at the Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School St., Lafayette. George Bailey, his life and finances in ruin, decides the world would be better off without him -- until he is paid an unexpected visit. Cost: \$1 for members; \$3 for non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

LECTURES & LITERATURE

Sugar Addiction. Julia Ross, a celebrated pioneer and educator in the fields of addiction and eating disorders treatment, will discuss our addiction to sugar and explore how we can correct the faulty appetite chemistry that drives addiction at 6pm Wednesday, Nov. 7, Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Cost: \$22 standard; \$12 members; \$7 students. For more info, call 415-597-6705 or visit <http://bit.ly/SugarAddiction>.

Positive Living Forum, Happiness Club. Brighten your day and take part in this interactive gathering which features speakers on a wide range of topics that encourage and guide participants towards a more ideal and positive life experience Thursday, Nov. 8 and Dec. 13 from 10:30am to noon in the Sequoia Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Cost: \$1 members; \$3 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

Author event, David Swanson: The Military Industrial Complex at 50 from 2 to 5pm Saturday, Nov. 10 at the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church Owl Room, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. Swanson is the coordinator for RootsAction.org, an online initiative dedicated to galvanizing Americans who are committed to economic fairness, equal rights, civil liberties, environmental protection -- and defunding endless wars. For more info, call (925) 933-7850 or visit www.mtdpc.org.

The Stroke Support Group of Contra Costa County November meeting in the Concord Room at John Muir Medical Center. Speaker Lindsay Visocchi will discuss the California Relay Telephone Services, including "Speech to Speech" services Monday, Nov. 12 from 7 to 9pm, 2540 East Avenue, Concord. For more info, call Ann Dzuna at (925) 376-6218.

Coping With Holiday Grief. Hospice of the East Bay offers a workshop Tuesday, Nov. 13 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. for people who have experienced the death of a loved one, and find the holiday season to be a sad and stressful time of the year. Workshop at Hospice's administrative offices, 3470 Buskirk Ave., Pleasant Hill. For more info, call (925) 887-5681 or visit www.hospiceeastbay.org.

Home Town Security. Majora Carter illuminates the value of smart environmental management on local economic development, and all aspects of our civic and personal lives from 7 to 8:30pm Tuesday, Nov. 13 at Saint Mary's College, 1928 St. Mary's Rd., Moraga. For more info, call (925) 631-4000 or visit www.stmarys-ca.edu/hometown-security-with-majora-carter.

Holden High School presents the second in its writer's series from 7 to 9pm Thursday, Nov. 15 at the Orinda Community Church Fellowship Hall. This Meet the Writer event will feature

Marine Ecologist Dr. Rod Fujita, author of Heal the Oceans and will include refreshments, a conversation with Rod, sales of his books and an autographing opportunity.

WORKSHOPS & ORGANIZATIONS

Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 171 meet the first Wednesday each month. Social hour is at 11am and lunch is at noon. The Nov. 7 after-lunch speaker will be Dan Ashley, anchor of ABC News at 6 and 11. Ashley's presentations have been very interesting and informative. The branch meets at Holy Trinity Culture Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. For more info, call Larry at (925) 631-9528.

Widowed persons support group. The sessions are informal discussions for those in need of emotional support after the loss of a loved one. There will be counseling sessions that continue each Saturday from 10am to noon through Nov. 17. The meetings are at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in the Oak Room, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda.

Lafayette Garden Club features guest speaker Laurel Ann Winzler, one of San Francisco and the Bay Area's outstanding floral and event designers, who will share her magical ideas for "Fabulous Holiday Décor" at 9:30am Nov. 8, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. Contact: sa613and@aol.com.

Create a New Health Care Directive For Free presented by Stefanie West, Attorney at Law. An Advanced Health Care Directive is critical to communicating your preferences for end-of-life care. Stefanie West will take you through the Directive and will notarize for free any directives completed at the workshop from 10:30am to noon Thursday, Nov. 15, Cedar Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. Cost: \$1 members; \$3 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

Montelindo Garden Club Meeting. Janet Sluis traveled the world for 20 years to search for unusual plants. Hear how and why these plants made the cut to become 'Sunset Western Garden Collection' plants at 9am Nov. 16, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. For more info, call (925) 254-3906.

What's All The Hype About Skype? Presented by Valerie Riveiro, Mass-Mutual Financial Group. Come to this class for a live Skype demonstration and learn how to install it and use it on your own computer to chat with family and friends from 10:30am to noon Tuesday, Nov. 27 in the Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Cost: \$1 members; \$3 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS

A Harvest Fair and Luncheon. Take time to browse and purchase that distinctive gift for the special people on your shopping list from 10am to 3pm Thursday, Nov. 8 at the Soda Center, Saint Mary's College, 1928 Saint Mary's Road. Enjoy a glass of wine, soda or juice while shopping for holiday decor, stocking stuffers, and hostess gifts. A Traditional Thanksgiving Menu will be served at noon. Cost: \$27. For more info, call (925) 820-8002.

Appraisal Event in Moraga. The Moraga Women's Society is sponsoring a second appraisal event presented by Michaan's Auctions from 4 to 7pm Nov. 9 at Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga. Cost: \$20 for up to three items in the same category. For more info, call Jean Glaser at (925) 376-7961.

Town of Moraga's Veterans Day Ceremony hosted by the town of Moraga and Moraga Boy Scout troops 212, 234, and 246. Speakers for the event include John Haffner, CAPT, SC, USN (ret), RADM Vince Anzilotti, and the Mayor, Mike Metcalf from 11am to noon Nov. 11 (see related article on page A5).

... continued on next page

Lamorinda's Religious Services



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www.christianscienceorinda.org

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www.holyshpherd.org



8:15 a.m. Traditions Worship Service
9:40 a.m. Education for all ages
10:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service
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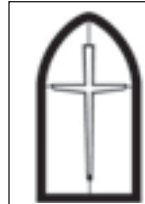
In-church Youth Zone, 10 AM Nursery Childcare

682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws

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FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS ... continued

Artisan Faire. Offering unique, creative gifts, with complimentary wine tasting from 4 to 7pm Thursday, Nov. 15 at the Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante, Orinda.

Community Thanksgiving Breakfast. The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce invites you to join city leaders, residents and the business community for breakfast as we have done for 32 years. Breakfast will be graciously provided by Dave's Cuisine from 7 to 8:30am Nov. 15 at Lafayette United Methodist Church, 955 Moraga Road, Lafayette. Cost: \$20. For more info, call (925) 284-7404 or visit www.lafayettechamber.org.

African & Guatemalan Bazaar. Great holiday shopping. Shop with a purpose for baskets, jewelry, batiks, beaded jewelry, handbags, scarves and much more Nov. 17 from 10am to 3pm and Nov. 18 from 8am to noon at Our Saviors Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. For more info, e-mail patwirdaily@gmail.com.

The holidays are upon us and Lafayette Community Center has of variety of classes to help you prepare. Come by the Santa's Bag Boutique Nov. 30 to Dec. 2 to peruse our local vendors' wares. For more info, call (925) 284-2232 or visit www.lafayette-terec.org.

Celebrate the Joy of Remembrance at the 26th Annual Hospice of the East Bay Tree of Lights. Please join any of the commemorative ceremonies to enjoy music, poetry, remembrances by family members and friends of Hospice, and the special moment when the tree lights up. There will be a tree lighting ceremony Saturday, Dec. 1 at 4:30pm at the Orinda Tree in Orinda Village, and at 5:30pm Sunday, Dec. 9 at the Moraga & Lafayette Tree, Moraga Country Club, 1600 St. Andrews Drive, Moraga. There will be a reception following the tree lighting. For more info, call (925) 887-5678 or visit www.hospiceeastbay.org.

OTHER

Words of Wisdom. From the Philosophical to the Light-hearted. Take part in this free-wheeling exchange of inspiration, information, and humor. This is a discussion group led by Paul Fillinger from 10:30am to noon Tuesday, Nov. 20 in the Cedar Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Cost: \$1 members; \$3 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

Hearing Screening By Audiologists from Hearing Science/Diablo Valley Ear, Nose, and Throat. The screenings are on the 1st Wednesday of the month, Nov. 7 and Dec. 5 in the Cedar Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Appointment required. Cost: \$1 members; \$3 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

Self-Discovery and Aging, Creative Writing Workshop. Workshop sessions include writing prompts, feedback and encouragement, and information about the world of writers, writing, and publishing. This workshop is from 10am to noon, the 2nd and 4th Thursday monthly, the Cedar Room at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Cost: \$1 members; \$3 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

Nature Walk and Bird-Watching. 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 nature walks are every Wednesday from 9 to 11am except Nov. 21, Dec. 19, and Dec. 26. Call Lafayette Senior Services at (925) 284-5050 for weekly meeting locations.

Lamorinda Dance Social. Enjoy afternoon dancing and learn some great new dance moves every Wednesday from 12:30 to 3pm, the Live Oak Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Cost: \$2 members; \$4 non-members. For more info, call (925) 284-5050.

The Cycle Recycle. Tom and Bobbie Preston of Moraga will be collecting gently used bicycles and tricycles which are repaired and refurbished and then donated to groups which gift them to underprivileged kids in our area. Gently used repairable bikes and tricycles or usable bike parts will be accepted until Dec. 1; just drop them off in the side driveway of the Preston's home, 1307 Larch Road, Moraga. For more info, call (925) 376-8474.

Free Memory Screenings as part of National Memory Screening Day from 1 to 4pm Tuesday, Nov. 15 at Aegis of Moraga, 950 Country Club Drive, Moraga. For more info, call (925) 376-9900 or visit www.alzfdn.org.

Lamorinda Moms' 15th Annual Preschool Fair. Attendees will receive a comparison of each of the participating preschools and have the opportunity to meet and talk with the directors and parents from each school from 6:30 to 8:30pm Thursday, Nov. 15 at Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Free. For more info, visit www.lamorindamoms.org.

Help Feed Our Furry Friends. Share the Joy Pet Photography of Lafayette is teaming up with the Contra Costa Humane Society to collect dog and cat food for needy families. Share the Joy Photography is holding 15 minute mini studio sessions Friday, Nov. 16 for pets for \$50 and a 30 pound bag of dog or cat food. For more info, call (925) 284-3280 or visit www.cchumane.org.

Free Pet Fix Day – Dogs. Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation is pleased to offer free spay/neuter surgeries for dogs Wednesday, Dec. 5, 2890 Mitchell Drive, Walnut Creek. Call the Spay/Neuter Clinic at (925) 296-3125 for an appointment.

Kindergarten Tour at St. Perpetua School. St. Perpetua School in Lafayette invites all incoming kindergarten-age children and their parents to get a taste of kindergarten and the school's very own Café St. Perpetua from 8 to 10pm Friday, Dec. 7 at St. Perpetua School, 3445 Hamlin Road, Lafayette. For more info, visit www.stpsparenteducation.eventbrite.com.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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When Art and Business Grow Hand in Hand

Allison McCrady Fine Arts Expands

By Sophie Braccini



Allison McCrady in front of her new space in Orinda's Theatre Square.

Photo Sophie Braccini

Allison McCrady, owner of Allison McCrady Fine Arts, is expanding her gallery at Theatre Square in Orinda, attributing her success to the combination of her business savvy

and her artistic talent. "Good art at a good price" is her recipe for success, she says. She will celebrate the expansion into the new space with a reception featuring a collection of

paintings by Sandy Ostrau, paired with a tasting of Rombauer wines from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday, November 8.

McCrady's new space is directly

across from her old one, between Living Lean and Barbacoa. The new space is not much bigger, but it has a better configuration. The first space was slightly offset with a modest front, while this new location has a prominent all-glass storefront. McCrady refreshed the painting, using a very lively bright hue of aqua. "I picked up the color of the Theatre's tiles," she says. "I wanted something lively and fitting with the rest of the Square."

The gallery will make use of the expansive glass surface front – perfect for an art gallery. "I also plan to update the inside lighting," says McCrady. "It will be a beacon inside the Square."

McCrady is keeping her original space for now. She plans to paint and teach there, and invite her colleagues to come by as well. "I will change the exhibition in the new space every 60 days," says McCrady. "The paintings

of the other artists I work with will also be on display across the way in the old space."

McCrady has been able to grow her art business during the recession by working with and representing other artists. A former investment banker and Orinda resident for more than 20 years, McCrady decided that affordability was the key to her success. "Affordability is of course a relative notion," she says. "We try to keep our average price around \$900."

She works only with professional artists, such as Ostrau. "She has a wonderful mastery of colors," says McCrady. "Her creations are on the abstract side, but she is part of the family of artists I work with, people who are inspired by the California landscape and express it in pieces that are joyous in nature."

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

Pierce Named VP of Prudential Fine Homes Division

www.pruca.com

(925) 249-1600

Prudential California Realty announced that David Pierce, a long-time real estate professional, has been named the Vice President of the brokerage's Fine Homes Division. Pierce works with the company's Fine Home Specialists to promote the company's luxury and high-end residential real estate properties. Pierce has been in the real estate industry since 1987, and has been a top producing real estate agent since his second year in the business. He has been with Prudential California Realty since 1994. He lives in Orinda with his wife Ellen, is very active in his community having been the president of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, as well as a director for the Contra Costa Association of Realtors.

Moraga Employee of the Month, October

A popular Moraga employee who has served as the Town's Recreation and Facilities Coordinator for the past six years, Kimberly Nelson has been named the October Moraga Employee of the Month, an award sponsored by the Rotary Club of Moraga and the Chamber of Commerce. Nelson coordinates many of the Town's events and rentals for its facilities as well as associated recreation programming and administrative duties. "Kimberly always goes the extra mile to make sure both external and internal customers have a positive experience when working with the Town," said Jay Ingram, the director of parks and recreation. "She also provides staff support to the Moraga Youth Involvement Committee and the many activities and projects they complete annually." The Rotary and Chamber awarded Nelson a \$50 gift card to Safeway as well as a \$50 gift certificate to Michael's Ristorante in Moraga. Nelson was presented with her award and gifts at the Moraga Rotary luncheon on Tuesday, November 6.



From left, Frank May, Rotary president, Kimberly Nelson, and Jay Ingram, Director of Parks and Recreation
Photo provided

News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Monthly Mixer from 5:30 to 7 p.m. November 14 at Orchard Nursery & Florist, 4010 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Ribbon Cutting at 5 p.m. November 15 for Venture Men's Goods at 3571 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Moraga

The California Independent Film Festival will be held November 8-11. Don't miss the many movies, documentaries, children movies, and the now local Iron Filmmaker competition at the Rheem Theatre, with selected films also at the Orinda Theatre. For a full program and tickets visit www.caiff.org.

No membership meeting in November for the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Save the date for the holiday party from 6 to 9 p.m. December 4 at the Moraga Country Club.

Orinda

Vice-President Rick Kattenberg assumed presidency of the Chamber after Keith Miller resigned. "I know I speak for the entire chamber membership when I express my gratitude for Keith Miller's excellent service as president of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce," Kattenberg wrote to Chamber members. "We all wish him the very best and hope that he might be able to one day return to the Chamber. In his absence, we do plan to continue the good work that has always been the hallmark of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce. We're proud of our part in helping to bring Theatre Square back to life, the Restaurant Tour, the Shop Orinda Campaign, the Live at the Orinda Comedy event, our involvement with the annual Orinda Classic Car Show, the Fourth of July celebration and parade, now a Lamorinda event." Kattenberg will not run for president in the future board election to avoid any perceived conflict of interest; his wife Candy has been serving as executive director of the Chamber, a part-time paid position for the past five years.

Save the date for the Hospice Tree Lighting ceremony December 1 at 31 Orinda Way, in the Bank of America parking lot. Every year, the Chamber and Hospice of the East Bay bring local school choirs and Santa together to welcome the holidays.

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

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

NCS Water Polo Titles up for Grabs

Today's games to determine Finalists

By Marissa Harnett



Miramonte eased into the NCS semifinals defeating opponents by at least ten goals in the first two rounds. Photos Andy Scheck

The Lamorinda high school water polo teams stormed through the playoffs to make it half-way to the North Coast Section championship. All three girls' teams and two boys' teams moved into the semifinal round after the November 3 games.

Boys:

The boys' teams all enjoyed large margin wins in the first rounds. First seed Miramonte managed a decisive 16-6 second round win over Monte Vista, while an unlucky draw landed #5 Acalanes and #4 Campolindo together in the quarterfinals. Acalanes defeated the Cougars in a 13-12, down-to-the-wire, match.

Having lost to Campo just two weeks ago, the Dons were familiar with their rivals and their game. Head coach Clarke Tamariki made some tactical changes for this match. "We made a couple of matchup adjustments on defense to help slow down their top shooters," he said.

Acalanes came out aggressively in Saturday's match in Campo's pool. The Dons scored two minutes into the game on a penalty shot. Campo answered back seconds later, setting the tone for a competitive match. At the end of the first half, Acalanes netted the ball at the buzzer, giving them the 6-5 lead.

The second half saw action similar to the first, but rougher and more intense. By the start of the fourth pe-

riod, Acalanes was down three goals. With the help of two more penalty shots, the Dons clawed back to take the lead, bringing the score to 13-12 with just 44 seconds remaining.

Time-outs stretched the last seconds into nail-biting minutes. The semifinal berth hinged on the final six seconds. With all time-outs exhausted, final action resumed with Campo in possession of the ball and the ability to send the game to overtime.

The Acalanes defense proved to be insurmountable for the Cougars and the clock ran out before Campo could net the ball.

"The boys are definitely excited to win the game and move on to the next round of the playoffs," Tamariki said. Today's semifinal match against 12-time NCS winner and reigning champion, Miramonte, will be a tough one with speed and a strong goalie challenging them. "To prepare for the game (today) we will have to adjust our offense to slow down their team counter attack," Tamariki added.

Miramonte/Acalanes action begins at 7:15 p.m. tonight at Miramonte.

Girls:

The Lamorinda girls have dominated the NCS bracket this year. The final four is comprised of all three local teams.

Third seed Acalanes plays Sir Francis Drake tonight at 6 p.m. at home.

The Lady Dons sailed into the quarterfinals with a bye in the first round and a 14-point win over Ukiah in the second round. Head coach Misha Buchel admits that it will be tougher moving forward and recognizes that Campo is the team to beat. "Campo is by far and away the favorite in this tournament. They've only lost one game all year and just won the Nor Cal Championships tournament."

Also tonight at 6 p.m., #1 Campo hosts #4 Miramonte.

Miramonte head coach Trevor Rose echoed Buchel. "Campo is hands down the best team in NCS, if not northern California. If we can get past them it'll be one of the best wins in recent history for the MHS women's polo program. They have an excellent coach, and great players so it'll be tough."

Miramonte defeated San Rafael 17-3 and Northgate 11-7 in the first and second rounds, respectively. Campo had a first-round bye and beat Marin Catholic 21-2 in the second round to get to the rivalry game.

Even though Campo has the edge with a 2-0 season record against Miramonte, head coach Kim Everist admits that it will be a mental and statistical challenge to continue to win. "We are treating this game as if it is our first match-up against them. They are a good team, aggressive and athletic and they have some very key pieces."

Semifinal matches: **Today**, Wednesday, November 7

Boys:

(1) Miramonte vs. (5) Acalanes at 7:15 p.m. at Miramonte

Girls:

(1) Campo vs. (4) Miramonte at 6 p.m. at Campo
(2) Acalanes vs. (3) Sir Francis Drake at 6 p.m. at Acalanes

Finals: Saturday, November 10 at Acalanes - time TBA.



Campo hosts a determined #4 Miramonte in the semifinals. The Cougars defeated the Mats both times they faced off this season.

Playoffs Schedule

Volleyball: #1 Campolindo has a first round bye. They will play their first game on November 10 at home at 7:00 p.m. They will play the winner of the #8 Sir Francis Drake/#9 Acalanes game.

#9 Acalanes will play on Wednesday, November 7 at 7:00 p.m. at #8 Sir Francis Drake.

Football: #4 Campolindo will host #13 Terra Linda on Friday, November 9 at 7:00 p.m.
#7 Miramonte will travel to play #10 Tennyson on Saturday, November 10 at 1:00 p.m.
#8 Acalanes will host #9 Bishop O'Dowd on Friday, November 9 at 7:00 p.m.

Note: Girls' tennis played the first round yesterday. See cifncs.org/sports/tennis for updated schedule. Water polo playoffs are today. See above for details.

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Gaels Look to Repeat as WCC Champs

Men's basketball season starts Saturday

By Simon Tryzna



Coach Randy Bennett with Jorden Page
Photos Tod Fierner

It might be tough for the Gaels to follow-up one of the most successful men's basketball seasons in school history. The 2011-2012 team won both the WCC league title and the WCC tournament.

Although the team graduated a key component of last year's squad in Rob Jones, who finished eighth in the nation in rebounds, the Gaels return one of the best point guards in the nation in senior Matthew Dellavedova. Dellavedova, who was one of the five finalists last year for the Bob Cousy Award, given to the nation's top point guard, gained experience playing for the Australian National Team in the 2012 Olympics.

Still, citing the loss of Jones, many of the national media outlets and the WCC coaches have the Gaels finishing third in conference play, behind Gonzaga and BYU.

"It's a good league," said Bennett in response to his team being chosen third by his fellow coaches. "You can make an argument for picking several of those teams."

While the league may have improved from top to bottom, the Gaels still return a strong backcourt. Dellevadova is joined by junior Stephen Holt, who averaged 10.1 points per game and was second in the WCC in steals, averaging 1.8 steals per game last year. He was named honorable mention on the All-WCC Team.

"[Dellavedova & Holt are] pretty good experienced [guards] that have been through the battle," said Bennett. "That is going to be the

strength of our team this year – the guard play."

With only one true small-forward in the rotation, junior Beau Levesque, Saint Mary's will likely play three guards as part of their offense, which worked well last year. Newcomer and Southern California Junior College Player of the Year James Walker III and junior Jorden Page will provide depth to guard play.

Replacing Jones at the power forward position will be 6'-11" Matt Hodgson, who has impressed Bennett already. "Matt Hodgson will help right away and I think could be a really good player," he said.

He will be joined with sophomore Brad Waldow, who will be an impact player at center. Mitchell Young will also be a key piece of the offense. Lastly, senior seven-footer Kyle Rowley will look to provide a huge boost off the bench for the Gaels.

"We return 13 guys off that team from last year," said Bennett. "We have a lot coming back off of a very positive experience from last year, and I think that's always important in college basketball."

In addition to a tough conference slate, the Gaels have a fairly tough, but manageable, non-conference slate. After opening the season against Sonoma State, the Gaels will travel to take on Utah State. The Utes have compiled an impressive 157-12 home record (with one of the losses coming from the Gaels) since 1998. Over Thanksgiving break, Saint Mary's will participate in the DirectTV Classic in Anaheim, opening up against CAA favorite Drexel on Thanksgiving Day at 1:30 p.m. on ESPN2.

On New Year's Eve, McKeon Pavilion will play host to a nationally televised matchup against the Harvard Crimson.

One of the most important keys for the Gaels is to see if they can improve on the 16-1 home record from last year.

"McKeon Pavilion is a great atmosphere for college basketball," said Steven Holt. "To have our student section be right on top of the court adds that flair, that intensity, just makes it a tough environment for opposing teams, [which is] obviously an advantage for us."

The Gaels will kick off their season this Saturday, November 10 against Sonoma State in McKeon Pavilion at 7 p.m.

Practice! Practice! Practice!

Prep basketball starts this week

By Michael Sakoda



Kiran Shastri Photo Kevin Nguyen

High school basketball teams reported for practice on Monday. While the future for Acalanes, Campolindo and Miramonte looks bright, it's always tough to win in the DFAL.

Acalanes finished last season with an 18-10 record, going just 6-6 in DFAL play. They qualified for the NCS playoffs and beat Piner High School in the first round before falling to El Cerrito. The Dons were the only Lamorinda team that failed to qualify for the CIF Tournament.

The Dons will return just five players to varsity—junior center Buster Souza, senior forward Ivan Harewood and senior guards Brendan Kirbach, Eric Thomas and Aaron Edwards.

Souza will likely be a focus of the offense and Thomas and Edwards are expected to move into bigger roles.

The Dons do have some players coming up from junior varsity. "Matt Thomas, Zack Kisner and Ross Teichman, who are all going to be impact players this year," said Dons head coach Darrell Hirashima.

Hirashima understands his team's weakness, but also has confidence in the team's strengths.

"We don't have the quickness or the star talent some of the other teams have," Hirashima admitted. "But defensively, I think we'll be able to match up with the big strong teams out there. Offensively, we definitely have some serious weapons in the arsenal... just not as deep as we've previously been."

Hirashima remains optimistic about his team making the playoffs. "We have a strong group of guys, and if we dedicate ourselves to what we're doing, we could make a little run there at the end."

Campolindo finished last season with a 23-7 record, going 9-3 in conference play, clinching the DFAL title. In the NCS playoffs, Campo defeated Drake then knocked off league rival Miramonte before falling to Bishop O'Dowd. They qualified for the CIF Tournament, but fell in the first round to Foothill of Palo Cedro.

The Cougars return six players—junior guard Issac Christian, sophomore guard Matt

O'Reilly, junior forward Justin Dunn, senior guards Jack Evans (the only returning starter), Tyler Garrison and Matt McCue.

"We should be a stronger defensive team this year," said Campo head coach Matt Watson. "We're always going to try to put the screws to someone."

Last season, the Cougars scored 62.8 ppg, while holding their opponents to just 55.5 ppg.

Offensively, Watson said keep an eye on the sophomore. "Matt O'Reilly was just a freshman last year... he will contribute a lot more. He's a very good shooter, very good offensive player... He'll contribute almost 100 percent more than he did last year."

Watson emphasized the influence of his three seniors. "They do a lot of policing of the rest of the players, keeping them all on board, reminding them that it's team first," Watson said.

McCue is indeed keeping his eyes focused on the team's goals. "We are planning to... work hard every day in practice and get into the best possible shape we can. The person who really wants to do something finds a way to, the other makes excuses."

Watson said winning the DFAL is no easy feat. "We've got a mix of young guys and just three seniors, so it would be challenging for us to repeat, but I wouldn't put it past us."

Miramonte finished last season with a 20-10 record, 8-4 in DFAL play. They defeated Analy in the first round of the NCS tournament before falling to Campolindo. The Mats were the only Lamorinda team to make it beyond the first round of the CIF Tournament, defeating Sierra before losing to Sacred Heart.

Drew McDonald, in his first season as head coach of the Mats, inherits a strong team. Miramonte returns 10 players, including senior forward and co-captain Kiran Shastri, a first team All-League selection, and junior guard Joey Goodreault, second team All-League.

McDonald is expecting big things from last year's standout, Shastri. "I think we have the league's best player in Kiran Shastri," he said. "He has done a lot of work in the off season to really make himself better, and I'm expecting him to have an outstanding season."

McDonald is no stranger to the Mats' system; he was an assistant coach for five of the past six seasons. "I'm very familiar with how the guys played in the past. We're going to try to play a little more up-tempo."

Last year, the Mats averaged nearly seven more points than their opponents. "We are going to aspire to be better defensively," McDonald said. "That's probably our number one goal right now."

Despite all the talent and experience on his bench, McDonald doesn't underestimate his opponents. "Campo is the league champ until someone beats them. Acalanes should be very strong. Dublin might be the most talented team... we have our work cut out for us."

While expecting a strong season, McDonald is focused on team play. "Our goal is to be as excellent a basketball team as we can be. If we do that, we'll let the chips fall where they may."



Kyle Rowley



Matthew Dellavedova

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JM 7A Girls' Volleyball Wins Tournament

Submitted by May Lo



From left, back row: Remi Haycock, Elena Koshkin, Jessica Thomas, Cassie Nguyen, Claire Menik-
tas, Jillian Yick, Mia Schaffel, Isabel Artiaga, Coach Debbie Standing; front row: Samantha Mas-
soni, Paige Johnson, Sophie Hein, Jessica Nelson, Grace Huber, Grace Schmidt Photo provided

The JM 7A girls' volleyball team went un-
defeated and took first place at the
Foothill Middle School Volleyball Tournament
held October 22 - 26. Eight teams participated

in this double elimination tournament. Lamor-
inda schools dominated the tournament with JM
taking first place and Stanley finishing in third
place.

East Bay Middle School XC Meet

Submitted by Christina French



Photo provided

The Moraga Country Club provided the
setting for two cross-country running
events on October 22. Joaquin Moraga Inter-
mediate School served as the host school for
290 participants, representing eleven East Bay
schools.

Standout local runners' were Joaquin Mor-
aga's Mateo Larson, who placed first in the sixth
grade boys' running event, and John Mader of
Orinda Intermediate School, who won in the
7th/8th grade boys' event.

East Bay Eclipse Earn Second Place

Submitted by Steve Mahomes



The East Bay Eclipse U13 girls celebrate their third tournament finals of the season. Photo provided

The East Bay Eclipse U13 Lunar girls
made their third tournament finals of the
season at the Walnut Creek Octoberfest over the
weekend of October 27-28. They went home
with their fourth award of the season, finishing
second overall.

In their second game, Eclipse faced off
against Lamorinda Soccer Club. The game was
evenly matched at the start, but Eclipse eventu-
ally took control, earning a 2-0 victory.

Despite falling behind 2-0 early in their first
game of the tournament against Central Marin,
the Eclipse girls stormed back with a late goal
in the first half and three more in the second half

The Eclipse beat a tough team from Must-
ang Soccer Club 2-0 to make it to the finals.
The girls fought hard in the championships, but
they gave up the winning goal in the final sec-
onds to finish in second place.

JV Water Polo Takes DFAL

Submitted by Veronica Erickson



Photo provided

The Campolindo JV boys' water polo team
clinched the DFAL championship with a
hard fought 7-6 victory over Miramonte. The
Cougars were led by Cole Stevens with three
goals and Marty Cunnane with two, including

the game winner with one minute remaining.
Yurii Hanley added four assists and drew four
kickouts. Miramonte was led by a talented core
of sophomores, who looked forward to revisiting
this rivalry next season.

Hard Work Pays Off for College Bound Lamorinda United U18 Girls

Submitted by Jorge Pearce



Lamorinda United 94 Back Row, from left: Darian Corey, Frances Collins, Michaela Maes, Re-
becca Bostwick, Rachel Hamilton, Sam Zarling, Jessica Tuan, Katie Tao, Claire Winter, Coco
Pearce, Kaitlin McGee, Coach Mohamed; middle row: Val Margerum, Jessica Jara, Megan
Turner, Sophie Fuller, Aly Turner, Shannon Stabler, Natalia Pedder, Hilary Bucanan; front row:
Nina Gerson, Sophie Leksan; not pictured: Nadia Alaiyan, Jessica Martinez Photo provided

It has been a long journey for the Lamor-
inda Soccer Club's senior U18 women's
team. These girls made soccer their passion
and their hard work paid off. The team re-
cently earned the title of 2012 West Coast

League Champions and are currently ranked
#1 in Northern California.

Below: Lamorinda United players and
the colleges that they will play soccer for
next year:

Player	College
Nadia Alaiyan	Pomona College
Hilary Buchanan	Cal State Northridge
Darian Corey	Humboldt State
Sophie Fuller	Westmont
Nina Gerson	Washington University St. Louis
Jessica Jara	Santa Clara
Sophia Leksan	Loyola Marymount
Michaela Maes	Point Loma
Valerie Margerum	Oregon State
Coco Pearce	Pomona College (offered, still considering)
Shannon Stabler	Cal Poly SLO
Katie Tao	Pomona College (offered, still considering)
Megan Turner	Stanford
Claire Winter	UCLA
Samantha Zarling	Colorado College

Seals Win Fall Ball Tourney

Submitted by Kevin Reilly



Bottom row, from left: Nick Kresnak, Owen Hansen, Nicolas Bamont, Erik Voss, David Sniderman;
top row: Tommy Thrasher, Ryan Reilly, Colby Burns, Grant Harper, Manager Dan Fitch, Brett Donat,
Vincent Bianchina, Kade Shipp, Murphy Baker, Kyle Sintchak Photo provided

The Lamorinda Baseball Academy Seals
completed a successful fall tournament
season, going undefeated and winning the
Scarecrow Classic at San Jose's PAL Sta-
dium on October 20-21. The Seals, com-
prised of 10 and 11-year-old players from

Lafayette, Moraga, and Pleasant Hill, beat
Santa Cruz 10-2 in the championship, fol-
lowing wins over Pleasanton, Palo Alto, and
Suisun City. The Seals scored 42 runs during
the tournament and displayed solid pitching
and fielding throughout.

Lamorinda CYO XC Runs to First

Submitted by Jeanne Balczewski



Photo Andrea Ruane

The Lamorinda CYO cross country team
finished a successful season. At the
Diocesan meet on Friday, October 19 at Joaquin
Miller Park in Oakland, two teams won.

Kott, Peter Reeves, Davis Henningsen, Brandon
Hein and Cayden Hein) placed first in the grades
2-5 boys' race.

The Saint Perpetua girls' team (Avery Bahl,
Sophie Boselli, Morgan Salmon, Caitlin Smith
and Scarlett McCullough) placed first in the
grades 2-5 girls' race.

Two athletes from Saint Perpetua, Dylan
Gunn, a fourth grader, and Hannah Ruane, a
seventh grader, had standout performances. Two
eighth graders from Saint Monica's, Lola Ola-
bode and Jared (JJ) Yabu, also had strong runs.

The Saint Monica boys (Evan Yabu, David

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Lamorinda Weekly Volume 06 Issue 18 Wednesday, November 7, 2012



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

How Does Your Garden Grow?

By Cynthia Brian

"As I farm the soil which yields my food, I share creation. Kings can do no more." Chinese proverb



Breakfast on the sunflower balcony

Photos Andy Scheck

"Dirt - \$5.00!" the sign read in a corner shop in New York City. At age 19, this was my first trip to the mega metropolis paved in concrete and blacktop. Hard times had hit our farm in California because

of the drought combined with the low prices wineries were paying grape growers. I ran to the nearest pay phone to call home. "Daddy," I shouted in the receiver, "I found the solution to save our ranch. DIRT! Here in New York City, five-pound bags of

dirt sell for \$5. We have 368 acres of the brown stuff. I think we hit pay dirt!" My daddy chuckled. "There's dirt and then there's soil," he responded.

Potting soil, topsoil, peat, compost, mulch – all are different compositions of soil mixes that can be purchased in garden centers to increase the texture, aeration, and nutrient concentration of your own backyard dirt. The best soil is a loamy soil because it contains a balance of sand, silt, clay, and humus. Without good soil, you'll never have a great garden, no matter where you buy your plants or how much you spend. I like to compare soil to building a house. You can design the most beautiful structure, but if you have not built a strong, solid foundation, the building will not endure. Even with excellent construction, a house still needs regular upkeep including painting, cleaning, re-roofing, gutter cleaning, water-proofing, termite inspections, and more to preserve its integrity. Our precious dirt requires the identical maintenance.

After years of growing, the soil in our once lush gardens is depleted of nutrients. Crop rotating, mulching, composting, amendments, and soil replacement are necessary. Fall is a great time of year to determine what kind of soil you have. Fill a small jar with soil samples and leave it to settle overnight. The next day you will see distinct layers with sand staying on the bottom, silt in the middle, and clay will be on top. Once you see what percentage you have of which type (and in our area, most likely you'll have mostly clay), you'll be able to purchase the correct "dirt" to fix your garden.

... continued on page D4

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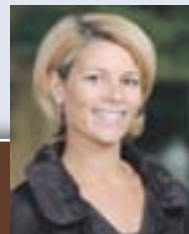


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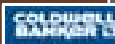


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MORAGA	9	\$625,000	\$2,173,500
ORINDA	7	\$680,000	\$1,600,000

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- 995 Buchan Drive, \$800,000, 3 Bdrms, 1859 SqFt, 1955 YrBl, 9-28-12;
Previous Sale: \$925,000, 04-06-05
- 3955 Canyon Road, \$1,175,000, 2 Bdrms, 2483 SqFt, 1963 YrBl, 10-2-12
- 3195 Condit Road, \$1,175,000, 4 Bdrms, 3277 SqFt, 1955 YrBl, 10-5-12;
Previous Sale: \$404,000, 05-18-12
- 14 Diablo Oaks Way, \$1,460,000, 3 Bdrms, 3517 SqFt, 2001 YrBl, 9-28-12;
Previous Sale: \$330,000, 11-01-02
- 3230 Greenhills Drive, \$1,575,000, 5 Bdrms, 4899 SqFt, 1987 YrBl, 10-3-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,753,000, 08-16-07
- 4124 Happy Valley Road, \$2,023,000, 4 Bdrms, 4509 SqFt, 1978 YrBl, 9-27-12
- 3440 Lana Lane, \$725,000, 2 Bdrms, 987 SqFt, 1954 YrBl, 10-5-12;
Previous Sale: \$452,500, 05-28-02
- 1225 Monticello Road, \$1,650,000, 5 Bdrms, 3987 SqFt, 1986 YrBl, 10-1-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,250,000, 10-01-03
- 3769 Mosswood Drive, \$697,500, 3 Bdrms, 1706 SqFt, 1951 YrBl, 10-3-12
- 1068 North Thompson Road, \$560,000, 3 Bdrms, 1100 SqFt, 1963 YrBl, 10-3-12
- 3559 Old Mountain View Drive, \$1,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 4114 SqFt, 1991 YrBl, 10-3-12;
Previous Sale: \$590,000, 09-06-91
- 3113 Ramada Court, \$659,500, 4 Bdrms, 2274 SqFt, 1973 YrBl, 10-5-12;
Previous Sale: \$56,000, 06-25-73
- 915 Reliez Station Road, \$600,000, 3 Bdrms, 1523 SqFt, 1959 YrBl, 10-3-12;
Previous Sale: \$40,000, 06-15-72
- 1 Rimrock Road, \$1,325,000, 4 Bdrms, 2962 SqFt, 1979 YrBl, 10-8-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,250,000, 07-01-11
- 3216 Ronino Way, \$1,185,000, 3 Bdrms, 3463 SqFt, 1984 YrBl, 9-28-12;
Previous Sale: \$545,000, 08-12-93
- 3199 Stanley Boulevard, \$730,000, 3 Bdrms, 1520 SqFt, 1950 YrBl, 10-5-12;
Previous Sale: \$715,000, 04-18-08
- 1216 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 2118 SqFt, 1953 YrBl, 10-3-12;
Previous Sale: \$855,000, 07-03-00

MORAGA

- 908 Augusta Drive, \$710,000, 3 Bdrms, 1819 SqFt, 1988 YrBl, 10-3-12;
Previous Sale: \$685,000, 06-19-03
- 3 Benedita Place, \$625,000, 3 Bdrms, 2095 SqFt, 1984 YrBl, 10-4-12;
Previous Sale: \$150,000, 03-10-97
- 89 Brookfield Drive, \$1,320,000, 5 Bdrms, 4133 SqFt, 1964 YrBl, 9-27-12;
Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 12-12-03
- 1026 Del Rio Way, \$905,000, 4 Bdrms, 2102 SqFt, 1969 YrBl, 10-5-12;
Previous Sale: \$405,000, 06-23-95

... continued on page D7

Lamorinda Foreclosures recorded

none

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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

How Does Your Garden Grow?

... continued from page D1

The optimum is a consistency that when rolled in the palm of your hand will be a bit gritty, smooth, sticky, dry, soft, crumbly, and dark like chocolate cake. As soon as you start increasing the health of your soil, you will start seeing results.

Since I focused on soil amendments and cover crops in my last issue, you may wonder why I am again preaching the benefits of nutrient rich dirt. Many readers contacted me after that article was published to complain about the lack of a bountiful vegetable harvest. The number one question was, "Should I replace my soil?"

One gardener with a bushel of practical knowledge when it comes to maintaining great soil to reap great crops is the publisher of Lamorinda Weekly, Andy Scheck. His tomatoes and zucchinis are so plentiful that he cans 20 pounds in an evening, drinking the sweet juice as he goes. I finally caught up with this busy man between videotaping the politicians, printing the latest newspaper, and, of course, puttering in his garden.

Interview with Andy Scheck

Cynthia: What is your secret to growing a great garden?

Andy: As you know, Cynthia, working the soil is the most important work you can do for your garden. We compost and maintain the compost regularly to "harvest" soil twice a year.

Cynthia: Can you explain how you compost?



Compost bin filled with chipped garden waste

Andy: When I came to California from Germany I bought a chipper for composting. Kitchen scraps, weeds, flowers (except for roses because they have thorns), leaves, and grass are composted. I water it occasionally and then let it sit for four or five months. Before I use it, I add chicken manure, Monterey beach sand, and two bags of regular gardening soil. It makes a nice mix. When it looks and feels ready, we "harvest" this new soil and spread it around the yard. I get about 24 cubic feet each time.

Cynthia: Have you always gardened, Andy?

Andy: I did a little gardening when I was living in Germany. When I was 19, I bought a piece of land to later build my house on and my uncle asked if he could use it as a garden meanwhile. He taught me to garden. We grew mainly lettuce, potatoes, and strawberries.

Cynthia: Tomatoes are one of your favorite crops and you grow ample amounts. Lamorinda isn't the best area for tomatoes, how do you do it?



Andy: First of all, as I already stated, I compost and enrich the soil twice a year. I irrigate with drip, which helps to keep down the weeds. For my tomatoes, I keep only one stem, letting the stem grow tall, breaking off any leaves that are close to the ground to keep



Wire cloth helps to keep gophers out

the plants clean and disease free. If a leaf turns brown, I cut it off. Lots of sunshine and air circulation are key to success. My gopher barrier has also been successful because gophers are smart. It's important that every corner is wired. We harvested over 200 pounds of tomatoes this season and we've been eating them from July through November. There is nothing better than this!

Cynthia: What about your giant sunflowers?

Andy: I can't take credit for the sunflowers. Last year Eric Dausman gave me some plants he had grown from seeds. I planted them and grew gigantic sunflowers. I was lucky to capture a photo of a squirrel dining on the sunflower "balcony."

Cynthia: Any final tips for our readers?

The best part of gardening is being in nature. Everyday we spend at least 20 minutes walking around the garden seeing what's new and changed. We become one with the garden. Gardening is a huge pleasure. We eat berries for breakfast, add cucumbers to our salads, eat tomatoes right off the vine, and experiment cooking zucchini in many different ways. Everything is healthy, and tastes better fresh. And I like being green, knowing we are doing our part to keep pollution at a minimum.

Cynthia: Thanks Andy for all this useful information. All gardeners enjoy sharing their bounty and we benefit from your experiences.

How does your garden grow? Follow Andy's tips and you'll be smiling this time next year.

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide on page D10



Patricia Battersby

925-330-6663

pb@patriciabattersby.com

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Top Rated Schools: Happy Valley, Stanley Intermediate, Acalanes High School



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*per Public Records



How to Create a Luxury DIY Design Project

By Ann McDonald



The Moraga dining room, featured on ivillage, includes a custom dining table, vintage re-purposed chairs, menswear upholstered seats, new lighting, smooth textured walls and custom colored paint, designed by Ann McDonald, Couture Chateau www.couturechateau.com

Photo Peter Medilek, Inc. www.petermedilek.com

When setting out to complete a transitional suburban re-design for two stylish Moraga homeowners, my design team took some color risk so the space would feel fresh. We said goodbye to beige, hello to gray.

The project, which was featured on ivillage's "16 Beautiful Fall Décor Trends 2012," encompassed several rooms. For the dining room, a neutral envelope with saturated brown walls was pulled together with a punch of gray. The 5 Stage Custom Gray Lacquer on the vintage repurposed dining chairs with blue undertones and menswear stripe upholstery shared base hues with the rug border, custom wall color and table finish so the eye read them compatibly. Three ceiling spots were designed to center on the custom table and art lighting highlighted a collection on the walls.

In conjunction with the dining room, we also tackled a lack-luster entry hall by reworking the wall texture and molding and building a custom console table from historic columns. In the master bedroom, custom architectural details, additional paint treatments, custom furniture and bedding were added to maintain the chic aesthetic upstairs.

The luxurious space absolutely sings at night.

As a designer, I believe two things: First, luxury lives in all of us. Second, everyone is capable of designing their own home beautifully; sometimes we just need encouragement.

Every project has that moment when you want to throw in the towel and retire your staple gun, but the following steps will help you walk through your own Lamorinda Luxury Project, do-it-yourself (DIY) style.

The first step? Set clear goals.

I believe luxury must answer these three questions: What do you care about? What do you value? What is your intent? For the Moraga project, the client wanted a beautiful space without too much distraction. What are your goals for the space at hand? At the beginning of any project, start with a blank slate. Remove the finish on a chair you want to repaint, clear the room, clean the space. Write down the specific things you need to do to create that blank slate. Much like applying makeup, you need to clean your face before applying more. Even if you intend to use your existing pieces, this process enables you to be precise about your intent. Without it, a design project will never be luxury. It simply won't.

Step two: Make good choices.

We sourced a vintage dealer for solid wood chairs that could be modified and refinished. With well constructed product, you can change anything.

... continued on page D8

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

MORAGA ... continued

1283 Larch Avenue, \$920,000, 5 Bdrms, 2510 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 9-27-12

36 Merrill Circle #S, \$2,173,500, 5 Bdrms, 4904 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 9-28-12;

Previous Sale: \$1,380,000, 10-26-99

3 Netherton Court, \$1,120,000, 4 Bdrms, 2552 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 10-4-12

21 Sanders Ranch Road, \$1,065,000, 3 Bdrms, 2974 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 10-4-12;

Previous Sale: \$469,000, 03-13-87

54 Shuey Drive, \$1,180,000, 4 Bdrms, 2304 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 10-3-12;

Previous Sale: \$990,000, 04-12-10

1049 Silverhill Drive, \$965,000, 4 Bdrms, 3053 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 9-27-12;

Previous Sale: \$350,000, 01-31-94

ORINDA

156 Alice Lane, \$1,384,000, 5 Bdrms, 3601 SqFt, 1990 YrBlt, 9-28-12;

Previous Sale: \$1,325,000, 03-22-01

174 Canon Drive, \$923,000, 4 Bdrms, 2112 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 10-5-12

2 Casa Vieja, \$1,550,000, 3 Bdrms, 4192 SqFt, 2004 YrBlt, 10-2-12;

Previous Sale: \$340,000, 08-01-03

173 Crestview Drive, \$928,000, 3 Bdrms, 2445 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 9-28-12

428 Dalewood Drive, \$1,600,000, 5 Bdrms, 3412 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 9-27-12;

Previous Sale: \$885,000, 07-31-92

640 Greystone Terrace, \$1,460,000, 4 Bdrms, 3372 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 9-28-12;

Previous Sale: \$1,240,000, 05-22-03

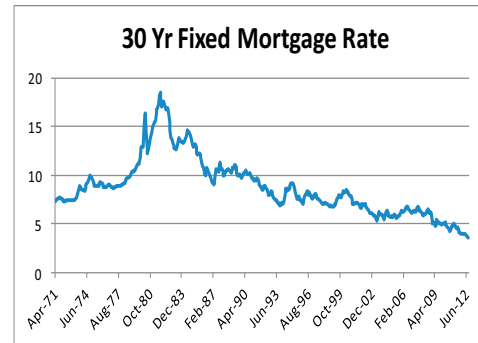
26 Knickerbocker Lane, \$680,000, 2 Bdrms, 1385 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 10-2-12;

Previous Sale: \$675,000, 11-17-11

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Moraga Neighbor Spearheads Roadside Makeover

By Cathy Dausman



From left: Rena and Dave Munson, Linda Foley, Kathy Shieman, Meridel Moulton, Linda Miller, Elaine Smit, John Moulton, Margie Mason, Jan Catalano, Kathy Flett, and Marcia Fisherkeller. Photo Al Foley

“I think I opened a Pandora’s box,” laughs Linda Foley of Moraga. If she did, it will soon be filled with daffodils, thanks to a neighborhood group calling itself the Stafford Groomers. Stafford, as in Stafford Road, which is only about 30 feet long, intersects the Lafayette Moraga Regional Trail at roughly the five mile westbound marker, connecting St. Mary’s Road and Fernwood Drive. No one lives on Stafford Road, but traffic flows regularly in and out of the adjacent Rheem Valley Manor neighborhood. Until now, it has been a dull, dry, weed-strewn landscape. Foley’s plan “to create a welcoming entry to our neighborhood” initially involved a two-hour work crew October 13. She sent e-mail requests to neighbors and members of the Moraga

Garden Club, which she is president, and more than a dozen volunteers showed up, shovels and weed whackers in hand. The group filled more than 20 bags of debris. Advanced Tree Service sent Lou Edwards to help with poison oak removal; his company will rototill the soil when conditions are favorable. Foley said Moraga’s Parks and Recreation Department will plant the “hundreds” of daffodil bulbs donated by Moraga Garden Club, giving the area “a much needed face lift.” She called the initial work-party response “inspiring, fun and rewarding.” A second work party was held October 20. Foley invites anyone who wishes to participate in additional work parties to e-mail her at lindafoley@me.com.

How to Create a Luxury DIY Design Project

... continued from page D6

Solid wood can be lacquered, refinished, repaired, repainted, rebuilt – heck, it can even be stripped and chipped.

Step three: Customize.

Your home should reflect you, not someone else. The intent is to enhance your life. Your home should be a refuge and encourager, a place of safety and order. It’s hard out there! Creating spaces that nurture us is important. It can be as simple as monogramming a favorite sham, adding trim to a pre-fab drapery panel or painting a colorful line in a groove on a piece of furniture you love. Whatever it is, make it you.

Step four: Concentrate.

What does excellence look like for your DIY project? Proper hand sanding, distressing and curing of custom finishes cannot be rushed. Write down the details and you can roadmap your professional outcome. Remember, we eat the elephant one bite at a time.

Step five: Complete.

What should your completed DIY project look like? Prepare for that completed look from the start. Honestly address realistic timelines, proper supplies and appropriate work space. I always consult clients undertaking DIY to budget three times the hours they think, purchase

all the proper supplies before starting and create a formal work space as if they were completing the job for a make-believe client. It’s all right to use your garage to refinish a piece of furniture, just treat it as a formal studio during the time it takes. Preparation means you won’t be putting anti-scratch pads on your new dining chairs as friends walk in for a dinner party! Take pride in being the strong finisher and move forward in life.

Isn’t that what life is all about anyway?



Ann McDonald is the Founder/CEO of Couture Chateau in Orinda, a luxury interior design firm. She is an associated member of the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) and the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO), and was recently quoted by Elle Decor on Luxury Now. She teaches design seminars: “How to Run your Project like a Pro” in addition to blogging on design: www.couturechateau.com.

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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for November

"...a man can do no better than to eat and drink, and find satisfaction in his work." -Solomon, Ecclesiastes 2:24

When I was writing *Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul*, we received a very sweet story from a nurse working in an eldercare facility. Penned on a napkin, she described their garden project for November - planting bulbs. Each person was given a specific task from digging the hole, taking the bulb out of the bag, putting the bulb in the hole, adding a scoop of bone meal, covering it with soil, and watering it. One gentleman who had difficulty understanding the directions was asked to just watch. At the end of the planting when everyone looked at their work they were confused as to why every bulb sat on top of the dirt when each person had done their job very carefully. They all looked to the man who was told to observe and questioned him. He retorted, "You told me to keep my eye on the bulb and I did just that!" Although the narrative didn't make it to the top 101 stories published, I always chuckle every November when I begin planting my bulbs.

- DIG bulbs now. Bulbs that do well in our area, including tulips, crocus, daffodils, are available in nurseries and garden centers. Dig the holes a little deeper and stack three bulbs with different blooming times for a longer show of color come spring. Plant naturalizing Narcissi six inches apart so that roots don't strangle each other or compete for water and nutrients.
- PLANT azaleas this month. If the weather is dry, make sure to keep the ground moist around the plants. Hanging begonias add a special splash of fall color to your patio.
- TAG trees that you'll want to cut down or prune heavily this winter. If you will use the wood for fires, make sure to dry it for at least a full year. Dried firewood produces 7,700 BTU of energy when burned, while green, wet wood produces 5,000 BTU.
- SCRATCH a limb to find out if a limb or branch is alive or dead. If it's green it's still alive.
- REDUCE the risk of infection from tick bites for you and your pets with Tanglefoot's new product, Tick Twister. This small device attaches to your keychain or pet's collar for safe and easy removal of ticks.
- FIX vent screens, broken foundation, and roof shakes and remove brush and wood piles from the perimeter of your house to deter mice and rats from building their winter abode.
- KEEP your heart healthy by including several of these fall harvest power foods in your meal planning: dark leafy greens, broccoli, pomegranate, and nuts. You'll get antioxidants, fiber, phytonutrients, plus calcium, magnesium, and potassium.
- CLEAN UP container plants before bringing them indoors for the winter.
- REPAIR garden tools and equipment before storing.
- WEED your garden once again, then, cover your yard with mulch. If you have a large space, consider contacting a local tree trimming service to ask for free wood chips. They are great at preventing weeds and making your garden look groomed.
- HARVEST sweet potatoes but don't rush. The longer they are in the ground, the sweeter they become. Wait until the leaves yellow and frost is near. Didn't plant any last year? Put them on your "must plant" for next season's healthy treats.
- SPICE up the Thanksgiving table by juicing your apples and adding seltzer water, nutmeg, and cinnamon for a tasty refresher.
- PICK your pumpkins and fairytale gourds for a November porch party.
- EXPLORE, experiment, and experience with the fall foliage in our luscious surroundings. Bring a bit of fall indoors.
- SALUTE the wild turkeys trotting through our neighborhoods. They have no clue what's cooking on November 22!
- THANKS to everyone for reading *Digging Deep*. Wishing you a Thanksgiving filled with the love of family, friends, and frivolity. Eat, drink, and be grateful for your work, play, and soil.

Happy Gardening to You!

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ASK CYNTHIA: Reader Requests

Hi Cynthia:

At least three times a week when I return from work, turkeys are trotting through our neighborhood. They don't seem to bother my yard, but some neighbors aren't so happy with them. Should I do anything to protect my plants?

Janet
Orinda



Hi Janet:

This is a trick question because you'll get a different answer depending on whom you ask. Turkeys are omnivores. They forage through the day for plants, berries, leaves, insects, reptiles, and small amphibians tending to feed most heavily a few hours after leaving their roosts in the morning and before sunset. (Their evening meal is probably what you witness when you return from work.) If you were a wheat or corn farmer, you'd probably be roasting wild turkey for Thanksgiving as well as Sunday dinners since in agriculture these gobblers can be a nuisance.

However, we live in rural Lamorinda and in my opinion, one of the main benefits is our proximity to nature and open space with the sounds and sights of both domestic and wild animals and birds. When I see the setting sun in my rearview mirror as I cross the Bay Bridge, I breathe a sigh of relief knowing that fresh air and natural beauty await me just a few miles away.

Yes, I am in the camp of enjoying the turkeys. For the past few years I've had several flocks living and dining chez moi. My front lawn is almost bug and weed free thanks to them devouring insects, grubs, seeds, and wild grasses. They keep down the hundreds of unwanted oaks, plums, and pines as they eat acorns, fallen fruit, and nuts on the hillside. Watching the toms puff, primp, and putt as they court the hens is entertaining and when the poult hatch, they gorge on my snails, slugs, grasshoppers, beetles, and other nasty insects that actually do damage my plants. I collect turkey feathers to use in floral arrangements and their fertilizer nourishes my soil and my compost pile.

My advice is to smile, get out your camera, and photograph these striking native birds knowing that they are protecting and enriching your garden and your pastoral experience. If you notice them munching your prized plants, hoot and holler and they'll run rapidly away... another terrific photo opportunity!

Wishing you double gobbles!
Happy Gardening!

Cynthia
Cynthia Brian
The Goddess Gardener

Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com
www.GoddessGardener.com
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©2012 Cynthia will answer one or two questions per issue as space allows. Email your comments or questions to
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LANDSCAPE COMPANY INC.

BLUE JAY FELDMAN
OWNER/OPERATOR

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Lamorinda's Leading Independent Real Estate Firm.



ORINDA



20 Oak Court

Fabulous views, cul-de-sac. One of the best lots in Castlegate. Premier subdivision of estate homes.

Offered at \$459,000



ORINDA



81 Van Ripper Lane

Great 4bd/ 3.5ba rancher on one of the best Orinda streets. Great price too - move right in or remodel.

Offered at \$1,250,000



ORINDA



60 Coachwood Terrace

An Estate in prime location. 5bd/4.5ba, pool/spa, apx. 6000 sq ft on apx. 6.54 acres. Fabulous stone walled gardens, many fruit trees. Reflects Orinda living at its best.

Offered at \$2,495,000



LAFAYETTE



3898 Happy Valley Road

Fab orig owner property in Happy Valley's "Golden Mile". Prime 1.5 ac w/lvl lawn, secluded patio, towering redwoods. Gorgeous vus. Restore 1948 farmhouse or build new dream hm.

Offered at \$1,295,000



ORINDA



40 Dos Osos

Incredible Orinda, San Pablo Dam, Mt. Diablo views + abundance of nature surrounds this supersized parcel bordering EBMUD land. Exceptional beauty. Once in a lifetime oppy raw land sale.

Offered at \$545,000



ORINDA



43 Canyon View Drive

One of a kind, secluded, Tahoe-like 4bd/3.5+ba hm on 1.25 ac w/views of hills & Mt. Diablo. Fruit trees abound. Stone fireplace. Updated kit/baths.

Offered at \$1,439,000



MORAGA



8 Berkshire Street

Exquisitely remodeled single level, Plan 2 in Moraga Country Club. Chef's kitchen, spa-like master bath. Beautiful setting. Former MCC Home Tour Home.

Offered at \$869,000



DANVILLE



1130 Shady Creek Place

Great location for affordable home with private large yard in great community. Close to schools, park, shopping & freeway.

Offered at \$449,000



ORINDA



50 Camino Don Miguel

Special Country Club location amidst expensive homes. Lush setting with building site knoll and towering oaks, filtered views & total privacy.

Offered at \$545,000



ORINDA



251 Monte Vista Ridge Road

Panoramic views of Briones! Outdoor living at its best with expansive terrace featuring fabulous kitchen. Romantic master retreat with spa bath. Stunning gated 5bd/4ba custom estate!

Offered at \$1,995,000



LAFAYETTE



1690 Reliez Valley Road

Fab 1+ ac ridgeline ppty w/spectacular views of Mt. Diablo etc. Paved driveway to building site w/utilities & sewer at ppty. Incl preliminary plans for 4900+ sq ft home.

Offered at \$650,000



WALNUT CREEK



1758 San Luis Road

Unique hm w/terrific priv. setting on .29ac! At end of ct is 2bd/1ba hm w/modern interior. Lg bekyd w/pool & vus of Mt. Diablo. Be creative w/non-conforming 1bd/1ba in-law apt w/sep. entrance.

Offered at \$499,000



ORINDA



73 La Espiral

Well maint. 4bd/3ba hm for easy living. Vaulted ceilings & abundance of windows. Updated baths & mod. kit. This 2825 sf hm offers "Great Room" concept, stylish decor, & quality features.

Offered at \$1,060,000



ORINDA



65 La Espiral

Updated w/beautiful custom features & amenities. Very well maintained. Majestic setting, lovely gardens, new pool + views/privacy, fully fenced. Tuscany ambiance, European flair.

Offered at \$2,195,000



LAFAYETTE



1061 Glen Court

Happy Valley Glen, one of most desirable Laf. ngrbrhds. Trad., priv. lane close to town/BART. .4ac gorgeous setting, lovely lvl yd. Charming 3 bd, lite & bright, hdwd flrs, 2nd FR/Ofc. Top rated schools.

Offered at \$1,075,000



WALNUT CREEK



1720 Orchard Lane

Original Orchard Lane Estate. 4bd/ 4.5ba + office. 4792 sq. ft. home on 1.32 acres. Updated and remodeled in 2004. Simply Fabulous! By appointment only.

Offered at \$2,350,000

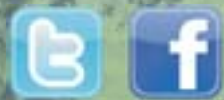
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93 Moraga Way, Suite 103 Orinda, CA 94563
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