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Orinda Tree Service to the Rescue

Submitted by Laura Shields Bronte



Lance Cowles rescues 9-month-old kitten, Bombay.

Photo provided

Mary Jo and Lance Cowles of Blue Pines Tree Service in Orinda came to the rescue March 9 after "Bombay," a 9-month-old Moraga kitten/cat had been stranded in a tree for three days. Lance Cowles

climbed over 25 feet into a very tall evergreen, using a harness, to coax and carry the cat to safety.

"Everyone said that 'cats will come down when they're good and hungry' and 'you never see cat skele-

tons in trees,' but online research indicated that cats which go without water for more than three days risk severe renal failure, and are not likely to fully recover," said owner Laura Shields Bronte. Bombay was clearly in distress and wanted to come down. Her cries were loud and very upsetting to her owners and concerned neighbors who tried everything to coax her down including putting up a platform that she would hopefully jump to.

"When I was facing the clear prospect of a fourth day with her up in the tree, my neighbors suggested calling Blue Pines Tree Service who they had located through a local cat rescue organization," said Shields Bronte. "My daughters (ages 8 and 10) and I adopted female litter-mates 'Bombay' and 'Frisky' from Tony LaRussa's Animal Rescue Foundation last summer. We are so happy and grateful to our heroes!"

Food for Thought: 'Gulp'

By Cathy Dausman



Vickie Sciacca of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center (left, in red), and Beth Girshman of the Orinda Library discuss the latest Lamorinda Reads selection: Mary Roach's "Gulp." Roach is scheduled to speak at the Lafayette Veteran's Memorial Building March 27 at 7 p.m. Photo Cathy Dausman

Warning: Do not attempt to eat while reading "Gulp" – you might end up choking back laughter. Mary Roach's latest book, the current Lamorinda Reads selection, is an in-one-end and out-the-other digestive system 'tour de farce' for the layman.

While the book cover is all smiles, it's soon strictly downhill, as Amazon's Best Science Book of 2013 begins its discourse on each piece of the alimentary canal (or "food chute," as Roach calls it), minus the small intestine.

"I just can't make the small intestine interesting," she admitted.

Roach's introduction to the subject of her latest book came in fifth grade science class by way of a "headless, limbless molded plastic torso" with "a set of removable or-

gans in full and lurid view." Later, she wrote an article which became the subject of Chapter 13 ("Dead Man's Bloat," if you must ask) and found she had "no space to do it justice," hence her latest monosyllabic title.

"It's important to shake things up," Roach said without a hint of irony in a phone conversation a week before her Lafayette appearance. She admitted she comes to her book ideas "in an inside out [sort of] way," and feels lucky to be able to pick and choose her topics.

Reading "Gulp" you'll learn that each person's chewing habits are unique, that hydrochloric acid doesn't faze mealworms (even those rescued alive from frog stomachs), that laundry detergents contain digestive tract enzymes, that humans generate three pints of saliva daily, and that said

saliva/spit cleans old paintings quite well.

In spite of the book title and chapter headings which include "Hard to Stomach," "Spit Gets a Polish" and "Stuffed," Roach cautioned "I don't like to write with puns." Not to worry – some of her expert witnesses have it covered – a chemist named Spitz, for example, or the detergent industry consultant named Grime.

Roach's previous titles offer similar offbeat science takes on the after-life, life in space, human cadavers and sexual physiology. Her audiences are happy to suggest she explore subjects such as UFOs, drugs, alcohol and the brain connection, or the lives of high-rise apartment dwellers.

While she hasn't taken up any of those suggestions, she is already at work on her next book project. "I don't want you to say 'Gulp' is gross," Roach writes in her introduction. "I want you to say 'I thought this would be gross, but it's really interesting. Okay, and maybe a little gross.'"

Roach starts her book tour for "Gulp" at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 27 at the Lafayette Veteran's Memorial Building. The program is a joint presentation of the Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda Friends of the Library groups. Print and audio copies of the book are available at Contra Costa County libraries, as well as at Orinda Books and Storyteller in Lafayette. It is available on order through Canetti's Bookshop, Orinda.

Rheem Odyssey of the Mind Team Receives Coveted Award

Submitted by Pamela Strazdas

The third grade Rheem team received the coveted OMER Award during the Odyssey of the Mind regional



Photo provided

competition March 1. Named after the Odyssey of the Mind raccoon mascot, OMER, the award is given to teams and team members who exhibit exceptional talent, outstanding sportsmanship and astounding teamwork. According to judges who nominated the team, "This wonderful team was given the wrong [Spontaneous] problem by mistake in the morning and had left the tournament. They were called and their wonderful coach brought them back to do the correct Spontaneous problem. Their response: 'Great! More Spont, more fun, more mints.' What a great team and great coach." The Rheem team is sponsored by the Moraga Rotary.



As Seen in Lamorinda ... New Blooms Celebrate Spring

March 20 marked the first day of spring. Chalk it up to last month's rain, organic fertilizer and a sunny Moraga slope, these Chihuly roses are early bloomers in Moraga. The variety is named after famous, colorful and prolific glass artist Dale Chihuly. Their subtle rainbow of yellow, apricot and red petals celebrate the season. C. Tyson



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Spring Camp:
 March 31–April 4, April 14–18

The Summer Camp:
 June 16–20, June 23–27, June 30–July 3,
 July 7–11, July 14–18, July 21–25, July 28–Aug 1,
 Aug 4–8, Aug 11–15, Aug 18–22 Aug 25–29

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.