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Wendy Scheck and furry companion Amberite recently enjoyed a midday hike on the Briones-to-Mt. Diablo Regional Trail.

Photo Andy Scheck

Walking in Sunshine

Lafayette trail maps get thoughtful upgrade just in time for spring

By Cathy Tyson

The hills are popping with poppies! Precious late-winter rains turned Lamorinda green, at least for a little while, as spring arrives in full bloom. If you're in the mood to take it all in you'll be glad to know that taking a hike just got easier, or rather, more informative,

thanks to Lafayette's trail maps project.

Looking to avoid steep hills? Then these new and improved maps are your friends – that crucial information, along with trail length, surface, terrain and parking information is now a click away via the city's website; printed maps are available at the Parks

and Recreation office at the Lafayette Community Center and other locations noted below. Updated trail maps range from the challenging, yet scenic, Walter Costa Trail (a steep, more than two-mile trek) to the much more moderate Silver Springs Trail to the flat, one-mile Hidden Oaks Trail. ... continued on page A12

Quote of the Week:

"As much as we love our sports, the arts are so important in defining and building a community." Read The Broad Shoulders of a Volunteer, page A6.

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Risky Business

By Nick Marnell

The politics and the dangers of the firefighting industry collided at the March 20 meeting of the Lafayette Emergency Services Task Force.

The initial focus of the meeting was the status of fire station 46, the proposed joint venture between the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. ConFire chief Jeff Carman, who spent most of his day involved with a three-alarm brush fire in Pittsburg, reported that he and chief Stephen Healy of MOFD were closer than they have ever been to an agreement on the station. But he needed to know the position of the task force.

"Do you get behind 46 and support it? Or, are you still going to seek detachment? I need to decide where to put our emphasis," he said. Carman did not want to present a station 46 plan to the Board of Supervisors and have it be simultaneously reported that the Lafayette task force was still looking at detachment

from ConFire.

"The chief has a point here," said Steven Falk, city manager. "If there's a risk that Lafayette will detach, why invest \$1 million?" He proposed that detachment efforts could be put on hold until Carman received an answer from his board. Co-chair Traci Reilly agreed, saying that she'd be in favor of "hitting the pause button. We're in charge of how we pace this process," she said.

Task force member Peter Clark did not agree. He said that station 46 will not be a cure-all, and that the committee should continue to explore all options for providing fire service to the city. "The ConFire model is not sustainable, with an intractable financial problem," added committee member Rich Cunningham.

As Cunningham spoke, an obviously preoccupied Carman ran across the room and ushered Falk out of the meeting. An ashen Falk returned to his seat while Carman grabbed his assistant chief and two ConFire captains and shot out of

the room. "One of our chiefs has been in an accident," said Carman.

The station 46 discussion ceased. And in one of the many ironies of the evening, Pat Frost of Contra Costa Emergency Medical Services began her presentation on the state of the county's EMS system.

ConFire captain Chris Leimpeter returned to the meeting and relayed that the injured firefighter had been rushed from Pittsburg to John Muir Hospital, where his condition was improving.

"It's the worst thing that can happen in your career," said Carman, who discussed his initial reaction to the emergency call. "It pains you ... it's an out of control feeling, for someone who is used to always being in control."

The politics of the firefighting business – as discussed by those at the task force meeting – continue to be wrought with delay and frustration. The dangers of the firefighting business – impressed upon those at the task force meeting – resulted that day in a near tragedy.

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Town News	A2 - A12
Business	A10
Life in Lamorinda	B1 - B12
Classified	B8
Not to be Missed	B10-B11
HOW TO CONTACT US	B11
Food	B12
Service Directory	B12
Sports	C1 - C3
Shop Moraga	C4
Our Homes	D1 -D12
This Week Read About:	
Eden Opens	A2
Town Center Homes	A4
Roads 2015	A6
Unplugging	B2
OAC Arts Competition	B3
OLLI in Lafayette	B5
Lamorinda Reads	B6
Lafayette Youth Arts	B7
Basketball Wrap	C1/C2

Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Jellyfish Art

Unique works by a Lafayette artist to light up your life - page B1.



Sports C1-C3

First Pitch

Baseball season's under way and Lamorinda's high school teams have their eyes on the prize - page C1.



Our Homes D1-D12

Award-Winning Wine Cave

"Let us celebrate the occasion with wine and sweet words." (Plautus) - page D1.





Lafayette Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, April 14, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Tri Cities Council Meeting

Monday, April 7, 7 p.m.
Saint Mary's College,
1928 Saint Mary's Rd., Moraga

Planning Commission

Monday, April 7, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, April 7, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

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

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, April 16, 7:30 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room at 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, April 9, 7 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
Stanley Library
3477 School St., Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

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Affordable Housing Project Opens Doors in Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson



Some of the residents of Belle Terre gather in the lobby area, from left: Property manager Leslie Bown, Evora James, Larisa Lantsova, Yuet Yuen, Nirmalui Bains and Mac Parker. Photo Andy Schreck

Demand clearly outstripped supply for the brand new low-income senior housing project on Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Belle Terre, developed by Eden Housing. Finishing touches were completed in late January and a parade of residents moved in, filling all of the 45 one-bedroom units in just under a month.

Long time homeowners in Lamorinda may be shocked at the going rates for an apartment in Lafayette. A quick look at Craigslist, a popular online classifieds service, has the least expensive two-bedroom apartment

downtown listed for \$2,100 per month. For most house hunters, especially seniors on a fixed income, that is clearly unaffordable.

There was phenomenal interest in the property, said Eden's senior project developer Woody Karp of the roughly 600 requests for housing. "It's a very, very desirable property, because it's so deeply affordable." This project is specifically designed to serve extremely low income and low income senior residents. To be categorized as a person with extremely low income, a documented income of less than 30 percent of the Contra Costa median income is required; for the low-income category the figure is 50 percent of the median income – which is calculated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Last year the county's median income was \$65,500, so a low income resident

could only qualify for one of these apartments if they made a maximum of \$32,750 per year.

All sources of income are counted, including Social Security benefits, 401K, disability and interest from bank accounts. Tenants pay rent that is calculated at one-third of their income, with the balance paid through operating subsidies which are ultimately paid by HUD vouchers, via the Contra Costa County Housing Authority.

"With budget cuts and sequestration—there are a limited number of vouchers available," said Karp. Federally funded HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.

Eleven of the 45 units were allocated by the Housing Authority from their existing waitlist; the balance of units, 34, had a separate process

through Eden Housing. There was a very simple pre-application form with basic information provided to all 600 interested parties—that group was randomly assigned lottery numbers. Lucky seniors who received numbers 1-300, and are at least 62 years old, were invited to fill out more detailed applications that documented their finances, including tax returns and evidence of income and assets, and then a criminal background check was completed along with contacting their prior landlord. Those who met all of the requirements and had a qualifying lottery number were approved.

Fair housing law prevents apartments to be selectively allocated to tenants whose population is not representative of greater Contra Costa County. While it's true that the vast majority of Lamorinda residents are Caucasian, that representation is not true of the entire county.

It was challenging to win one of these apartments and it was equally challenging to get the structure built. The project took nine years from the initial efforts of the Senior Housing Task Force which was created to help the City Council meet its goal of providing senior housing in Lafayette.

In 2008, the project was approved for very low income seniors, but securing financing wasn't easy. "After a few unsuccessful attempts to obtain state and federal funding, the project broke ground in September, 2012 and was completed in late 2013. Funding for the project comes from a number of sources, including the county and the state. The city's redevelopment agency contributed \$3.8M towards the project," said Niroop Srivatsa, Lafayette's planning and building director. ... continued on next page



Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report, March 2-16

- Alarms 6
- 911 calls 8
- Suspicious Circum. 19
- Suspicious Vehicle 14
- Suspicious Subject 15
- Commercial Burglary
Safeway, Lafayette
- Disturbing the Peace
Acalanes High School
3300 block Rowland Dr
- Drunk in Public
Lafayette P.D.
900 block Dewing Av
- DUI misdemeanor
700 block Tanglewood Dr
Carol Ln/Mt Diablo Bl
- Fireworks
Huntleigh/Somerset Dr
3100 block Acalanes Av
- Felony (other)
Safeway
- Grand Theft
3600 block Mt Diablo Bl
Lafayette Library
- Harassment
Peet's Lafayette
- Hit & Run
Ace Hardware (2)
3700 block Mt Diablo Bl
900 block Dewing Av
900 block Moraga Rd
Pleasant Hill Rd/Mt Diablo Bl
3300 block Mt Diablo Bl

- Misdemeanor (other)
Mt Diablo Bl/Oak Hill Rd
- Missing Adult
1000 block 2nd St
- Narcotics/Controlled sub
Acalanes High School
Del Rey/Del Mar
- Panhandling
Post Office
3500 block Mt Diablo Bl
- Reckless Driving
Moraga Rd/Sky Hy Dr
Mt Diablo Bl/Lafayette Cir
Pleasant Hill/Deer Hill Rds
Springhill/Pleasant Hill Rds
800 block Moraga Rd
Mt Diablo Bl/Hwy 24
- Restraining Order Violation
1100 block Upper Happy Valley Rd
- Threats
Round Up
- Trespass
Springhill Rd/Prado Wy
- Vandalism
3200 block Sweet Dr
Location not available (2)
Mt Diablo Bl/Dolores Dr
- Vehicle Theft
Lamorinda Tow
- Warrant Actions
Oak Hill/Deer Hill Rd (2)
1000 block Summit Rd
Lafayette/Mt Diablo Bl (2)

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Traffic Calming Approved in Burton Valley

By Cathy Tyson

It all started with neighbors concerned about the dangerous combination of speeders, lack of sidewalks and bike lanes and the many children who walk and bike to school every day, along with adult recreational use. Over the past year, a group of residents formed a volunteer Neighborhood Action Team to identify and evaluate concerns and consider options to tackle these issues for the Merriewood Drive and Silverado Drive areas.

Like most neighborhoods, not everyone agrees on the problem or solution, but eventually volunteers with a range of viewpoints came together to address traffic speeds. "The City's program is designed to bring differing points of view together to develop a plan with the intention that the outcome of the process will be a compromise and not result in any extreme proposals that benefit one group at the expense of another," wrote Leah Greenblat, transportation planner.

A plan that had been approved by the Neighborhood Action Team was presented to the Circulation Commission in February; while there was some disagreement among residents in attendance, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend the plan to the City Council for approval. The Level II plan that focuses on easily implementable and relatively low cost features such as striping and signage – there are no physical changes to streets – included reinforcing school crosswalks and existing speed limits with new signs and stencils, and added striping to enhance pedestrian safety at intersections.

Moving forward, the plan was presented to the City Council for final approval at its March 10 meeting; many Burton Valley residents filled the auditorium to express their concerns, some taking issue with the traffic calming process that is rather convoluted.

Some urged council members to stop the plan altogether and address clarifying the rules first. Others, like Jorge Torres, encouraged the adoption of the Level II traffic calming solution, calling it "very basic – a constructive approach." There had been some disagreement on the interpretation of rules that could have derailed the effort and sent organizers back to square one.

Gina Ney, who has been working on the effort for over a year, suggested that would be disheartening, after all of the community meetings and effort that has gone into the project thus far. In her opinion the process has been fair, "evenly split - which is why we have this compromise plan."

Ultimately, the City Council agreed. Councilmember Brandt Andersson has had the unique experience of being hit by a car going roughly 30 miles per hour. "I wouldn't recommend it," he said. He was confident there was a problem in the neighborhood and supported the recommendation to approve Level II improvements and was optimistic that Level III, a much more involved process, wouldn't be necessary.

Councilmember Mike Anderson agreed with many of the public speakers that perception of speeding is an issue. He, like many of his fellow council members, described his concern about the process and suggested that city staff re-evaluate traffic calming guidelines.

With city leaders agreeing that the changes seem reasonable and modest, the measure was approved, with added stipulations that city staff review the traffic calming process and mayor Don Tatzin volunteers to go out with the Burton Valley Elementary School bus driver to take a road test to examine the practicality of a proposed paddle sign in the middle of the street near the school entrance on Merriewood Drive.

Affordable Housing Project Opens Doors in Lafayette

... continued from page A2

"It's like heaven – really nice," said Connie Yoo who moved in to her third floor unit with husband Hanseop Yoo on Feb. 1. The couple attended an information meeting last fall and were struck by the many interested people vying for apartments—"I'm lucky," she said. They filled out all of the required paperwork and were approved and with help from family they moved the few blocks from their previous Lafayette apartment to their brand new, light filled space. "It's like a family already," she says of her neighbors. "We appreciate the government, they helped us."

New tenant Evora James couldn't be happier. She enjoys the brand new

apartment and its convenience to downtown. Although she doesn't own a car, she is able to walk to the grocery store and even BART. When the project was in the planning stages, there was some concern about adequate parking, but many of the residents don't own cars, so the underground parking area is roughly half full, with plenty of available spots for visitors.

There will be an official grand opening party with a ribbon cutting on May 16 to wrap up affordable housing week; Belle Terre is the showcase project. The mayor is expected to speak along with political luminaries. Another Eden project is under construction in Orinda.

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Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, March 26, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, April 9, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Tri Cities Council Meeting

Monday, April 7, 7 p.m.
Saint Mary's College,
1928 Saint Mary's Rd., Moraga

Planning Commission

Monday, April 7, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Monday, April 14, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

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

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District

Tuesday, April 8, 7:30 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2



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Town Center Homes: New Plan Gets Traction

By Sophie Braccini

Recent modifications made to a proposal by City Ventures to develop the vacant 2.6-acre lot that sits next to the fire station on Moraga Way may turn out to be a preview of Moraga's 21st century look, when the center of town will be completely developed under the Moraga Center Specific Plan.

The first proposal featured attached condominiums of up to three stories; a new, and unpopular, look for Moraga. Zoning allows for up to 20 units per acre in that area but after holding several meetings to gather public input, City Ventures came back with a revised plan that reduces the number of units, keeps most to two stories and includes duplexes along Country Club Drive that are more aligned with the homes across the

street. Questions about adequate parking remain the last serious concerns raised by the project's neighbors.

The Design Review Board got its first look at the new plan for City Ventures' Town Center Homes project on March 10 during a study session. The purpose was to make sure that the project conforms to the 2010 Moraga Center Specific Plan and that no major questions remain to be answered. The relatively short hearing went so well for the applicant that the next step will be the formal start of the application process that will lead to the project's construction.

The major modification to the new plan is the reduction of the number of units from 54 to 36. Running perpendicular to Moraga Way would be four rows of between four and six

clustered, two-story condominiums, some of them with a loft (a partial, 500-square-foot third story). Each of the 21 units will have a two-car garage, no driveway and a small private yard. Fifteen duplexes would face Country Club Drive, with garages accessible through the back road. Other modifications include a direct access road to Moraga Way (in the previous plan the only access to the development was from Country Club Drive), and more landscaping along Moraga Way and Country Club Drive.

"City Ventures has been doing a great job," said Moraga Country Club resident Wess Beway who went to many of the developer's public outreach meetings. He noted that the remaining concern is parking since

many people have three cars and the new proposed units include two-car garages for each home, with no driveway parking, and only 18 additional spots. "No matter what, you'll have cars parked on Country Club Drive, which is a hazard," said MCC resident Jerry Tanner.

During the meeting, members of the Design Review Board discussed options to increase parking availability on Country Club Drive and the possibility of including more variety in the facades of the homes, to create a more custom design look.

City Ventures confirmed that its next step is to incorporate the last recommendations and submit a formal application to the town for the project's construction. (Read a related article on page A9.)

Town Council Shuts Down Café Hacienda

By Sophie Braccini

Despite a passionate plea from Gayle Somers to keep her café open for another month at the Hacienda de las Flores, the Moraga Town Council decided to close the popular breakfast and lunch venue at the end of March.

What should have been a seamless transition for the Moraga chef,

from her temporary location at the Hacienda to her permanent spot on Rheem Boulevard, collided with regulatory requirements and the Parks and Recreation Department's plans to get the Hacienda ready for the busy events season.

Café Hacienda was opened last May by Somers while she awaited the completion of her new location on Rheem Boulevard. For the town, it was a pilot project to attract more mid-week visitors to the Hacienda. The Town Council created a subcommittee last fall, which included the Hacienda Foundation, the Moraga Park Foundation, the café operator and Parks and Recreation director Jay Ingram, to guide the future of the onsite café.

The subcommittee met four times with mediator Maura Wolf from the Leadership Center at Saint Mary's



Photo Cathy Dausman

College. "We took a two-prong approach, asking 'what's the big picture?' and 'how does the café fit into that?'" Wolf explained.

Somers hoped to become the sole user of the kitchen. Under the current agreement with the town, every Friday afternoon Somers dismantles her

operations in the kitchen and transports her food in the cold units located in the nearby Casita.

"The Hacienda is used for weddings, classes and different local groups; we could not give Gayle the exclusive use of the kitchen," said Ingram. ... continued on next page



Moraga Police Department

Driving too fast with little brother, 3/15/14 A 17-year-old driver was pulled over for going 52 mph in a 35 mph zone on Moraga Road near Corliss with her little brother in the car. It became a family affair when mom came to rescue the 10-year-old and dad and the teenaged driver agreed for her to enter the Juvenile Diversion Program, which allows young first offenders to learn from their mistakes.

Purse Stolen 3/15/14 A woman left her purse in her unlocked car on Donald Drive near the Hacienda and was gone for approximately 15 minutes. Much to her surprise, upon return to the vehicle, the handbag along with wallet and credit cards had magically disappeared. Loss estimated to be \$500.

Where are my keys? 3/14/14 There was a party on Friday night at a Moraga Road home and on Saturday morning a key ring had vanished. The key's owner checked with roommates and party attendees, but she was unable to locate it. Be on the lookout for a key ring with one car key, a pink flip flop dangle along with a "2011" dangle.

Coupon conundrum, 3/14/14 An individual attempted to purchase a high volume of items with the use of coupons. The buyer believed restricting his access to items was against company policy because he was buying the items in support of a charitable organization. The manager informed the buyer that he didn't want him to clear out the inventory of the item. The manager felt that the would-be buyer may have obtained the coupons fraudulently, especially when he became irate and threatening. Officers advised the fellow he would be subject to arrest if he

returned. The coupon holder said he'd sue, then left the property without incident.

Dog issue, 3/14/14 There was an off-leash dog at a Donald Drive residence. A fellow was walking by with his dog on a leash and was approached by the off-leash dog. The walker advised the homeowner of leash laws and requested he keep his dog on a leash; the homeowner allegedly became agitated and verbally abusive towards him and followed him on foot as he left. The dog walker was concerned for his safety and the safety of his dog due to the confrontation. Both parties were advised of the report and the incident was forwarded to Contra Costa Animal Services.

Tree vandalism, 3/11/14 An azalea tree had been pulled from the front yard of a Del Monte home sometime during the day by an unknown suspect. The victim noticed the damage to his landscaping at around 3 p.m. Total amount of loss is estimated at \$150.

In addition, the following incidents were reported between March 10 and March 17:

Lost/stolen property

Archer Court

Traffic Incident

Moraga Road

Making annoying phone calls

Camino Pablo

False Alarms

Teodora Court, Moraga Way, Arroyo Drive, Del Rio Way, Camino Pablo, Park Street, La Quinta

Suspicious Circumstances

Dolores Court

Outside Warrant

Country Club Drive

Deceased Person

Carr Drive

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Sign Ordinance: Community Input Still Needed

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Planning Commission conducted a study session with the community March 17 regarding the town's sign ordinance. The Chamber of Commerce was present, as well as diverse business owners who want to be able to increase their visibility within the boundary of the rules. By law, the town cannot regulate signs by content but only by zoning district, type and temporality. More public input is needed. Additional study sessions are tentatively scheduled for April 14 and April 23. The April 14 study session would be a joint meeting with the Design Review Board and the Planning Commission. The April 23 study session would be with the Town Council. "Our intent is to bring the sign ordinance back to the Planning Commission for hearing in May," said Ella Samonsky, associate planner. Check the town's website for additional information, moraga.ca.us.

New Cross Graces the Hill



Photo from Saint Mary's College video footage

A new redwood cross was installed March 19 on the hill above Saint Mary's College to replace the previous one that fell right before Christmas. The new cross is the same size as its predecessor and is the third since 1940. Brother Christopher Donnelly says that the new cross was made from the heart of a Eureka redwood tree and should last longer than the previous fir cross. *S. Braccini*

Town Council Shuts Down Café Hacienda

... continued from page A4

"That was the basis for the committee's recommendation to close the café at the end of the month," said Claire Roth, former president of the Hacienda Foundation.

Somers agreed to leave, but then she bumped into one regulatory hurdle after another, including new ADA compliance regulations that went into effect Jan. 1 and needing to re-apply

for a fire district permit that had expired after six months.

During the Town Council meeting March 19 Ingram explained that the hardwood floors have to be refinished so the Hacienda will be ready for the events season that is a big revenue source for his department. "I do not see how Gayle could be operating a restaurant as the work is done."

The Town Council ruled to close Café Hacienda on March 31. "Maybe some local churches could house you while your construction is completed," suggested Councilmember David Trotter. Somers confirmed that she is seeking another temporary space so she can keep her team employed.

More Moraga Civic News on Page A8

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This is a 1937 charmer with a guest house! It features 2 BR and 1 1/2 BA in the main home on a 1/4 acre with lots of fruit trees and a view of Mt. Diablo. Easy walk to downtown and BART, great commute location as well. Cute little kitchen and original hardwood floors. Quaint little guest studio is nicely updated. **Offered at \$850,000 by Tina Van Arsdale 925-640-2355.**
CalBRE#01259271

653 Augusta Drive, Moraga

NEW LISTING



Perfect Location! MCC "Gem" with all the Club Amenities and then some! 3+bd/Bonus Room 2.5 bath, formal dining, hardwood floors, 2 enclosed patios, breakfast nook and vaulted ceilings. All just steps away from fun in the sun--golf, tennis, & swim. The largest end unit lot in Club! A Must See! **Offered at \$775,000 by Monica Clarke 925.297.7289.**
CalBRE#01221955

50 Ascot Place, Moraga

NEW LISTING



Living on top of the world. This level-in condo behaves like a single-family home with 2 BR, 2 BA and a den. It also has vaulted ceilings and remodeled kitchen and views from most every room. Fantastic indoor/outdoor entertaining in a prime Cul-da-sac location. Steps from the Mulholland Ridge trail. **Offered at \$550,000 by Larry Jacobs 925.788.1362 and Kress Hauri 925.899.5739.**
CalBRE#01495118/01465617

2740 Ptamigan, Rossmore


NEW LISTING



This sought-after Kentfield condo with two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a den has tons of extra living space. Most of the balcony has been seamlessly enclosed while a small open balcony remains. The spacious living room has serene views from almost every window. **Offered at \$448,000 by Elizabeth Haslam 925.899.5097 and Ann Cantrell 925.639.7970.**
CalBRE#01494942/01058289

1523 Ashwood Drive, Martinez

NEW LISTING



A lovely townhouse in Martinez with 2 master suites and 2.5 BA in 1317 sf. This home is nicely updated throughout with dual pane windows, HVAC, laminate floors, beautiful kitchen and baths. It has a large living/dining area, private back patio and greenbelt view. Also includes 2 covered carports and lots of storage. **Offered at \$330,000 by Tina Van Arsdale 925-640-2355.**
CalBRE#01259271

114 Lance Court, Martinez

PENDING



This Wisteria home is on a small court of newer homes built in 2000. It is a spacious 3 BR 2 BA home with over 2100sq ft. Its large kitchen opens to the breakfast and family rooms. The dining room and living room are perfect for adult gatherings. The sunny backyard is just right for both kids and a garden. **Call Adam Hamalian for price 925.708.5630.**
CalBRE#01917597

TIP OF THE WEEK

Real estate cycles run 7 – 12 years. The last peak for Contra Costa County was in July 2007 and the valley followed in 2009. We saw a recovery last year and prices here have increased dramatically. They could peak again this year, or sometime within the next 5 years, but we don't know if they will. They could also drop to another low as soon as 2016.

If you're timing the market, this could be the best time to sell! Springtime is usually the best selling season. Our inventory is still less than demand, interest rates are still attractive, and we are still getting multiple offers on most listings, so why wait?

Call us with any questions you have about the local market. We are happy to help you determine what course of action is best for you!

Meet our Featured Agents ...



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CalBRE#01221955



Adam Hamalian
925.708.5630

adam.hamalian@bhghome.com
CalBRE#01917597



Tania DeGroot
510.367.1422

tania.degroot@bhghome.com
CalBRE # 01094898



Jim Colhoun
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Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, April 8, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Tri Cities Council Meeting

Monday, April 7, 7 p.m.
Saint Mary's College,
1928 Saint Mary's Rd., Moraga

Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 8, 7 p.m.
Founder's Auditorium, Community Center
28 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, April 9, 6:30 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
22 Orinda Way

Check online for agendas, meeting
notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

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

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District

Monday, April 14, 6 p.m.
OUSD Office, Vintage Building
25 Orinda Way, Suite 200
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

State of the City

For those who cannot attend today's State of the City address, Mayor Sue Severson will deliver a second address at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 27 in the Orinda Library Auditorium. This program is free to the public and no RSVP is necessary.



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report, March 2-16

Alarms	47
911 calls	11
Suspicious Person	12
Suspicious Circum.	10
Suspicious Vehicle	32
Death (unknown cause)	
100 block Ravenhill Rd	
Domestic Disturbance	
Fish Ranch Road/Hwy 24	
Greenwood Ct	
Disturbing the Peace	
10 block, La Madronal	
Drug Possession	
Camino Pablo/Santa Maria Wy	
DUI Misdemeanor	
Pleasant Hill Rd/Amino Dr	
Hwy 24/St Stephen's Dr	
Camino Pablo/Hwy 24	
End of Bryant	
Drunk in Public	
Theatre Square	
Brookwood Rd/Moraga Wy	
Moraga Wy/Southwaite	
60 block Donna Maria	
Grand Theft	
100 block Amber Valley Dr	
Reckless Driving	
Moraga Wy/Glorietta Bl	
Wells Fargo, Orinda	
Camino Pablo/Brookwood Rd	
Restraining Order Violation	
10 block Dos Posos	
Vandalism	
400 block Camino Sobrante	
Warrant Actions	
70 block Rheem Bl	
10 block Dolores Wy	
40 block Cedar Tr	
100 block Moraga Wy	
Hwy 24/St Stephens Dr	



Coming Soon!

Open House— Sat & Sun March 29th & 30th, 1-4.

Beautiful sunlight and serene views of Orinda's rolling hills are seen from this lovely 2 bedroom, 2 and a half bath townhome. Renovations include updated bathrooms, kitchen appliances and window treatments. Enjoy soaring living room ceilings, stunning views, a charming courtyard for indoor/outdoor living, a formal dining room, ample closets and storage, a 2-car garage plus all Orindawoods amenities including a BART shuttle.

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Orinda City Leaders Pave Way for 2015 Road Improvements

By Laurie Snyder

In consultation with city staff, following a review of Orinda's most recent StreetSaver assessments, the Orinda Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission recently recommended its list of roads to be repaired under the Fiscal Year 2015 Pavement Reconstruction Project. That list was given to the Orinda City Council at its March 18 meeting, along with the CIOC's annual report regarding commission activities and "the state of Orinda's roads; the on-going pavement management program; the Measure L Sales Tax" and "remaining infrastructure issues still facing the City of Orinda."

Four parts of two roads will receive help in 2015: St. Stephen's from the north side of the Highway 24 overpass to La Espiral and Overhill Road from Westwood to Highland

courts, from Westwood to Moraga Way and Highland to Broadview Terrace. "St. Stephen's needs a lot of help; that's a big project," said Chuck Swanson, public works director. The thoroughfare missed past lists because the city was faced with the choice of fixing the largest number of streets possible or expending limited funds on just one big road. The current projected cost of more than \$1 million for the four-segment repair is likely to change as engineering estimates are refined.

Funded through Gas Tax and Contra Costa County Sales Tax Return to Source funds (formerly labeled "Measure J funds"), the pavement reconstruction project fixes base failures and rebuilds arterials, collectors and school routes – streets in Orinda with the highest traffic volume. Staff

typically do as much preventive maintenance as possible with the funds allowed to be used for this purpose.

The annual CIOC report was prepared by Richard Nelson and Darlene Gee, and presented by Dennis Fay. "The key focus of the CIOC efforts in 2013 was related to developing policies and selection criteria for using the Measure L Sales Tax dollars ... The CIOC also selected initial road segments to be repaired in 2014 with the Measure L funds" and reviewed a "drainage facility maintenance ordinance and planned drainage studies" in order to "further incorporate drainage considerations into future repairs once more data is available in 2014."

Fay noted that the number of very poor or poor arterial and collector seg-

ments was reduced from 43 in April 2009 to just 19 as of Dec. 31, 2012. CIOC members now project that Orinda will finish those repairs by 2018 without using Measure L funds. Those dollars can, therefore, be used residentially. This is vital since more than 130 residential segments are now classified as very poor.

Following deliberation, the City Council unanimously approved the 2015 pavement reconstruction project list and authorized staff to begin preparing contract plans, specifications and engineering estimates. In addition to bringing its annual report back to the City Council at a future meeting, the CIOC will present the list of roads to be repaired under Measure L sometime in April.

The Broad Shoulders of a Volunteer

Susan Garell Named Orinda's 2014 Citizen of the Year

By Laurie Snyder



Susan Garell

Photo Ohlen Alexander

A Harvard-trained MBA who is intelligent, graceful and deeply supportive of the arts – but occasionally goofy. A skilled communicator, "power texter," and energetic, highly organized, strategic planner – who also knows how to have fun and is genuinely kind. There were kudos and adjectives aplenty in the air in Orinda on Friday, March 14, and the love was all flowing in one direction – toward Susan Garell, co-president of the Orinda Arts Council and Orinda's 2014 Citizen of the Year.

Co-sponsored by the Orinda Rotary and Contra Costa Times, the 67th annual celebration of community volunteerism and civic engagement began with a social gathering during which impressions of Garell were exchanged freely among attendees before opening remarks were offered by Rotary president, Sue Breedlove; Times editor, Sam Richards; and master of ceremonies, Richard Westin, executive director of the Orinda Community Foundation. Contra Costa County Supervisor Candace Anderson personally presented an impressive proclamation

– as did Orinda Mayor Sue Severson, City Council Member Victoria Smith, and representatives from state and federal government offices.

But the evening will be most remembered by those present for the touching tributes by the children and adults of Orinda who have benefitted from arts programs that have flourished under Garell's guidance. Lamorinda Idols, Arriana and Kiera Glenn, sang Josh Groban's, "You Raise Me Up" before longtime arts advocate, Myrna Witt, spoke of Garell's sincerity and gift for listening as well as seeing. Witt added that Garell is known for driving out the devil from "the devil in the details," and said, "Susan always ends her emails with 'Best to You,'" – and means it.

"As much as we love our sports," observed Anderson, "the arts are so important in defining and building a community." Garell, she noted, helped shepherd OAC through its lean years to recruit a full board of directors and become an even more vibrant, effective organization.

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Story Poles Site of Future Bank on Orinda Way



Story poles at 25 Orinda Way.

Ohlen Alexander

The City of Orinda's Planning Commission recently held a public hearing to consider commercial use permit applications, architectural design, and other matters related to the proposed construction by property owner Hooshang Hadjian of a new 4,100 square foot building for a Chase Bank with retail space on the 20,473 square foot lot at 25A Orinda Way. "While four of

the six commission members present at the March 11 meeting indicated support for the proposed bank use on the site, no formal action was taken," said Emmanuel Ursu, Orinda's planning director. Commissioners "expressed concern with several aspects of the proposed site layout including the inefficient parking design and the relationship of the proposal to surrounding public and private spaces," he added. Additionally, the commission is currently in transition as two members begin new terms while two others depart. The commission will take up the matter again at a future meeting, according to Ursu, when Callison Architects will present, in a workshop format, site plan and building design options to address the concerns that were raised. *L. Snyder*

More Orinda Civic News on Page A8

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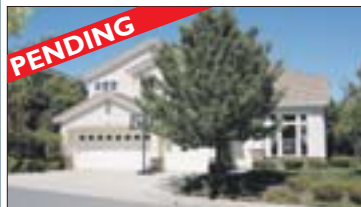
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ORINDA \$6,300,000
 4/4.2. Rare opportunity to buy newer estate plus two adjacent lots. Gated, wine cellar, gorgeous grounds w/pool & more!
 Elena Hood CalBRE#01221247



LAFAYETTE \$1,199,000
 4/3.1. Resort-Style Living! Sprawling lot w/privacy, pool, fire pit, outdoor Kit., water features and much more!
 Dave Rivera & Sheila Small CalBRE#1705345/01415221



PLEASANT HILL \$984,900
 4/3. Rare, 2962 SqFt on big lot w/ bedroom & full bath on main lvl. Big bonus room upstairs.
 Jeannette Bettencourt CalBRE#01154506



LAFAYETTE \$849,000
 3/2. This is one you've been waiting for. Move in ready. Lafayette schools, minutes to BART and freeways.
 Lana Fitzpatrick CalBRE# 01805218

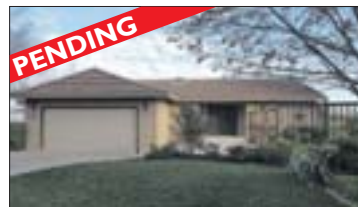


LAFAYETTE \$739,000
 4/4. Two houses on one lot. Charming 2BR/2BA single story plus two story 2BR/2BA 2 story.
 Rick & Nancy Booth CalBRE#01341390/01388020

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MORAGA \$2,750,000
 4+/4. Executive home, 4837 sqft, 1.54 acre private lot, gourmet kitchen, guest house, wine cellar.
 Elena Hood CalBRE#01221247



MORAGA \$1,189,000
 4/3. Striking Contemporary. Views abound in this 2 level on a cul-de-sac.
 The Holcenberg's CalBRE#01373412/00637795



ORINDA \$2,095,000
 4/4. New construction! Gorgeous view, nice lg yard, quality materials. Cul-de-sac loc. www.orindaos.com
 The Beaubelle Group CalBRE#00678426



ORINDA \$2,175,900
 4+/3. New construction. Gorgeous views, close to town. More pics/info at OrindaOaks.com.
 The Beaubelle Group CalBRE#00678426



MORAGA \$1,288,000
 3/2. Lovely one story contemporary with great views. Lrg rear patio, great for entertaining.
 Jerry Wendt CalBRE#00178259



LAFAYETTE \$1,250,000
 5/2.5. Lovely larger home. End of cul de sac. Private setting. Close to school, Club. Must see!
 Susan Schlicher CalBRE#01395579



PLEASANT HILL \$979,000
 5/2.5. Gorgeous Executive home in golf course community. Views of Reliez Valley & Mt. Diablo
 Jeannette Bettencourt CalBRE#01154506



ORINDA \$1,300,000
 4/3. The best of the past is present in this updated Cape Cod gem w/ 4BD/3BA, 2489 sf & views.
 Patti Camras CalBRE#01156248



ORINDA \$1,495,000
 4/3.5. Sunny oasis. Remodeled throughout. Pool, spa w/large deck & lawn for play. Bonus inlaw suite.
 Laura Abrams CalBRE#01272382



ORINDA \$2,100,000
 3/3. New construction. Gorgeous views, close to town. More pics/info at OrindaOaks.com.
 The Beaubelle Group CalBRE#00678426



LAFAYETTE \$998,000
 4/2. Gracious home offering a tranquil setting w/lush gardens. Many upgrades throughout.
 Kathy McCann CalBRE#00946092



LAFAYETTE \$1,255,000
 3/3. Spectacular Mid-Century Modern in Zen-like Setting. Designed for Enjoyment & Relaxation!
 Soraya Golesorkhi CalBRE# 01771736



ALAMO \$4,900,000
 5/4.3. Gated custom home on Private Knoll with unparalleled outstanding views and features!
 McCann/O'Donnell CalBRE#00946092/01916567



ORINDA \$1,798,000
 4/3.5. Orinda Downs Luxury through and through. Private deck w/hot tub off Mstr.
 Vlatka Bathgate CalBRE#01390784



ALAMO \$1,695,000
 5/4. Bright, spacious estate home in gated community. Stunning backyard with pool and spa.
 Holt/Geoffrion CalBRE#00827803/01878803



OAKLAND \$1,100,000
 3/3. Stunning contemporary townhome w/sweeping views of SF and the Bay. Exquisite interior features.
 Linda Van Drent CalBRE#01051129



MORAGA \$1,195,000
 4/2.5. Updated 1-Story Rancher. Open, remodeled, kitchen, hwd floors, lvl yard, workshop, Campolindo area.
 The Holcenberg's CalBRE#01373412/00637795

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Contemporary Art in Downtown Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



Jennifer Perlmutter in her studio.

Photo Sophie Braccini

Jennifer Perlmutter paints. Standing in front of a large 48 inch by 60 inch frame, armed with a big brush, she applies strokes of color on the canvas; it is a very physical process, a dance between her, the thick paint and the image that forms. The process is long, weeks, months; and layer upon layer, the vision that transcends the painter materializes as fine art. Perlmutter invites people to come and see her work. The young Lafayette resident opened an art gallery in February, located at 3620 Mt. Diablo Blvd. – in the back of the gallery is the studio where she paints and teaches.

“When we moved back to northern California, and Lafayette, five years ago, I started working in a studio in Berkeley,” says the artist, “then I realized that my son was growing up in the community, but not me; that was weird.” She left the Berkeley studio and looked for a large enough space to work in Lafayette. When she found the place on Mt. Diablo Boulevard (where the Soccer Post used to be), she knew she’d found her new home. “At first I was just looking for a place to paint, but here I have both, an artist-run gallery and a studio,” says Perlmutter.

The gallery is luminous with white walls and Perlmutter’s large,

feathered out and now I’m craving a lot of brush strokes.” As an artist she wants to push herself and when something becomes too familiar and comfortable, she has to start exploring something else.

Perlmutter also invites other artists to her gallery to display their work for a few weeks. “There is no reason that people should have to go to San Francisco to find quality art,” she says.

She is planning to invite artists around a specific theme. Poetry reading with Amy Glynn and an exhibit of Shelly Hamalian’s photography will be combined in the gallery on April 19. From June 7 to July 19, the gallery will feature painter Carol Aust and sculptor Laura van Duren. “The exhibit will explore home, belonging and our place within it all,” says Perlmutter. “We’ll display figurative oils and interactive installations of sculpture.”

Perlmutter also teaches in her Lafayette studio, mostly individual lessons for now but she may offer group classes in the future. “Most of what I know, I learned through my work,” she says.

Perlmutter studied communication in college, with a specialty in television and film production, and went to work in the film industry in Los Angeles. There she discovered that she had a talent working with her hands and started making props, then furniture. “Maybe it comes from my German ancestry, but I first saw art as something that had to be useful,” she says with a smile. As her confidence developed so did her ability as a painter. “I am very fortunate that there are forces outside of myself that are coming through me to create,” she says, “so I get out of the way so my muse can express itself.” She does not think that she is in control; she might have a vision of where she is going, but has to pay attention to what it is telling to her as she creates.

For more information about events and classes go to www.jenniferperlmuttergallery.com.

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

abstract, mixed media pieces immediately attract attention. “I owe gratitude to my community because when I told my friends last October that I had rented this place, they all started to come out and help,” she remembers. There was not a day that she came to the studio and did not have help scrubbing the floors, painting the walls, and choosing the lighting system – the biggest investment, but a must in an art gallery. She describes it as “a barn-raising project!” On Feb. 1 she opened the gallery doors and celebrated with a party for everyone.

In the gallery, Perlmutter shows her own work and that of guest artists. Different periods of her maturation as a painter are recognizable. “I’m working in series,” she explains. “A series can be 10 to 12 paintings, and it’s only complete when it evolves into something else.”

On the wall hang very large and much smaller pieces of non-figurative mixed media. Her vision is bold and warm, with a palette of colors that is bright but not shrill. There is also a series of landscapes; smaller, more figurative, but as seen through a dream. A large green and blue painting with brush strokes does not incorporate any collage. “This is a new series I am starting,” she says, “before, everything was softened and

business briefs

Passionate About Our Roots: MY Genealogy Services 3752 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 193, Lafayette (510) 381-2975, www.mygenealogyservices.com

MY Genealogy Services is a new full-service genealogy company offering family research, document retrieval, and family trees suitable for framing. MY Genealogy Services is collaboration between Karla Henderlong and Madeline Yanov, who have more than 30 years of combined experience in researching family histories. Their geographical area of expertise is Europe, Russia and the United States.

Lamorinda Massage Envy to Open in Moraga 558 Center Street, Moraga (925) 376-3689

A new franchise of the 12-year-old Massage Envy Spa is getting ready to open its doors in Moraga. The Massage Envy group employs 21,000 licensed massage therapists nationwide—it is the largest network of massage and spa franchises with more than 950 locations. The business model is making massage services more affordable with a membership-based structure. There are about 50 locations in the Bay Area, with the closest in Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill. The opening of the new franchise is set for April in the Rheem Shopping Center.

Lafayette Resident to Head Kaiser Service Area

Dr. Ken Grullon of Lafayette has been chosen as the new co-physician-in-chief of Kaiser Permanente’s Diablo Service Area. Grullon replaces obstetrician/gynecologist Dr. David Niver who retired last month from Kaiser Permanente after nearly 35 years of service. Grullon will serve alongside surgeon Judy Lively, overseeing a team of more than 800 Kaiser Permanente physicians in central and east Contra Costa County and the tri-valley area of Alameda County.

Moraga Employee of the Month



From left: Nora Avelar, Rotary president; Chief Bob Priebe; Lieutenant Jeff Price, Moraga Employee of the Month; Kevin Reneau, Chamber of Commerce president.

Photo provided

Lieutenant Jeff Price was named the Moraga Employee of the Month for March, as announced by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club of Moraga. Price began work with the department in October of 1981 and is scheduled to retire this month after a distinguished career. In addition to patrol duties, Price has trained almost 45 new officers. “Jeff has been instrumental in our effort to keep Moraga safe over the years and he deserves a lot of credit for his fine service,” said Moraga Police Chief Bob Priebe. “His work history has been exemplary in all facets and his retirement will be a huge void for our department.” Price received a gift card to Safeway and a gift certificate to the Golden Palace restaurant at the Moraga Rotary luncheon held March 18.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

Young Professionals Meet-Up from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 26 at the Round-Up Saloon in Lafayette, for 21- to 39-year-old professionals. The Young Professionals group from the Lafayette Chamber promotes professional development, intellectual discussion and fun. Go to www.meetup.com/Young-Professionals-Group-Lafayette-CA for more information and to join the group.

Ribbon cutting ceremony for new chamber member, Caroline’s Salon, at 5 p.m. Thursday, March 27, 33 Lafayette Circle in La Fiesta Square.

Chamber mixer at Byron Park from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 9, 1700 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek.

Moraga

Shred event from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 29, next to 5A Rent A Space. \$5 per banker box benefits local AAUW Tech Trek grant sending middle school girls to tech summer camp.

Orinda

Orinda Trivia Bee sponsored by the Chamber and the Orinda Rotary Club at 5:30 p.m. Friday, April 25, at the Orinda Masonic Lodge, 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda. Entry fee is \$360 per team, dinner included (up to six people per team). For more information call Candy Kattenburg at (925) 254-3909. To reserve and pay your team entry fee online go to the chamber’s website, Orindachamber.org.

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

Civic News Moraga

Traffic Committee No More

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Town Council did a bit of spring cleaning at its March 12 meeting. After closing the café that has been operating temporarily at the Hacienda de las Flores, council members said goodbye to the Traffic and Safety Advisory Committee.

Former TSAC chair John Valentine could not convince the Town Council of the need for this public forum for two main reasons—town staff wanted to see the committee sunset, and Valentine is virtually the only volunteer, with a possible second, for the five seats on the committee. The Town Council also did not support the idea of a pedestrian and bicycle committee proposed by staff.

In his presentation of the topic Edric Kwan, town engineer and public works director, told council mem-

bers that traffic issues brought up by residents could be handled by him and the police chief, and they did not need TSAC anymore.

Robert Priebe, chief of police, said that TSAC was nice to have but that there might be some burnout among volunteers in town. He added that there were fewer requests from residents now than in years past and that there was more and better staff capable of handling the issues that are raised.

The Town Council acknowledged the good work of TSAC and particularly the development of the calming guide that will remain the guideline for traffic issues. Councilmember Mike Metcalf believed there was a need for the committee, but he was outvoted 4 to 1 and TSAC was dissolved.

Moraga’s Citizen of the Year Nominations

Nominations are being accepted for Moraga’s Citizen of the Year. The designated outstanding citizen will be honored with a banquet event on Friday, May 2 at the Soda Center of Saint Mary’s College.

Nominations with detailed information concerning the individual’s community activity may be addressed to Wendy Scheck, associate publisher, Lamorinda Weekly, at P.O. Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94556, or by email to wendy@lamorindaweekly.com.

Sponsors for Moraga’s Citizen of the Year event are Lamorinda Sun, Saint Mary’s College, Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga Chamber of Commerce and Kiwanis of Moraga Valley.

Civic News Orinda

Out Smarting Criminals with Technology

Orindans now have another weapon in their anti-crime arsenal – Nixle. Orinda’s new police chief, Mark Nagel, recently announced that the Orinda Police Department is joining Lafayette and Moraga in partnering with the breaking news messaging system to enhance public safety across Lamorinda, and strongly encouraged residents to sign up for the “opt-in communication service.”

Explaining that Nixle enables OPD “to instantly notify citizens via text and email of road closures, police activity, wanted subjects, missing persons,” accidents, construction detours, and other events impacting the

safety of Orindans, Nagel added, “This is another way for our department to stay in contact and inform the community of incidents that may require their attention.”

Once a resident opts in, Nixle’s technology uses that resident’s location to send relevant alerts. With customized subscriptions, each user dictates how much information to receive – and by what method: email, online via login to the Nixle website, or by SMS/text message (which will incur standard text messaging charges). Go to <http://local.nixle.com/city/ca/orinda>.

L. Snyder

Glazer’s Assembly Campaign Officially Opens



Steve Glazer at the opening event Photo Ohlen Alexander

It’s official. Steve Glazer is actively running for election to the California Assembly. The current vice mayor and two-time former mayor officially opened his campaign headquarters at 23 Orinda Way during a reception March 16. Attendees included elected officials, business leaders and residents from Orinda, Lafayette, Moraga, and beyond. Re-elected to his third Orinda City Council term in 2012, Glazer hopes to replace California Assembly Member Joan Buchanan, who is terming out as the representative for the 16th District covering Lamorinda, Pleasanton, Dublin, Livermore, and portions of the 680-corridor and Walnut Creek. Other candidates in the 2014 race include: Newell Arnerich, Tim Sbranti and Catharine Baker. For more information, visit the California Secretary of State’s website: www.sos.ca.gov. L. Snyder



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But They'll Certainly Be Well Protected

By Nick Marnell

Station 41 captain Anthony Perry, on behalf of the nearly two dozen firefighters standing behind him, sent the board a message regarding the labor negotiations at the March 19 meeting of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District.

"We're not here to impede your meeting," said Perry, one of the district's Local 1230 representatives. "We've had some positive things occur and it's clear evidence that both sides are working hard on a solution. We hope that an agreement can be reached soon." The district declared an impasse in the negotiations in January, but one month later accepted the union's request to enter into mediation. Vince Wells, the union president, had publicly expressed his gratitude and the presence of the rank and file seemed to endorse his position. The firefighters stayed until the end of the meeting and contributed during public discussion of the main agenda item.

Real estate developer City Ventures, Inc., has proposed a 36-unit townhome project to the Town of Moraga, to be constructed on a site adjacent to MOFD station 41. Fire

chief Stephen Healy presented the latest update on the project: that the developer agreed to construct a sound wall along the property line shared with the district in an attempt to minimize noise for the residents.

The first to object was director Fred Weil. He lambasted the idea that the sound wall will provide noise protection. He predicted that the development's proposed hiking trail will impede the ability of the district to reconstruct station 41. And he demanded that residents be warned of the fact that fire service training will be going on at all hours on MOFD property. "The fire district was there first," he said. "I will not agree to further degrade that site. It's the wrong place to put (the development), and I would like the board to tell the council that it's the wrong place to put it."

Director Kathleen Famulener offered that constructing a children's playground adjacent to the district's training facility was a terrible idea. "We need to fight now to have it built on the other end of the development," she said. "The first 3-year-old who cries because he's afraid of the chain saw noise, we're going to lose."

"We could no longer flow water during our training," added Perry. "Since water can shoot several hundred feet, we would no longer be able to use our hoses by the playground."

All of these objections can be stated in the covenants, conditions and restrictions of the homeowners' association, said director Steve Anderson: "There's a fire station next to you, and there's going to be a lot of smoke and a lot of noise." Board president John Wyro agreed that the compatibility issues need to be addressed, and the board authorized Healy to present the district's concerns to the Moraga Planning Commission in late April.

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors Meetings

Next meetings:

Wednesday, April 16
check website for updates

(Go to www.mofd.org as the meeting date approaches for location and more information)

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ConFire's Quest for Additional Revenue

By Nick Marnell

When the final draft of the Fitch Report was presented to the Board of Supervisors in February, the document offered no ideas for revenue generation for the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District. The report focused mainly on how the struggling district could improve its service model. "As a fire chief, I've looked for revenue sources for 40 years and found none that were sustainable or reliable," said Jim Broman, the Fitch consultant who made the presentation.

ConFire chief Jeff Carman did not accept that message. He recently outlined his ideas for securing additional revenue for the district, his first notion being the implementation of a first responder fee, a fee-for-service program that he proposed to the Board of Supervisors at its March 11 meeting.

A portion of your property tax bill has traditionally been allocated to fire departments to protect just that - property. But fire districts have expanded their service models over the years to include medical calls, technical rescue operations, hazardous materials responses and the like. As long as times were good, there were no issues providing these and other services.

Times are no longer so good, acknowledged Carman, and revenue needs to increase; at least, to offset the expenses of responding to these non-property protection incidents. "We have to find a way to stabilize our revenue streams, so that is my main pri-

ority for the district while I am here," he said.

Carman's proposal will enable ConFire to collect a first responder fee for the assessment and treatment of medical patients at the scene. At \$416 per incident, to be billed to insurance companies, Carman expects the district will generate over \$1 million per year. The insurance companies benefit, he said, because it will cost them less in the long run to have quality care provided early in a medical emergency. Under a similar, but not identical, program, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District budgeted more than \$1 million in ambulance fee revenue this fiscal year.

The Board of Supervisors agreed in principle with Carman's proposal, but supervisors Federal Glover and John Gioia asked Carman to perform more due diligence on its implementation. "We want to be sure we are not violating our responsibilities to the California Welfare and Institutions Code," said Gioia, referring to the county's duty to provide health care services to indigent and dependent poor persons and those otherwise incapacitated.

Other ideas Carman discussed included using the ConFire training division to generate revenue. He explained that the cost of running the division could be offset by allowing colleges and other organizations to use the training facility to provide high level fire service education. "We are fortunate enough to have a facility

like we do, and many of our neighbors do not," he said. "We could host training classes at our facility and invite our neighbors. They can attend classes close to home, we collect tuition costs and it is a win/win for all."

The chief envisioned a similar situation involving his maintenance facility, providing repair work for neighboring agencies that do not have their own shop. "If we determine we have extra capacity in our shop, we could contract with those neighboring agencies to bring their equipment to us," said Carman. "It would save them travel time and money, and it could support our fleet maintenance program." He also threw out the possibility of performing mobile repairs on other agencies' apparatus, potential for yet more revenue.

"With our areas of expertise and specialty, including our communication center and radio service programs, we can provide a better and more economical service to our co-operators," said Carman. "We all win!" Other than for the first responder fee program, he did not estimate revenue figures.

First comes internal house cleaning, though. ConFire's lead mechanic retired in February, and the district is considering an organizational change in the fleet maintenance division. Lewis Broschard was recently promoted to assistant chief of support services, and one of his first goals is to improve the performance of the district's communications center.

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Community Service

National Charity League Class of 2014

Submitted by Peggy Dillon



Photo Juleen Lapporte

The Lamorinda Chapter of the National Charity League celebrated the graduating class of 2014 March 9 at the 23rd annual Senior Presents at the Claremont Hotel and Spa. The young women were honored for their dedication to the values of leadership development, cultural enrichment and service to the community. During the past six years these seniors volunteered over 3,500 hours at 32 different non-profit organizations, including Mt. Diablo Center for Adult Day Health Care, Monument Crisis Center, Loaves and Fishes, Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano and Special Olympics. The students represent Miramonte, Acalanes, Campolindo, Carondelet and Bentley high schools. Their final act of philanthropy as a group was a

donation to the American Cancer Society in honor of Joyce Burke and family members and friends in their brave battle against breast cancer. The co-chairs for the gala were Erika Odell and Amy Ruegg. Top row standing, from left: Claire Marvin, Julia Nishioki, Lauren Petite, Olivia Biesel, Hannah Friel, Kyra Ruegg, Margaret Odell, Mica Zimmerman, Abigail Brzezinski, Grace Moran, Allison Nichols, Gabrielle Cirelli, and Makenzie Huguet; middle row, seated: Hannah Durant, Katie Adams, Allison Miller, Sierra Ryder, Jenna Schmitz, Samantha Garcia, and Caroline Colwell; front row, seated: Jennifer Leserman, Colleen Burke, Mallory Faldt, Helena Valvur, Clare Varellas, and Bailey Moran.

St. P Student Outreach Helps Others

Submitted by Theresa Maloney



Photo provided

Students Wil Schueler, Dylan Duque, Bennett Winter, and Alexis Lovelace recently participated in the St. Perpetua Jr. High Out-

reach Program, in which they planned, prepared and served a dinner for approximately 90 people at the North Concord Shelter.

Local Real Estate Agents Give Back During 'Day of Service'

Submitted by Janine Hunt



Top row, from left: Ruth Eddy, Paul Hunt, Larry Jacobs, Kress Hauri, Regina Englehart, Janine Hunt, Teresa Ramirez, Maureen Caldwell-Meurer, Monica Clarke, Tanya Degroot, and John Fazel; bottom: Brook Forkas, Lisa Shaffer, Tina Van Arsdale, and Mariah Bradford-Usher. Photo provided

This year the local Orinda office of Better Homes and Gardens/Mason-McDuffie Real Estate worked in conjunction with Moraga Parks and Recreation to provide a wonderful morning's worth of work as part of its annual 'day of service.' With the goal of providing manual labor to make an impact and a real difference, the group spent a lovely morning staining and preserving all of the exercise stations, benches and posts along the trail, beginning at Moraga Commons. "The thing that made the biggest impression on all of us agents were the number of appreciative runners, walkers, cy-

clists and playing families using the trail," said Janine Hunt. "Thank you for keeping our trail beautiful" and "Thank you for being volunteers" were a couple of the many accolades we received and it kept us going all morning." The group appreciates giving back so much that this year they are seeking additional volunteer opportunities, working with Las Trampas, Orinda Senior Village, the Rotary and their "Home Team" and the Orinda Chamber of Commerce. Look for their green and white T-shirts throughout the Lamorinda area as they make a difference in the community.

Poll Trust Grant Helps Expand Adult Day Program Facilities

Submitted by Beth Montgomery



Lamorinda Adult Respite Care's expanded program room

Photo provided

Lamorinda Adult Respite Care (LARC) hosted a reception March 16 to dedicate its expanded space to Earnest and Lola Poll – longtime Orinda residents who established a trust to benefit programs serving Orinda seniors with chronic illnesses. Originally from Hungary, the Polls moved to Orinda in 1949, opening Village Cleaners and becoming deeply involved in the community. Earnest passed away in 1982; Lola in 1987.

Trustee Erik Anderson of the Earnest and Lola Poll Trust presented LARC with an \$84,500 grant to expand and remodel its facilities located at Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church in Orinda. The grant enabled LARC to double the size of its program space in order to serve more local families. LARC is a non-profit, state-licensed, social adult day program for those with

Alzheimer's and other related dementias. The program began in 1997 as a grassroots effort to help a fellow Holy Shepherd church member caring for her Alzheimer's stricken husband in her home. Through private donations, fundraisers and countless volunteer hours, the support of the church and 'word of mouth' advertising, LARC has grown to be a valuable community resource for the hundreds of families in the Lamorinda area who care for ailing loved ones; the program offers respite for caregivers by providing exemplary care and stimulating activities for their loved ones. It is among the very few licensed adult-day programs in California that receives no public funding.

For information about LARC programs and services, visit www.holyshepherd.org or call (925) 254-3465.

Moraga Rotary Guests Enjoy a 'Nite at the Races'

Submitted by Gary Irwin



Four Monte Vista Interact Club members help at the Moraga Rotary "A Nite at the Races."

More than 185 celebrants enjoyed the Rotary Club of Moraga's 12th Annual "A Nite at the Races," March 15 at the Holy Trinity Hall in Moraga. The Interact Club of Monte Vista High School and the Rotaract Club of Saint Mary's College (both Rotary service club affiliates) served the dinner to earn money as their own fundraiser. Moragans Joe and Linda Fitzgerald held the lucky six of hearts to win a weekend stay at the Stanford Court Hotel in San Francisco. Moraga Rotary will use the proceeds from this event to fund their many community and international service projects such as scholarship donations to both Saint Mary's College and Campolindo High School, weekly newsmagazines to elementary students in Moraga, 11 Odyssey of the Mind teams from Moraga, the Employee of the Month program (with the Chamber of Commerce), Christmas stocking donations to inmates at Juvenile Hall, and helping fund the final push to eradicate the disease of polio from the world. Rotary Club of

Moraga is a local service club within Rotary International that meets most Tuesdays at noon at Saint Mary's College. For information, call Frank May of Moraga Rotary at (925) 376-8195.



Moragans Joe and Linda Fitzgerald are happy they won a two-night stay at the Stanford Court Hotel in San Francisco at "A Nite at the Races." Photo provided

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.

MEF Soiree Supports Moraga Schools

Submitted by Diana Obrand



The March 6 MEF Soiree benefited local school programs. Photo provided

Community members, teachers, staff and parents came together March 6 to delight in the sights and sounds of Moraga's K-12 students. The MEF Soiree, organized by MEF community relations chair Shanette Westphal, highlighted the key people and programs that make the five Moraga public schools special places to learn and grow. From woodshop to choir, video production to science, MEF donations support many of the programs that students attribute as the reason they look forward to school each day.

"Music is very important to me – I can't imagine a day without singing,

playing the piano or just listening to my favorite songs. Having choir first period gets my day started on the right note," stated one ninth-grade Campolindo student.

Highlights from the evening included a performance from the fourth grade choir, a French presentation from Ed Willy's class adapted from "Romeo and Juliet," and a drama presentation. Student representatives from woodshop and photography were proud to show their work from their respective classes. Other displays included: K-8 art, video production, science, library, and K-5 computers.



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Remembrances



Grace M. Hyde

Dec. 19, 1919 – March 2, 2014

Born at home in Rensselaer, NY, Grace was the second youngest of four children of Ethel and Ray Hyde. Always a bright academic, Grace attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, earning a B.S. degree in 1941, a M.S. degree in 1942, and ultimately a M.D. in 1948. Remarkably, Grace was one of only 17 women in her medical school graduating class of 125. Before entering medical school, she also worked for two years as a bacteriologist at the Upjohn Company in Kalamazoo, Mich.

In 1948, Grace moved west for an internship at Highland Hospital in Oakland. While at Highland, Grace met fellow intern Gerhard Hencky and they married in 1949. In the same year, she secured a residency in pathology at Highland and that would mark the beginning of her 40 year career as a pathologist, all at Highland. In the mid-1950s, Grace gave birth to her two children and continued to work at Highland while raising her children. When her children were older, Grace even took on an additional job as a cytologist and often could be found late at night in her den, hunched over her microscope.

Grace and Gerhard divorced in 1976 and she never looked back, buying a small home for herself in the Orinda hills and working happily until she was 70 years old. Retirement did not slow her down either; Grace stayed active by taking aerobics classes at the Orinda Community Center, sewing costumes and line-dancing with the Moraga Movers, taking upholstery classes in Pleasant Hill, becoming a member of the Golden Gate Chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers, and working in her garden. In the latter, she was almost always accompanied by her dogs. Grace was a true dog-lover and particularly fond of golden retrievers and black labs. Over the years, she enjoyed the company of at least 10 dogs and supported a number of rescue organizations.

Grace was a good listener and generous mother, a kind and loyal friend, a proudly independent woman, and an individual of the utmost integrity. She was also a fighter, battling numerous health problems over the last several years while still retaining her quick wit and wonderful sense of humor.

Grace is survived by her children Sharran Rodd and Alan Hencky, and grandchildren Chris, Rachel, Nathan, and Afton. A celebration of her life was held in Orinda on Saturday, March 22. If you have any additional remembrances you would like to share with the family, please email to henckfamily@comcast.net or call (510) 338-3975. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to Furry Friends Rescue, P.O. Box 7270, Fremont 94527.

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.

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From Front Page

Walking in Sunshine

... continued from page A1

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Parks, Trails & Rec. Dept: 925.284.2233

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Lafayette Trail Types

- Lafayette Trail
- EBMUD Trail
- EBRPD Trail
- Lamorinda Loop Trail
- Lafayette Parks
- Public Open Space

Lafayette Municipal Code Chapter 8.22 contains a complete listing of the rules, regulations and restrictions applicable to all Lafayette trails. Violations will be subject to citations and fines.

Revised Oct 2013

Both the rigorous Rim and lower trail maps of the Lafayette Reservoir, along with the East Bay Regional Park District's map of the Lafayette-Moraga Trail, can also be found on the website.

Active residents have Lafayette's trails subcommittee to thank along with whiz kid intern Emily "Chippie" Kislik. Looking for someone with a technical and mapping background, the subcommittee figured UC Berkeley might be a great resource – there they found Kislik, who recently graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from Cal's College of Natural Resources and is now a contractor at NASA's Applied Science DEVELOP Program at the Ames Research Center.

"Her impressive knowledge of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) was used to update several city maps including the City of Lafayette Trails Master Plan Map, a comprehensive recreational trails map and several individual trail maps," said Jennifer Russell, Parks Trails and Recreation director. "Chippie is all about earth science and she brought passion and dedication to her map-

ping project."

Upgrading Lafayette's many trails maps took over a year and required a dedicated team effort from the many volunteers on the Parks Trails and Recreation committee, staff and of course the clever intern. Each tri-fold map includes a clear topographical map with elevations marked, rules and restrictions, emergency contact phone numbers and lovely photographs from the trail. Namesake trails include a photo of the local luminary – in the case of the Walter Costa and Petar Jakovina trails, photos were provided by the Lafayette Historical Society.

With this free resource available to all, longtime Park Trails and Recreation member and avid hiker Allison Hill hopes more residents will enjoy the great outdoors. She points out that there have been no incidents on hiking trails and that even when crossing paths with fellow hikers, a rare occurrence, folks sharing the trails are generally very friendly.

When the Petar Jakovina trail was dedicated, Hill was in attendance and described him as "such a gentleman – he took us all to lunch afterward," at

Petar's, of course.

Most of the trails are on private property that the city has an easement over, which is good for property owners, explained Hill. Especially when damage occurs, such as the recent slide due to heavy rains at the Moraga-Lafayette border, in which case the cities split the cost of repairs.

With nature's local bounty beckoning, and helpful maps to guide the way, it's time to grab some comfortable shoes and help celebrate spring. For hikers looking for company the Lafayette Hiking Group welcomes all; for information about their roughly bi-monthly hikes in the area go to lafayettehiking@comcast.net. New maps and the hiking group's scheduled walks may be found on the city website at www.lovelafayette.com, go to Parks and Recreation, then Trails; maps can also be found at the Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, the city offices at 3675 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, #210 or at the Chamber of Commerce, 100 Lafayette Circle, suite 103.

Interested in Participating in Government? Supervisor Candace Andersen is Seeking Volunteers for County Advisory Boards

Applications are currently being accepted from residents of District 2, which includes Lamorinda, for seats on the following boards: Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board, Aviation Advisory Committee, In Home Support Services Public Authority Advisory Committee, Mental Health Commission. For more information about each board go to <http://contra.napanet.net/maddybook>. For an application, go to <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/6433>.

Submit stories and story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Jellyfish Artist Is All About Preserving Their Magic

By Chris Lavin



Alison Klippel creates lights made with jellyfish that have died naturally.

Photos Chris Lavin

Lafayette artist Alison Klippel doesn't believe in killing a single jellyfish, even in the name of art. "All our jellyfish live natural lives," she said. "Some people tell me they tried to keep jellyfish as pets but

they would only live for about six months. There's something wrong. They have much longer life spans than that." Using jellyfish raised in enormous saltwater tanks by her extended

family on Maui, Klippel creates magical looking lights, reminiscent of the lava lamps of yesteryear. Smaller versions are used as paperweights.

"Everything is done by hand," Klippel said during a visit to her Pleasant Hill Pilates studio. (She also teaches.) After the jellyfish dies, someone on Maui scoops it up from the bottom of the tank and ships it to her. They don't all reach Klippel intact. "They're very delicate," she said. "The tentacles can break ... they're mostly all water."

Mostly Klippel uses moon jellies, a variety that lives near the ocean surface. But she also uses black, deep-water jellies, tiger jellies, and more.

Once a jellyfish dies, it is frozen, "to preserve its shape." On some, Klippel might use a colored dye. Then she makes a clay mold by hand, puts in the jellyfish, then pours a resin into the mold. The jellyfishes' ultimate preservation could be attributed to NASA, the space agency that brought us Velcro, "memory foam," and handheld vacuum cleaners. "The resin was designed for the space shuttle program," Klippel said. "You can't have

Life in LAMORINDA

glass windows on a space shuttle."

When the resin dries, Klippel chips off the mold to see what she's got. Often, it's "voila!" and a beautiful jellyfish appears to swim in perpetuity, amid what looks like air bubbles. "But the bubbles aren't air," Klippel says. "They're actually nitrogen bubbles given off by the jellyfish itself." The specimens look beautiful on their own, but Klippel prefers to set them on one of three stands she uses, including a seven-light LED stand that changes colors. "They allow the light to pass through the jellyfish." And when the light is turned off, it's another "voila," because the jellyfish will glow in the dark.

While Klippel's specimens live natural lives, it would be a stretch to call them "happy." For 600 million years, jellyfish have lived as plankton live, floating with the tides and cur-

rents. They don't have brains. They don't even really have sex. "The female lays her eggs and the male fertilizes them in the water," Klippel said. Kind of like trout. Or salmon. She has no idea how many generations of jellyfish they have raised, but it's probably hundreds.

Something about Klippel's creations is mesmerizing. From her small paperweights of just a few inches to her larger ones that reach about a foot tall, they seem to float, a passenger riding a tide. They seem to glide and puff while they ... think.

Klippel sometimes receives notes from people who have her jellyfish. "They'll say 'I'm meditating to my jellyfish,' or 'I'm having wine with my jellyfish!'" she said. "I love getting those notes."

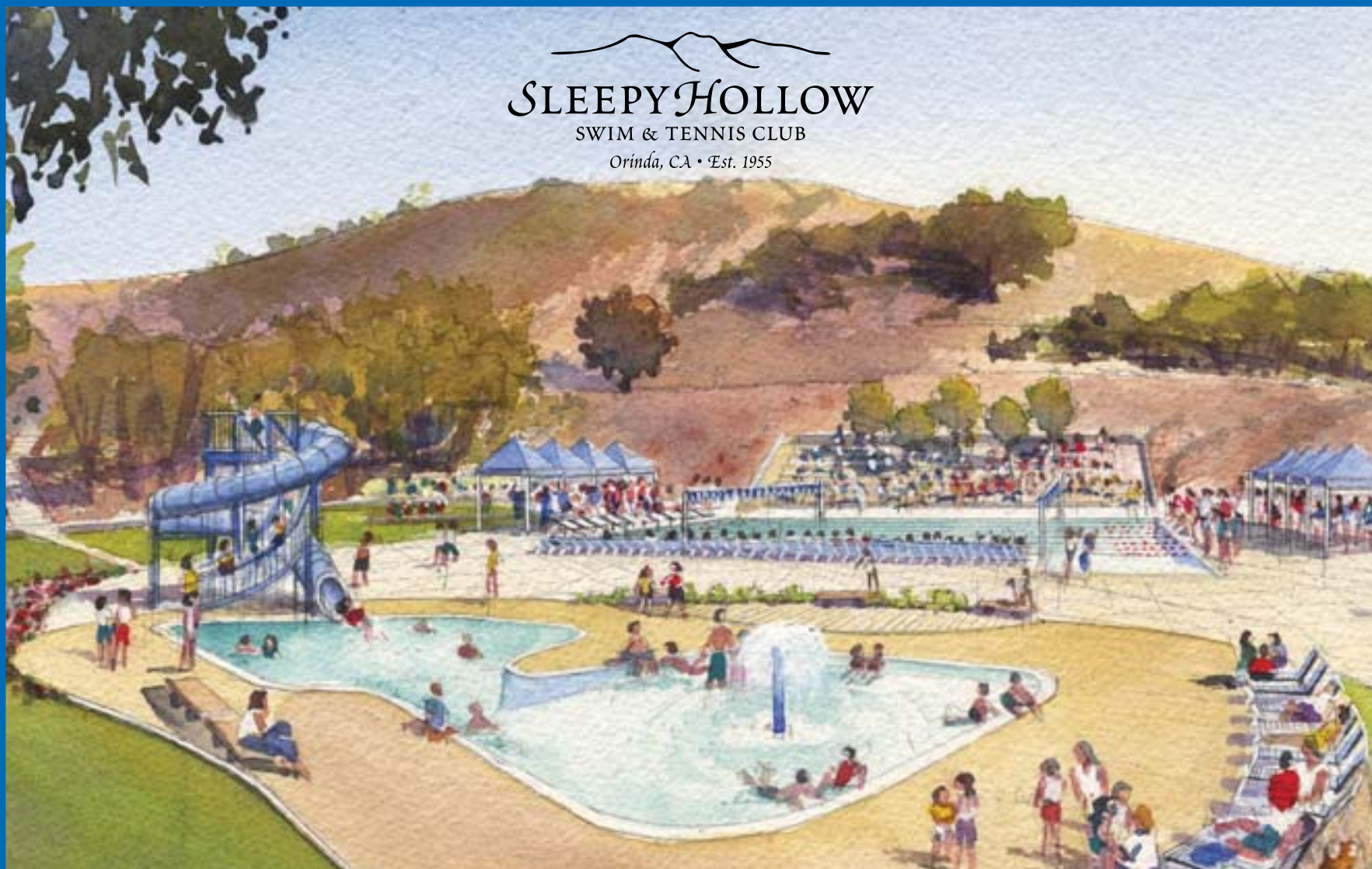
Klippel's creations can be seen at www.raphaeloriginals.com.



Even after the lights go out, Klippel's jellyfish glow in the dark.

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Unplugging

New novel delves into the potential slippery slope of the digital dark side

By Lou Fancher



Photo provided

Technology is too much with us. I'd die without my phone.

The competing love/hate thoughts are universal. Voiced by millions, echoed by Lamorinda residents during a recent, unscientific survey and captured quasi-fictionally by Bay Area author Dave Eggers in his 2013 release, "The Circle" (Knopf), the Internet's push and pull are well-trod terrain.

Unsurprisingly, the subject springs to refreshed life in the snarky, dextrous hands of Eggers, whose award-winning novels frequently unravel the ragged overlap of utopian and dystopian states. Set in the always-online world of the Circle, an initially benevolent big baby Internet company birthed in the wake of Facebook, Google, Instagram and others, Mae Holland is a young, customer service hire. Initially star-struck by the company's gymnasium, food emporium and famous rock stars on the lawn, Mae becomes enamored with numbers.

Soon enough, she's counting the Circle's "zinging" and "smiling" in her direction and promoting surveillance with "SeeChange" cameras and "ChildTrack" chips. She even swallows a smoothie-smothered chip and gains access through a spangly wristband to the minutiae of her body's BMI, blood counts, and an EKG, "shooting right like blue lightning and then starting over." There's an inevitability to the narrative, even when her path is repeatedly speed-bumped by Kalden, a mysterious co-worker who urges Mae to "rein in" the Circle's "very hungry, very evil empire." Gradually, her parents, her ex-husband and even Annie, the BFF who brought her into the Circle's fold, collapse from the digital connectedness.

Failing to recognize how the Circle has become more like a noose, Mae decides "not knowing" is the fear ripping her apart. "It was exasperating, really, Mae thought, not knowing. It was an affront, a deprivation, to herself and to the world," Eggers writes.

Although heavy-handed in a way his previous "A Hologram for the King" was not, "The Circle" is mostly fun/scary, like a ride on a colossal playground swing. The mix of polemic, stomach-churning plunges into the digital dark side and weightless suspension while summarizing humanity's inhumanity, occasionally teeters into scolding, but leaves a thrilling aftertaste. In the end, the novel's pleasures come from Eggers' fascinating, quirky demi-characters (Mae is too dim-bulbed to be admired) and the way he nails contemporary society to the wall while positioning the reader to enjoy delicious, "I told you so" superiority.

Eggers' book also makes the broader point that the Internet won't save us – it might even kill us. And if it doesn't literally lead us to suicide as it did Mercer, Mae's ex and a digital deviant who propels himself off a cliff rather than be tracked, it surely dilutes our uniqueness. So why are we so addicted to something positioned to become a totalitarian nightmare? Why do we risk losing individuality by feeding our lives through a Playdoh-like extruder that reduces us to perfectly-matched "1's" and "0's"? Perhaps it is because the Internet is not the first landscape for mankind's tendency to pair radical rapture with capitalistic ambition. Maybe we're merely revolving in an eternal pattern, albeit one with attractive, new toys.

On March 7, this year's National Day of Unplugging, opinions about technology and its pervasiveness from folks in Lamorinda ran the gamut.

"I have a basket and all the cell phones go in it before a family dinner," said Bryan Murphy of Lafayette. With three boys to raise, he instituted a "no game consoles during the week" rule and said the best way to

prevent a battle over technology is to never let it start. "I don't check email for days," Murphy said. "My friends have to come find me."

Wendy Dunn juggles a variety of volunteer activities and said her phone frees her from a home computer and keeps her on track. When her kids were young, she missed out on family time when getting work done meant being at a desk. "I still meet with people face-to-face and this helps me," she said, holding up her smartphone.

Moraga's Ramey Stevens said she's so tied to her phone it's become like a part of her anatomy. "One day, I left my phone at home. During an appointment, I actually looked at my hand to see what time it was. Like this," she said, upturning her palm as if holding an invisible phone. Ironically, being connected – even on vacation – and handling the avalanche of daily emails she receives as a person in sales makes Stevens feel "untethered."

A group of teens from Campo offered an eclectic mix of responses to the question, "Do you unplug?"

"I put my phone on 'do not disturb' while doing homework, but that's it," 16-year-old Michael Wright said.

"I can't unplug," Garrett Felix, 17, confessed. "I only did it once and yeah, I got stuff done. If I had to unplug? I'd sleep or eat to fill the time – or go to swim practice, I guess."

Michael Peterson, 17, said technology is advancing, not reducing, his social skills. "I'm actually communicating more, even if I'm texting and not talking."

Ryan Shaw, 16, provided a retro profile, in contrast to his millennial generation friends. "On Sunday, my family unplugs. I'm not on the phone. We talk about the week, play sports, read, get food and share it. I'm away from the world. I like it."

And so, Eggers had it right: use technology – just don't fall in love with it.

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Clever Musical Comedy Comes to THT March 30

Submitted by Arron Schuler



Photo Sue Ellen Nelsen

Rita the Cow (Diane Kehrig, left), Jack (Liam Gaard, center), and Lucy the Goose (Caroline Schneider, right) embark on a musical adventure in the East Bay Children's Theatre production of "Jack and the Beanstalk and the Giant, and the Goose, and the Really, Truly-Uly Rotten Day" – an upbeat, clever comedy with Broadway-style songs written by the Bay Area's most prolific creator of new musicals, Ron Lytle, and directed by Sue Ellen Nelsen that will be shown at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 30 at Town Hall Theatre in Lafayette. Tickets: \$12; purchase online at www.EBCOnline.org.

Student Artists Wow at 2014 Visual Arts Competition

By Laurie Snyder



Recognized for their excellence in creativity and originality, content, and degree of expertise displayed during the 2014 Orinda Visual Arts Competition were, from left (back): Jane Fessenden, Miramonte High School, 2nd place, 2D category for "Cinco de Mayo"; Anna Fenske, Campolindo High School, 2nd place, photography for "Surface Markings"; Will Gittings, Miramonte, Honorable Mention, 3D category for "Nature's Music"; and front: Saarah Slechta, Campolindo, 1st place, photography for self-portrait; Emily LaRoche, Bentley Upper School, Best in Show for untitled. Photos Ohlen Alexander

Nearly \$2,400 was awarded to 22 artists during the 2014 Orinda Visual Arts Competition, sponsored by the Orinda Arts Council (OAC). But as any of the winning student artists will tell you, the true prize is the

opportunity to have their work shown in a professional space – the Orinda Library Art Gallery. "The professionals have a three-year waiting period. That's how far booked in advance this gallery is," said OAC co-president,

Lawrence Kohl, at the March 12 VAC reception. Judges reviewed more than 210 submissions for this competition, which was chaired again by OAC member, Natalie Wheeler. Those works will continue sparking wonder through March 27.

This year's Best in Show/Viewer's Choice Award was claimed by Emily LaRoche, who combined paint and wax paper to create a mixed media collage which evokes the ways in which the status quo masks human individuality. "I was thinking of calling it *Lost in Formation*," said LaRoche of the initially untitled work. Women, she explained, are often "so edited to fit societal expectations that their true selves are lost." The 11th grader from Bentley Upper School first attracted attention last year when another of her works, *Welcome Home to Paradise*, was chosen as the winner from the 11th Congressional District in the U.S. Congressional Art Competition. That digital inkjet print from silver-gelatin image scan went on to hang in the U.S. Capitol building, and has inspired other students to submit their works for consideration this year. For more information about the federal competition, contact Adrienne Ursino in Congressman George Miller's office: (925) 602-1880.



Las Lomas High School junior, Lauren Fitterer, was awarded an Honorable Mention in the 2D category for her work, "thoughts."



More reason to smile for Emily LaRoche. A 2013 U.S. Congressional Art Competition Winner (11th District), LaRoche's latest dazzler was judged Best in Show by the public at the 2014 Orinda Visual Arts Competition



"One of the great High School Visual Arts Comp works at Orinda Library," Tweeted the Orinda Arts Council March 7 about this untitled piece by Campolindo High 12th grader, Ashley Bernardo.

2014 Visual Arts Competition Winners

Best in Show – Viewers' Choice Award

Untitled, Emily LaRoche – Bentley Upper School, 11th Grade

2D

- 1st Place *Meat Shop*, Courtney Daum – Campolindo High School, 12th Grade
- 2nd Place *Cinco De Mayo*, Jane Fessenden – Miramonte High School, 12th Grade
- 3rd Place *Untitled*, Arianna Ninh – Acalanes High School, 11th Grade
- Honorable Mentions: *Untitled*, Haley Marx (Miramonte, 12th Grade); *False African Violet*, Margot Mai (Miramonte, 12th Grade); *thoughts*, Lauren Fitterer (Las Lomas, 11th Grade)

3D

- 1st Place *Brown Boots*, Katrina Salinas – Acalanes, 12th Grade
- 2nd Place *Untitled*, Gavin Rock – Campolindo, 11th Grade
- 3rd Place *Memento moire*, Daniell McCann – Acalanes, 12th Grade
- Honorable Mentions: *Slinky Dog*, Mariah Brown (Campolindo, 9th Grade); *Nature's Music*, Will Gittings (Miramonte, 11th Grade); *The Key to the Future*, Misaki Kobayashi (Miramonte, 10th Grade)

Photography and Digital Design

- 1st Place *Self Portrait*, Saarah Slechta – Campolindo, 12th Grade
- 2nd Place *Surface Markings*, Anna Fenske – Campolindo, 12th Grade
- 3rd Place *Melancholic Dreams*, Shahong Lee – Bentley Upper, 11th Grade
- Honorable Mentions: *Cogita*, Jonathan Rowland (Campolindo, 12th Grade); *Yellow Jacket*, Santi Cabrera (Campolindo, 10th Grade); *Freedom In Her Eyes*, Hanna Schoenberger (Campolindo, 12th Grade); *Pensive*, Hannah Berger (Campolindo, 11th Grade); *The Water Cycle*, Sophia Spitulnik (Miramonte, 11th Grade)

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Campo Finishes on Top at California State Academic Decathlon

Moraga high school named East County Region 2014 Academic Decathlon Champion fourth year in a row

By Jennifer Wake



Campolindo High School Red Team with Coach Paul Verbanszky

Photo provided

The Campolindo High School Red Team, after winning the 2014 East County Region Academic Decathlon for the fourth year in a row, represented Contra Costa County at the California State Academic Decathlon last weekend and placed in the top 10 overall, winning the title of medium-sized school state champions to represent California at the national competition.

Directed by the Contra Costa County Office of Education and with the assistance of community volunteers, the county's Academic Decathlon provides an opportunity for high school students to compete as individuals and teams in a series of 10 academic tests and demonstrations. The curriculum includes art, economics, language and literature, mathematics, music, science, essay, interview, speech (prepared and impromptu), and the Super Quiz. Approximately 170 participating high school students have been studying and preparing for this event with their coaches since September.

"Uma Gaffney received a perfect score in the art competition and received a gold medal!" said Paul Verbanszky, proud Aca Deca coach and Campolindo teacher. "Marina Han received a silver in language and literature and a silver in essay. Tristan Caro and Christoph Steefel each received a bronze in science, while Sarada Symonds received a silver in art and gold in language and literature. Vikram Bhaduri re-

ceived a bronze in interview."

Acalanes High School was invited to join the state competition this year as an at-large team in Division 2, "so two Lamorinda schools were representing Contra Costa County," Verbanszky said. Acalanes placed 22nd at the state competition with Daylon Srinivasan, Iris Wang, and Karen Ma each taking home individual awards.

Acalanes High School placed (a very close) second at the regional competition, and the Campolindo Blue team, third.

"Four years ago was the first time Campo made it to state in almost a decade and we ranked toward the bottom of 65 teams. The following year we gained more success and moved up a bit. Then last year we started bottom third (40 something) and not only received most improved team (ending at 26 in the state) but also won the medium-sized school championship," said Verbanszky. "This allowed us to go to nationals where we won nationals. There is a huge banner in our gym and the Moraga Town Council honored us with a proclamation last May."

High school teams are made up of nine students, grades 9-12, with a maximum of three students in each of the following divisions: Honors (3.75-4.00 GPA), Scholastic (3.00-3.74 GPA) and Varsity (2.99 GPA and below). "It makes for an amazing mix of students because they are not all 4.0 students

and bring various skill sets to the team," said Verbanszky.

"Almost all the members on the [Campolindo Red] team have been part of the 'glory years' of Aca Deca since freshmen year and are, unfortunately, graduating," he added. Zach Scherer (class of 2014) has been at state four times now. Tristan Caro (class of 14) and Uma Gaffney (class of 2016) have done an exceptional job as captains. Other members include Vikram Bhaduri, Christoph Steefel, Sarada Symonds, Marina Han, Graham Wade, and Samuel MacAdam.

"I am honored to coach these fine young scholars, who have worked with me countless hours outside of the regular school schedule and have dedicated so much energy to represent Campolindo, Contra Costa, and Nor Cal well at this competition," Verbanszky said. "The Campolindo community is incredibly supportive ... In a time when funding to education is cut, it is great to see how a community comes together to support programs such as this one. I know that I would not be able to have such a successful after school club and compete with Los Angeles schools that have it as a class without the generous support."

The Academic Decathlon national championships will be held April 24-26 in Hawaii. The Campolindo Red Team will compete online. For information, visit www.academicdecathlon.org.

Edy Schwartz Honored By Contra Costa Commission for Women

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Derek Zemrak, Edy Schwartz, Leonard Pirkle, Supervisor Candace Andersen
Photo Richard Harris

Every other year the Contra Costa Commission for Women (CCCW) recognizes women who have made a difference in their community in the areas of the arts, leadership, community, environmental stewardship, healthcare, justice and science, adding their name to the Women's Hall of Fame. This year Lamorinda is represented by Moraga resident Edy Schwartz for her contribution to the arts.

"I nominated Edy because she exemplifies what makes our communities the amazing places they are today," says Contra Costa Supervisor Candace Andersen. "When Edy sees a need she doesn't just talk about it, she does something, and generally in a very big way! She selflessly gives of her time and has done so much for Moraga, particularly with her efforts to preserve the Rheem Theatre and make it a gathering place for art, culture, and fun in Moraga."

A former president of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, Schwartz was named Citizen of the Year in 2010. For the last several years she has channeled her enthusiasm and passion toward the Rheem Theatre and the annual California Independent Film Festival in Moraga and Orinda. Moving into the movie industry has opened a whole new world for Schwartz, while she continues to support her lifelong mission of building community.

Schwartz's involvement started in December 2009 when the operators of the Rheem Theatre announced that they were going to close the independent venue due to declining revenue. As chamber president, she called upon a group of local 'movers and shakers' to brainstorm solutions. Attendance grew, new events were offered that attracted more people, but the operators still closed the Rheem in 2010, preferring to concentrate their marketing efforts on the Orinda Theatre that they had also purchased.

Schwartz did not give up. She knew that if the Rheem stayed closed too long it would be impossible to revive.

For Schwartz the theater is a unique community asset that gets people of all ages together. She continued to look for solutions with other community members and in June of 2010, when she got a call from Derek Zemrak, co-founder of the California Independent Film Festival Association,

she shared her belief that the Rheem could be profitable due to community support. CAIFFA took over the Rheem and later, the Orinda Theatre; Schwartz's involvement intensified once she passed the baton as the head of the Chamber of Commerce.

She played an integral role in the campaign to raise funds for the three digital projectors at Rheem, the ADA compliance fund, and of course the promotion of the annual festival shown both at the Rheem and Orinda theaters. Schwartz is now working with a group that includes Orinda Chamber of Commerce president Sylvia Jorgensen to make the 2014 Independent Film Festival the most successful ever. Last year's festival registered the highest local attendance, likely because Schwartz conducted 25 "sneak-peak" presentations for different community groups in September.

"I do this because I believe Moraga needs the Rheem Theatre, as a major anchor in the Rheem Shopping Center, a community gathering place, and a unique artistic venue; and because I have learned the great value of independent films, the joy and discoveries they have brought to my life, and I'd like to share that with everyone." She continues to be a tireless advocate, because she knows that to keep the doors open, tickets have to be sold.

The eight women selected this year were honored at a dinner March 20 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Concord. "The selection process is quite rigorous," says CCCW Nancie Zimmerman who co-chairs the event. "Each recommendation is reviewed independently by three judges who live outside the area and are involved with the State Commission for Women." The judges also want to recognize women who might not be very well known beyond their community. "We received about 40 candidacies and I was blown away by the quality and leadership of all these women," adds Zimmerman.

Schwartz had the pleasure to meet with the other seven nominees at the event, as well as three women who were part of the Rosie the Riveter movement during World War II and are now involved with the namesake museum in Richmond. Having them as special honorees was a way for the commission to show the continuity of women's leadership throughout American history.



Acalanes High School team

Photo Diane Morrell

Noted Physician Tackles Medical Ethics

OLLI course at LLLC explores new and difficult questions

Submitted by Franette Armstrong



Dr. M. Michael Thaler Photo provided

Dr. M. Michael Thaler has a message for you: "If you haven't heard of 'personalized medicine' just wait a year. There is going to be a groundswell of forces that will put your entire DNA into your medical records for any doctor to see and use."

Whether this and other revolutionary new technologies are a good thing is the subject of a new 6-week course at the Lafayette Library. Through case studies it will delve into the advances in genetics, organ transplantation, robotics, imaging, and information technologies to ask students, "Is there a way to reduce cost and improve care without sacrificing patient rights? Who should get expensive new drugs and procedures and who should decide?"

Dr. Thaler promises you won't need a medical degree to understand and debate these issues.

The Nuremberg Code, the gold standard of medical ethics that arose after WWII, is of more than passing interest to Thaler, who began life in Nazi-invaded Poland and spent his early teens in a refugee camp. At 15 he was sent to Canada for high school and then medical school at the University of Toronto, where as a pathology resident he made a discovery that is saving lives every day – how to perform CPR on children without injuring them – which led to the first of his more than 200 scientific papers in a

medical career spanning over four decades.

Residencies and fellowships took him to Paris and Harvard and led to a 34-year career in pediatric medicine at UCSF, where he is professor emeritus in the school of medicine and recipient of the Chancellor's Faculty Award for Outstanding Contributions to Society. It was as president of the Northern California Holocaust Center that he became interested in Nazi medicine.

When he gave up his active role at UCSF, Thaler didn't give up his passion for learning and teaching. He obtained a degree in the history of health science at UC Berkeley, and taught this and the history of the holocaust for 11 years at UC Santa Cruz. "But in the end there was too much driving over Hwy 17," he said, so he began teaching UC Extension, Cal undergraduate classes and an OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) course at least once a year.

Thaler is fluent in five languages and reads three others. Father of two and grandfather of five, he and his wife don't get a chance to travel like they used to. "We're into cruises now ... it's the only way to keep everybody together. Forced house arrest!"

His class begins Tuesday, April 1 from 10 a.m.-noon. For more information go to olli.berkeley.edu or call (510) 642-9934.

New OLLI Classes in Lafayette

Three new six-week courses from UC Berkeley's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute begin April 1 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center:

Health Care Reform: Medical Practice and Medical Ethics taught by M. Michael Thaler, MD., will analyze the unprecedented ethical, economic and legal challenges brought about by new medical technologies – 10 a.m. to noon, Tuesdays.

Proust and His World taught by Larry Bensky, former national affairs correspondent for KPFA Radio and manager of Radio Proust explores the literature and times of Marcel Proust, one of the 20th century's most widely quoted authors, who was influenced by writers such as Anatole France, artists such as Monet and Picasso, and musicians such as Saint-Saens and Debussy – 10 a.m. to noon, Thursdays.

Art and Architecture of Turkey explores Turkey's culture through architecture, sculpture, paintings, mosaics and manuscripts in Ankara, Akhtamar Island, Yazikaya, Cappadocia and more. Art historian and former Cal State San Francisco professor Kerrin Meis has led tours and traveled extensively in Turkey and has taught many classes about Byzantine and Islamic art – 1:15 to 3:15 p.m., Thursdays.

Student and Science Teacher All Smiles at Science Fair

Submitted by Theresa Maloney



From left: Jason Pollack and Page McClun Photo provided

St. Perpetua science teacher Jason Pollack congratulates eighth-grader Page McClun, who was the first place ribbon winner and finalist in biological sciences at the recent Diocesan Science Fair, held at St. Joseph High School in Alameda. Not

pictured are Carson Kontny, first place ribbon winner and finalist in the physical sciences category, and Meghan Hohman, first place ribbon winner and finalist in the behavioral sciences category.

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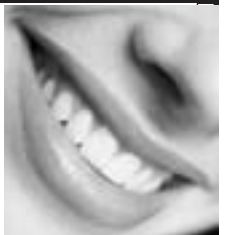
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Orinda Tree Service to the Rescue

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!"



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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.

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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 Spont 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.



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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

Lafayette Youth Arts Society Contest Showcases Artistic Talents

Submitted by Uma Unni



Lafayette Youth Arts Society writing and photography contest winners, from left: Clare Fonstein, Cameron Fisher, Noam Franbuch, Kate Gilberd, Elie Singer, Sophia Benveniste, Isabel Rurka, and Clare Needs. Photo provided

More than 100 eager middle school students stormed the Lafayette Youth Arts Society website March 15, hoping to see their names listed as winners of the 1st Annual Writing and Photography Contest. The contest, run entirely by two Lafayette teens, Linnae Johansson and Uma Unni, received nearly 150 entries.

“Students seemed excited about the contest, and many expressed their interests in entering in the contest’s second year, starting in November of this year,” said contest co-founder Linnae. “One contestant said that she entered the contest because her teacher suggested it, but was pleased to find that one of the judges said that her work had potential to be sellable as a stock photo.”

The entries submitted to the contest were all incredibly creative, added Linnae, taking innumerable interpretations of the same topics. “The judges were stunned not only by this creativity, but also by the overall quality of the work, especially taking into consideration the ages of the photographers and writers.”

The contest was started to give an outlet for the more artistic kids in Lafayette who might have felt overshadowed by local sports stars. Not only did the contest achieve its goal, but it also succeeded in showing kids who never considered themselves to be artistic that they have potential.

To see the winning contestants’ complete work, and to learn more about the Lafayette Youth Arts Society, visit www.lyas.org.

The following are excerpts from the first, second and third place writing contest winners. To read more, go to www.lyas.org.

From “Untitled” by first place writing winner Kate Gilberd:

It was dark, and all around Anna, there was green, and black, and the moonlight soaking through the branches of the trees that enveloped her. The path was carpeted with dead leaves, which cracked against Anna’s boots as she ran. That was all that she heard for a while, the sound of her feet hitting the leaves, her heart pounding in her chest. And then, all of a sudden, there it was again.

A twig snapping behind her. Anna let out a short breath and halted. “Who’s there?” she shouted. She didn’t expect a reply, and there was none.” ...

From “Unburdened” by second place writing contest winner Cameron Fisher:

I had never experienced such terror as I did at this moment. Not for the reason that I was hopelessly marooned in a malevolent wood, or that an inky blackness had descended, or even that I’d heard an indistinct snap directly behind me. No. What struck such fear into me was the complete absence of distraction. During the idle activities of the day, one may escape the primitive worries lurking in the shadowy recesses of our minds. Simply by participating in modern civilization, the malice within oneself may be quashed, controlled, unnoticed. We believe we are secure, that nature no longer influences us. It is only when we venture into the frontier which is devoid of technology and ruled by chaos, that we realize our weakness and utter inferiority to the many forces we cannot control. ...

From “We Forgot to Write a Title!” says Author #1” by third place writing contest winner Claire Fonstein:

Margot is walking alone through the woods. All forms of communication are down. She hears a stick snap behind her. It is a bear. Margot runs as fast as she can until she reaches a ledge, where she is faced with possibly the last decision she would ever make Margot decides to jump. She slows her breath, thinks thoughts of peace and happiness, slowly leans forward, and falls.

“Ahhhhhhh!” Margot screams as she falls to her death.

“Wait! What? She can’t die. It was just the beginning of the story!” author #1 shouts.

“The story is over, so deal with it,” author #2 replies.

“But that’s a horrible ending!” says author #1.

“Well fine then. The story won’t end there, but I get to choose what happens next.” Author #2 begins to write. ...

(Elie Singer received the creativity award for writing; Clare Needs received the creativity award for photography.)



First place photo by Isabel Rurka



Second place photo by Noam Franbuch



Third place photo by Sophia Benveniste

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'Orinda Idol' Soloist Leaps into National Spotlight

Submitted by Margaret Huang



Isabelle Johannessen (front center)

Photo provided

Orinda resident Isabelle Johannessen began singing when she was just a baby. "I would sit in my car seat and hold 'Ahhhh...' for as long as I could," the Oakland School for the Arts senior remembers. And she hasn't stopped singing since.

She made her first solo appearance on Orinda Idol, sponsored by the Orinda Arts Council, as a fourth grader and finally won first place in the Orinda Idol competition in 2012 with group, Urban Flare. She is now a member of Vocal Rush – OSA's prestigious national award-winning acapella group. She also works with Disney pop singer Zendaya, also a former OSA student, as a back-up singer on her "Shake It Up" tour. Johannessen was on tour with Zendaya and missed appearing with Vocal Rush when the group was a finalist on NBC TV's "The Sing Off" in December.

As a dancer and a performer in musicals at Orinda Youth Theater and Glorietta Elementary School, Johannessen found her commitment to the arts to be defining. Her broad range of talent coupled with an incredible work ethic landed her acceptance at OSA, where maintains a 4.04 GPA.

"The thing about being an artist is that you are learning to better yourself and your craft. That mentality of learning, because you want to improve and not just to get good grades, is how to succeed," says the 17-year-old. "In vocal music, if you don't want to pay attention, you don't really have to. But, when auditions come up and you are not picked for the group or for a solo, you know why. Going to a performing arts school helps you be motivated in all aspects of life."

Johannessen says she gets up at 5:45 every morning. "My mom and I leave the house at 7:30 to drive me to school. Some nights I get a ride home from my family, but most evenings I take BART home after school."

Johannessen recently toured LA with her family to visit colleges and has already received an acceptance from Loyola Marymount College.

For the second consecutive year, Johannessen will be a featured soloist in the OSA Vocal Department concert "Soundtrack," a night of Hollywood hits at the Fox Theater in Oakland on Friday, May 2. Tickets are available on <http://www.ticketmaster.com>, search for "Soundtrack."

TEEN SCENE

Healthy Choices to Avoid a Sedentary Lifestyle

By Henna Hundal

As teenagers, there's no doubt we want to keep our bodies looking great. And no matter how cliché it might sound, the best way to keep fit is to eat nutritiously and exercise appropriately. New survey results released in January by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that we aren't making exercise a priority. Junior Jessica N. reported, "I exercise maybe twice a month doing some push ups or sit-ups" while senior Kevin M. boldly stated, "exercise is just not my thing."

The survey results show that only 25 percent of American kids aged 12 to 15 are meeting the recommended daily exercise guidelines. This means that, on average, only one out of every four teens is doing at least one hour of vigorous physical activity each day. High school junior Hunter M. is one of the four who is getting enough exercise. "I do 25 sit-ups and 50 jumping jacks every morning, then I walk to and from school." Arezu K. chimed in, "I go to the gym three times a week for an hour because working out makes me look and feel healthier." On the opposite side of the spectrum, student Stephanie S. says

that exercise is "nonexistent" in her life while Jasmine M. remains only mildly active by walking half a mile a day.

Teens have become too sedentary. The report was based on the responses of 800 young people in the 2012 National Youth Fitness Survey, making it clear that we need to revive a national dialogue on the importance of vigorous physical activity in young people's lives. The average American spends 9.6 hours sitting down – more hours than they spend sleeping. Watching our diets and exercising 30 minutes a day will not be enough to offset the hours of sitting.

At a time when over 12.5 million American youth are dealing with obesity, and budget cuts are eliminating schools' physical education programs, we need to pause a moment to remember how crucial exercise really is. Getting the right amount of daily physical activity helps us in so many ways, including improving our mood, boosting energy, and increasing our overall wellness. We can celebrate our bodies by making healthy nutrition choices combined with strenuous

physical activity. Exercise isn't exclusively for athletes, it's critical for the longevity and happiness of every individual.

First Lady Michele Obama is on the right track with her Let's Move campaign. Walk, run, swim, bike, surf, skate, stretch, dance, tumble, play ball, or do yoga – everything counts towards a more healthy and beautiful you.



Henna Hundal

Express Yourself!™ Teen Radio Reporter and Be the Star You Are!® volunteer; Henna Hundal, is an 11th grader on a mission to empower the younger generation to lead active, healthy lives.

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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'This Life'

Some must die, so others can live

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

It is not by chance that Anne Grethe Bjarup Riis' movie, "This Life," was a big success in Denmark, its country of origin. The director shows a piece of that country's history at a time when the younger generation is asking questions and wants to understand what happened during World War II. But it also has universal appeal, telling how a handful of people can make a difference, and the consequences, good and bad, of personal engagement. It also touches the heart because it talks of family, of loyalty, and of the often understated and misconstrued role women played in this major conflict.

The movie that will play at the Orinda Theatre in early April tells the story of a Danish family that revolts against the German invasion of their country in 1939. As part of a close-knit community, the Fiils have a

large extended family and own a beautiful inn. The movie begins with the women cooking in the kitchen for the 25th wedding anniversary of owner Marius Fiil and his wife Gudrun. The war has not really reached this northern region of Denmark yet, and while it is clear the government has decided to collaborate with the invader, Danish laws are still in place.

During the dinner and party that ensues, a fracture begins between the guests: some think that the government's decision was cowardly, while others defend the Germans, believing they will protect the Danes against communism. Shortly after, the Fiils have to make a choice when they are asked to help organize the parachuting in of both people and equipment coming from England. The decision has life and death con-

sequences for everyone, and their values are tested to an extent they could not have imagined.

Bjarup Riis shows how good people can be crushed by the pitiless juggernaut of history.

At the center of the movie is the couple: Marius (Jens Jørn Spottag) and Gudrun (Bodil Jørgensen). As the head of the household, when help is sought, people talk to Marius; but when asked for his decision, he says he has to talk to his wife, first. Gudrun is the relentless worker, the hinge on which the family revolves. Soft spoken, gentle and strong, she is a moral compass. The Fiils have sons and daughters, including the fiery Gerda who cannot be kept at home when others go out and fight.

The characters shine with humanity and an honest love for each other. The title alerts viewers that not all of the characters survive the ordeal, and that certainty creates an unnerving tension as the movie approaches its denouement. But there are also many light and fun moments in the movie, just like life itself.

The dominant visual tones in the film are very warm and a bit subdued. "This Life" is solid, much like the people featured in the film who became reluctant heroes.

"This Life" is will be shown at the Orinda Theatre as part of the International Film Showcase April 4-11. For more information, visit internationalshowcase.org.

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SMC Spring Production Opens April 2

Submitted by Sharon Cahill



Photo by Michael Cook

Saint Mary's College student actors, Samantha Ricci and Michael Kuzmack, rehearse for the

upcoming Performing Arts Department spring production "ANTIGONE(S)" which will show at 8 p.m. April 2-5, and at 2 p.m. April 6 at LeFevre Theatre. This winner of the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award and the Drama Desk Award, is about two families – parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives – who struggle to understand the mystery, misery and magic of love. Tickets: \$10 general; \$8 seniors (65+) and non-SMC students; \$5 SMC faculty, staff and students. For information or reservations, call (925) 631-4670 or go online to www.brownpapertickets.com.

'Muppets Most Wanted'

By Derek Zemrak



Photo provided

Thus far 2014 looks like the year for kids' films: "Lego," which broke box office numbers, then "Mr. Sherman & Peabody" and now Hollywood has released "Muppets Most Wanted."

The previous Muppets movie, "The Muppets" released in 2011, grossed over \$86 million at the U.S. box office and was made on a \$45 million budget. What does that mean? Sequel! "Muppets Most Wanted" revolves around the Muppets themselves instead of the humans as was the case in "The Muppets" – Jason Segel and Amy Adams do not return in this sequel.

In "Muppets Most Wanted" the tone is set quickly in the opening musical number, as they poke fun at themselves with the music line "Everyone knows that the sequel's never quite as good" – classic Jim Henson humor. The line

probably refers to the 1999 Muppet flop, "Muppets From Space." From that musical number on, I knew I was in for an enjoyable 1 hour and 52 minutes.

The Muppets are on a world tour and get caught up in an international jewelry heist as they deal with a Kermit the Frog look-a-like, the impostor, Constantine. The 40-plus year olds in the audience will appreciate the return of a more classic Jim Henson style dialogue and screenplay. Some of the children will not get the humor but neither did we as kids, which is okay. They will love the vibrant colors and the loveable puppet characters they see on the big screen that were created over 40 years ago on PBS.

The human supporting roles in the film include Ty Burrell ("Modern Family"), as a very funny Clouseau-like In-

terpol agent; Ricky Gervais ("The Office" (UK), "Extras") as Dominic Badguy, Constantine's criminal sidekick; and Tina Fey ("30 Rock") as a Russian prison guard. Also, as with the classic Muppets shows, the movies have several cameo appearances – Celine Dion, Lady Gaga, Salma Hayek, and Usher, to name a few.

Some may say they miss the humans as the leads, but I say it's the Muppets' movie and I'm glad the focus has returned to be on them. "Muppets Most Wanted" is rated PG.

Derek Zemrak is a film critic, film producer and founder of the California Independent Film Festival. You can follow Derek on Twitter @zemrak for the latest Hollywood news. Derek can be heard every Friday on KAH1 950AM on the Poppoff Show.

LYNN'S TOP FIVE:

Taxes 2014 - Plan now for confidence later!

By Lynn Ballou, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

A rainy weekend – perfect time to get those taxes done, right? Wait – not so fast! As I'm writing this the IRS is just now finishing the instructions for a couple of new forms. So the tax software companies are just now updating and testing their software. They tell me hopefully this coming weekend (March 8) I'll be able to file my return. Yup, they are still due April 15! Makes you want to hug your tax pro, right?

So by now, even though all the forms are ready and hopefully your last corrected 1099 is in your hands, this will still be the year that will test your patience – until you get a peak at your return and then it will be the year that you realize tax planning for 2014 needs to start right now! Here are some of the bigger tax surprises that I think will be in store for you and what you need to do now so that next year will be "Ho hum," and not "Oh no!"

1) Cap Gains Pass Throughs: They say that "making money on your money" is what it's all about, right? Well congrats, because many of your investments were busy this past year doing just that. And with very few if any losses left on the books to offset gains, some of your holdings are passing your share of the gains through to

you as we haven't seen the likes of in almost seven years. If these investments are in after tax accounts, be prepared to come up with the money to pay the taxes on this gain for 2013 and then include this in your planning for 2014 so you aren't unprepared at tax time next year. I think a lot of Americans will be pulling money out of their investments to pay this year's taxes, which of course could lead to more gains taken – sigh.

2) The Pease Limitations: One of the least enjoyable and least discussed experiences you may encounter is the return to phase outs of certain itemized deductions. Called the Pease limits after the Congressman who wrote the bill (Ohio, if you want to send him any love notes), these were suspended during the fallout from the global economic crisis. I guess Congress has bought in to the notion that the economy is better, because these limits are back! This will affect those of you with combined married filing jointly income of \$305,050 or singles with \$254,200. This complex law basically results in you losing as much as 3 percent of certain itemized deductions once you hit these income thresholds. Learn the specifics and how it might affect you when you are working on tax planning for this year.

3) The 0.09 percent solution: According to the IRS website, www.irs.gov, this new additional Medicare Tax, which went into effect on Jan. 1, 2013 applies to an individual's wages and self-employment income that exceeds a threshold amount based on the individual's filing status. The threshold amounts are \$250,000 for married taxpayers who file jointly, \$125,000 for married taxpayers who file separately and \$200,000 for all other taxpayers. Although an employer is responsible for withholding on this if you earn more than \$200,000, what about if you are married and together you must pay but separately your employer wasn't required to withhold? Be aware of this iceberg: you might not have been on top of this for tax season 2013, but now you know and can be better prepared.

4) Yup, another add on Medicare Tax!: In our offices we call this the good news bad news tax because it only applies if you have substantial investment income of a certain type, but once you do – and many retirees and avid savers in our community fall into this group – there are taxes to pay. Taxpayers with income over \$200,000 and married filers with income over \$250,000 should check to

see what their investment income is and how this tax might apply. This could be a bit of a stealth tax for you, as your investment income is probably rarely the same year to year. A large capital gain one year could put you in line for this tax that you would normally otherwise avoid.

5) Can I get a safe harbor? Well – maybe! With underpayment penalty tax rates higher than what you can earn in your savings account, it pays to pay attention to these rules. For some taxpayers, you can get by with paying in 90 percent of your 2013 taxes through withholding in 2014. For others, it's more complex. Check in with your tax pro or the IRS website to learn more. And really check into the rules for California – they are more complex, onerous and sticky than the IRS rules now. Go to www.ftb.ca.gov to learn more.

So in closing, it's a call to arms, basically, and by that I mean arm yourself and your tax pro now with information! And please note: this information is not intended to be a substitute for specific individualized tax advice. We suggest you discuss your specific tax issues with a qualified tax advisor. This is also a reminder that all the best tax planning now is certainly in your best interests, but you'll

want to check in later in the year to be sure you nailed it. Or see what new fun Congress has cooked up for you! Otherwise you could be looking at another "Oh no" tax season next year instead of "Wow – got that covered!"



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

Lamorinda's Religious Services



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ART

Lafayette Art Gallery's new exhibition, "Location - Location - Location!" through May 3. "Location" may be the rule of real estate but what does it mean to the artists at the Lafayette Art Gallery? It means the gallery has a new location with almost twice the space, three times the windows and light, and an artistic heritage at The Forge, built on Mt. Diablo Boulevard by the noted metal artist Carl Jennings in 1946.

Klein Gallery invites the Lafayette community to its show, "Waves of The Current," which includes work from eight Bay Area Artists who use a diverse array of mediums including painting, sculpture, graffiti art and prints. The exhibition runs through April 20.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art - four exhibitions now on view. From Swords to Plowshares: Metal Trench Art from World War One; Songs of the Patriot: How Music Helped Win World War One; Malcolm Lubliner: The Automotive Landscape; and William Keith: Nature's Tranquil Splendor. Open 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. For info, call (925)-631-4379 or visit stmarys-ca.edu/museum. Admission: free to K-12 graders; \$5 adults. Free parking.

MUSIC

Miramonte High School will host the All Orinda Band Festival with performances by elementary, OIS and Miramonte bands at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 26. This extraordinary annual event brings together Orinda music students of all ages and their families for a great evening of entertainment showcasing the Educational Foundation of Orinda funded band programs. Free.

The Gold Coast Chamber Players explore the famous love triangle of Robert Schumann, Brahms' friend and mentor, Clara Schumann, Robert's wife and a gifted pianist and composer, and Brahms who longed for a woman he could never have. The program highlights these three musical giants and their intimate relationships. Musicologist Kai Christiansen will start the evening with a provocative pre-concert talk at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 12 in the Community Hall of the Lafayette Library. Tickets: \$10-\$35 - price includes complimentary champagne, pre-concert talk and a reception with the musicians following the performance. Tickets are available at www.gc-players.org and by phone at (925) 283-3728. Limited seating, please reserve early.

THEATER

The Performing Arts Department at Saint Mary's College spring production "ANTIGONE(S)" will show at 8 p.m. April 2-5, and at 2 p.m. April 6 at LeFevre Theatre. (See related story page B6).

East Bay Children's Theatre production of "Jack and the Beanstalk and the Giant, and the Goose, and the Really, Truly-Ugly Rotten Day," written by Ron Lytle and directed by Sue Ellen Nelson March 30 (See related story page B2).

DVC Drama Presents - "Noises Off," directed By Ed Trujillo March 28-April 13. Check website for exact times and dates. For tickets, call (925) 969-2358 or go to our website at www.dvcdrama.net. DVC Drama is located at 321 Golf Club Rd, Pleasant Hill, with free parking for all performances.

LECTURE & LITERATURE

Lamorinda Reads presents author Mary Roach, "America's funniest science writer," according to the Washington Post, who will speak at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 27 at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. (See related story page B8)

The Moraga Historical Society presents Mary-Ellen Jones, who will speak about the history of UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 27 in the Moraga Library Community Room. Jones will discuss some of the collections and rare books in the collection and how Bancroft can be of benefit to the public. Free. Refreshments will be served.

Direct from the Republic of Congo, Miles Woodruff of the Jane Goodall Institute will present his work as principal investigator of the Mandrill Reintroduction Project at 6 p.m. Friday, April 4 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center in the Arts and Science Room. Learn about mandrills, the largest and most colorful of all the monkeys in this discussion, which is a balance of adventure, science, conservation and hope, and learn about the Jane Goodall Institute's efforts to protect this important species and critical chimpanzee habitat. Free. For ages 14 and up. Register online at tinyurl.com/mandrillmiles.

Expose on "Endangered Threads" of the Mayan people April 7. Valley Stitches and Fiber Arts guild's members and guests will be listening to Kathleen Vitale speak on her participation in the documentary on the native weavers of Guatemala. She and her husband, Paul, worked with anthropologist Margot Blum to capture this skill before it disappears. The guild meets at 10 a.m. on the first Monday of the month at the Faith Lutheran Church, 50 Woodsworth Lane, Pleasant Hill. For more info, contact Sheila at (925) 945-1338.

Moraga Movers and the Moraga Library present Book Talking at 2 p.m. Wednesday, April 9. Join C.W. Gortner as he discusses his wonderful historical novel, "The Queen's Vow," about Isabella of Castile. It tells of her dramatic ascent to power and how she changed the future of Spain and the world (remember Columbus?). As always, you need not have read the book to enjoy this fascinating discussion.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

The Friends of the Lafayette Library Bookmark Contest is happening again! The contest is open to all grades 1st through 8th at all Lafayette elementary schools, St. Perpetua, and Stanley Middle School. Entry forms may be picked up at school libraries, at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, and at the Friends Corner Book Shop. Deadline: Wednesday, March 26. Winners will receive a gift certificate to a local bookstore at our awards ceremony April 30 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. For more info, contact Mary Ransdell: mbrandsdell@comcast.net.

The Bancroft Library will become an interactive museum for a day filled with exhibits, talks and demonstrations highlighting the numerous treasures held within from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 26 at UC Berkeley. Staff members are using their knowledge of the collections to create displays and presentations in multiple areas of the library ranging from ancient Egypt to Mark Twain's correspondence. Free.

Steve and Kate's Camp Info Night: Parents and children are invited to meet the director, take a self-guided virtual tour of camp and be treated to dinner from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 27 at Contra Costa Christian Schools, 2721 Larkey Ln, Walnut Creek. RSVP at www.steveandkatescamp.com/location/walnut-creek/. Call Sarah with any questions: (415)389-5437.

Better Homes and Gardens Mason-McDuffie's Education Foundation is now accepting nominations for outstanding public school teachers for their 2014 grant program. Every year, Better Homes and Gardens Mason-McDuffie Real Estate awards cash grants to outstanding public school teachers in an effort to acknowledge their priceless contributions to our children's future. To nominate a favorite teacher for 2014, visit www.bhghome.com/educationfoundation. Deadline: March 31.

Start warming up your voices now - Lamorinda Idol auditions are just around the corner. K-12 students living or attending school in the Lamorinda

area may audition for a chance to be a Lamorinda Idol finalist. Auditions run May 15-17. Visit the Orinda Arts Council's website at <http://orindaarts.org/lamorinda-idol/audition-information> to sign up for auditions between April 1-30.

"Something Fun on Thingiverse" - teen 3D printing workshop at 3:45 p.m. Thursday, April 3 in the Community Hall presented by Brian Palacios, who will bring a 3D printer and look at Thingiverse (a website that allows for the discovering, making and sharing of 3D printable things) with the audience. He will then take audience suggestions for something to print and talk about 3D printing principles while it is printing. If time permits, he will give away the 3D printed object to a lucky audience member.

Junk Food Fest - Teens Only! Come to the Moraga Library from noon to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 5 to eat tons of delicious junk food, play games and hang out with friends!

The Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center's 17th Annual Dennis Thomas Art and Writing Challenge. Consistent with the theme of "The Multicultural Classroom" from its recent Creating a Peaceful School Conference, the Center is utilizing quotes from Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, Jr. as prompts for this year's contest. Students of middle and high school age throughout Contra Costa County are encouraged and eligible to participate. Four categories will be judged: essay, creative writing, art and video. Submissions must be received by April 11. For more specific info on the topic, contest rules and flyers, visit www.creatingpeacefulschools.weebly.com or call the Center office: (925) 933-7850.

The Friends of the Orinda Library is excited to announce the commencement of 2014's Poul Anderson Creative Writing Contest, open to all students who reside and/or attend high school in Orinda. Entry categories are science fiction, essay/memoir, poetry and short story. Students may submit one entry in any of the four categories for a total of not more than three entries. Submission deadline is noon on Friday, April 18. Entries should be submitted to individual school representatives. For info, visit: www.friendsoftheorindalibrary.org or email contest@friendsoftheorindalibrary.com.

OTHER

Another year of classic films is scheduled for Moraga's New Rheem Theatre. A time-honored movie is slated for the third Wednesday of each month. New for 2014: 1 p.m. starting time. Each film program is introduced by Larry Swindell.

Truck 'On Over to Support Acalanes Class of 2015! Food Truck Mafia will be in the front quad of Acalanes High School from 4:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 27. Featured trucks include: The Melt Bus, Street Dogs, Tacos de los Altos, Savourie Streets, Yummi BBQ & Lexie's Frozen Custard. Enjoy music, friends and maybe catch an AHS game, too! Ten percent of all proceeds will be donated to the Class of 2015.

State-of-the-art "cross-cut" shredding will be done from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 29 at 5A Rent-A-Space in the Shred Defense Truck starting at just \$5 per file box. Save your boxes of papers to be shredded for March. Financial advisors, attorneys, medical offices, and other businesses can meet their legal obligation to dispose of clients' information responsibly, while helping send Lamorinda middle school girls to AAUW's Tech Trek Science and Math Camp. Shredding details: Government Specified Approved Shred, HIPAA Compliant Shredding, TWIC Certified Drivers. Certificates of Destruction and Donation receipts will be provided.

... continued on next page

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cover best practices in grape growing in suburban California considering current climatic conditions. Join us at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 2 at the Moraga Library. For more information, visit cclib.org or call (925) 376-6852.

Vermicomposting (Worms!) and Bin Building Workshop from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 5 at Heather Farm Community Center, Walnut Creek. Cost: \$20; 20 household max capacity. Registration form deadline: March 28. For info, visit http://www.wastediversion.org/app_pages/view/1723.

DVC Emeritus College provides affordable classes for people 50 and over. Courses are held at JFK University, Rossmoor, and Diablo Valley College. There are some interesting, thought provoking classes starting in April and May as well as tours of the California Railroad Museum and the Ruth Bancroft Gardens, plus a hike of the Marin Headlands. To sign up by credit card call the Emeritus Office at (925) 969-4316 or mail in your registration with a check. Registration forms available through the Emeritus Office. You can view the entire 2014 Spring Brochure online at www.dvc.edu/emmeritus.

Moraga Beautiful will be held rain or shine from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 12 at Rancho Laguna Park. Volunteers should wear old clothes for weeding and the beautification of the park picnic benches. The Town will supply gloves, brushes and stain. Individuals and groups welcome!

Audiobook and eBook Workshop for Nook, iPad and other (non-Kindle) devices at 2 p.m. Tuesday, April 15 at the Moraga Library. Contra Costa County Library has a large and growing collection of eBooks and audiobooks in a variety of formats, waiting for you to check out and use on your own eReader. Workshop requires a working knowledge of your device. Space is limited and registration is required. Please call (925) 376-6852 or sign up online.

Oakland Museum of California presents "SuperAwesome Sneak Peek and Record Swap" from 5 to 9 p.m. Friday, April 18. Catch a sneak peek of new exhibitions Vinyl and SuperAwesome and enjoy an authentic Record Swap, all during Friday Nights at OMCA's food truck party! Cost: \$7.50 adults; \$5 students and seniors with valid ID; free for ages 18 and under and OMCA members. For more info, visit <http://museumca.org/event/friday-nights-superawesome> or call (510) 318-8400.

Volunteers are needed for the Moraga Community Faire which takes place in May. Be part of this fun and hardworking team for about six weeks starting mid-April. The following positions are needed: entertainment coordinator, equipment coordinator, Dunk Tank coordinator, publicity coordinator, and permits and permissions coordinator. To volunteer for one of these and for further information, contact Ellen Beans at (925) 376-7306 or ellen.beans@gmail.com.

Area residents who own classic cars are invited to participate in the 6th annual Moraga Classic Car Show, which takes place from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 10 as part of the 2014 Moraga Community Faire. The \$30 registration fee includes an entry ribbon, lunch for two, a commemorative photo, and a chance for owners to display their restoration work to the public. Prizes will be awarded. The registration deadline is May 1. To register, go to www.moragachamber.org/faire or call (925) 247-4629.

SENIORS

Lamorinda Dance Social - Enjoy afternoon dancing every Wednesday and learn some great new dance moves from 12:30 to 3 p.m. the first Wednesdays monthly in the Live Oak Room, Lafayette Community Center. Professional dancers Karen and Michael will provide a dance lesson and live DJ services, playing your favorites and taking requests. Members \$2; non-members \$4.

Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 171 meets the first Wednesday monthly at Holy Trinity Culture Center 1700 School St. Moraga. Social hour 11 a.m., lunch at noon. The after lunch speaker on April 2 will be Mr. Robert Doyle, general manager of the East Bay Regional Park District, who will talk about the 80-year history of EBRPD's park and conservation leadership and the challenges involved in running the largest Regional Park agency in the nation. For membership information in SIRs, call Larry at (925) 631-9528 or Tom at (925) 376-7724.

"Health Matters for Boomers and Beyond: Embracing the Benefits of Living a Balanced Lifestyle" from 9:30 to noon Friday, April 11 at the Garden room of the Orinda Library. Join us for the second of three free Health Matters events. Aging experts will be covering healthy aging topics, as well as offering free mini-fitness classes suitable for all levels: from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. - Preventing Elder

Financial Abuse; 11 a.m. to noon - Making our Communities Aging Friendly. Free.

GARDEN

"Mow no Mo!" or "How to remove your lawn, save water, and get paid for it, too" will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, March 29. In this hands-on workshop you'll learn how to remove your lawn and select drought-tolerant plants, and find out how to receive a lawn-removal rebate from your water district. Cost: \$30. Preregistration is required, at <http://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/select-tours>.

The Moraga Gardens Farm is holding their annual plant sale starting the weekend of March 29, and will run each Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. through April 19. Over 4,000 plant starts, grown without pesticides or chemicals, will be available. Plants include many hard to find, heirloom varieties of tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, and herbs. Moraga Gardens Farm is located between School Street and the Moraga Way fire station.

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will feature Robin Parer, owner of Geraniaceae Nursery, who will talk about sizzling colors in leaves and flowers

and fabulous plants for your garden at 9:30 a.m. Monday, April 8 at The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Road, Walnut Creek. It will include the business meeting, social time and "What's New in Geraniaceae." Guests and prospective members are welcome. For info, email mslittle44@gmail.com.

Lafayette Garden Club Annual Plant Sale at 10 a.m. Thursday, April 10 at the Lafayette Christian Church 584 Glenside Dr. You can purchase seedlings, flowers, and potted plants of all sizes and varieties. Very reasonable prices. Contact: cpoetzsch@gmail.com.

Lafayette Garden Club March Plant and Craft Sale at 10 a.m. Thursday, April 10. Lafayette Christian Church 584 Glenside Dr., Lafayette. For info, contact cpoetzsch@gmail.com.

Montelindo Garden Club meeting will be at 9 a.m. Friday, April 11 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. Visitors welcome. Topic: Art in the Garden. The speaker will be Freeland Tanner, landscaper, carpenter, metal fabricator. ([Freeland Tanner.com](http://www.freelandtanner.com)). www.montelindogarden.com.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

OTHER ... continued

The Lafayette Community Foundation (LCF) is accepting grant applications from local non-profits for its spring grant cycle. LCF invests in programs and projects that promote and enhance the civic, cultural, educational and environmental health of Lafayette and beyond. The grant deadline is March 31 - please submit by emailing application to grants@lafayettecf.org. You can find the grant application online at <http://www.lafayettecf.org>.

Interested in winemaking and grape growing? Join Sal Captain as he discusses wine making and grape growing from ancient times to today, and

Lamorinda Weekly
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Service Clubs Announcements

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Explore Lamorinda Rotary clubs The heart of Rotary is our clubs- dedicated people who share a passion for both community service and friendship. Learn about Lamorinda's Rotary clubs.

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Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club
We meet Friday mornings at 7 am at Celia's Mexican Restaurant, 3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. For more info, please email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com

March 28: Andy Amstutz, will speak to us about the Lamorinda Village - neighborhood support for aging in our community.	April 4: Dr. Bruce McGurk, will speak about CLIMATE CHANGE, IMPACT ON WATER SUPPLIES & OUR FUTURE
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Save the date: Motorama, Lafayette's premier auto show, is June 15th!

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ORINDA THEATRE SQUARE

Stinging Nettles – Lunch is Served!

By Susie Iventosch



Kevin Feinstein conducting a foraging hike in Lafayette



Photo Susie Iventosch

Kevin Feinstein (aka Feral Kevin), co-author of "The Bay Area Forager"

A reader tipped me off to a local foraging expert and naturalist, who leads guided foraging hikes in Lafayette and several other Bay Area locations. Kevin Feinstein, otherwise known as "Feral Kevin," is a self-taught expert on the edible treats Mother Nature nurtures in the wild, from mushrooms and chickweed to wild artichokes, milk thistle, wild mustard and radishes, mallow and miner's lettuce. He says that in a 10 by 10 foot square space, he might find 20 to 30 different types of edible plants!

"I grew up in a mainstream, suburban environment where I didn't eat

a fruit off a tree until I was in my 20s," Feinstein said.

Originally from Tennessee, Feinstein studied film at Florida State University before moving to California 14 years ago.

During his 20s he developed an interest in studying food, gardening, ecology, sustainability, diet and natural health. Now, he spends much of his time giving lectures, leading group hikes and private guided tours, teaching classes and writing books on these subjects. He has written two books:

"The Bay Area Forager," co-authored with Mia Andler, and an eBook enti-

tled "Crash Course in Wild Mushroom Foraging." Both books are available on Feinstein's website: www.feralkevin.com.

Most of his students are foresting novices, and he says that is lots of fun for him because they don't really know much about the subject.

"I am a cautious, conservative, careful forager," he pointed out. "I wish I would have had someone to teach me, especially when it came to foraging for mushrooms!"

The Lafayette hikes are best done from December through May or June, when there is plenty of moisture and

wild plants thrive. He conducts hikes locally through Sierra Ranch, because hikers are allowed to forage on private land with permission by the owners, whereas foraging may not be allowed on public lands. Feinstein emphasizes that hikers must be pre-registered for these events, which can be done on his website or through Sierra Ranch.

When I asked Feral Kevin if he had a recipe he could share, he admitted that he is not much of a recipe follower, but that he has several in his book. He said that he makes pesto out of his pickings and one of his favorites is stinging nettle pesto. Maybe you are like me, and cringe at the thought of eating those stinging green things, but I did try them last year when I saw them at the farmers' market. I sautéed them with shallots and garlic in a little bit of olive oil, and they were really very good. You can also make soup from this concoction by adding chicken or vegetable broth.

You must use gloves when handling nettles until you either cook them or pulverize them in a food processor. Either method removes the sting. I even read that if you boil the nettle leaves in water, the resulting tea mixture can be applied to the skin to

alleviate the sting from where that very plant may have stung you in the first place!

Feinstein says that nettles are a super-sustainable food, both to find and grow, and they are one of the most nutritious mega-super green foods available. He also likes to serve crunchy thistle stalks with hummus. He says that when trimmed up, they are kind of like celery stalks. Now, I would never have looked at a thistle plant and thought ... food! But, that is true of the beloved artichoke as well, I suppose.

"Foraging connects you to your food and the place you live more than any other activity," Feinstein noted.

Kevin Feinstein
<http://feralkevin.com>

Sienna Ranch
3232 Deerhill Road, Lafayette
(925) 283-6311, <http://siennaranch.net>

*For more information on stinging nettles:
<http://www.motheearthnews.com/natural-health/stinging-nettle-benefits-zmaz81mazkin.aspx?PagelD=2#ArticleContent>

**To harvest your own nettles, check with a good source on what leaves to cut in order to reap multiple harvests from your plant.

Stinging Nettle Pesto

(Makes 1 1/2 to 2 cups)

INGREDIENTS

2 cups nettles, washed and stems removed (be sure to use tongs or gloves when handling)
1/4 cup grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano
1/4 pine nuts or walnuts
1-2 cloves garlic
1-2 teaspoons fresh-squeezed lemon juice
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

Bring a pot of water to boil and blanch nettles for about 2 minutes. (You can also steam them to remove the sting, or thoroughly pulverize raw leaves in a good quality food processor.) Drain and pat dry to remove excess water. Place nettles in food processor with remaining ingredients. Process until desired consistency. Add more olive oil if necessary to allow for processing.

Use pesto as you normally would for spreads, pastas, dips, etc.

Sauteed Nettles with Shallots and Garlic

INGREDIENTS

4 cups nettle leaves, stems removed
1 large shallot finely diced (can also use onion)
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tablespoons olive oil
Garnish with grated Parmesan, red pepper flakes, or toasted pine nuts and season to taste with salt and pepper.

DIRECTIONS

Heat olive oil in large sauté pan. Add shallots and garlic and cook until translucent. Add nettles, using tongs, and cook until wilted over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally.

Serve as a side dish, or use as a base for nettle soup, by adding chicken broth. You can also add diced carrots, leeks and potatoes to your soup, either pre-sauteed, or tossed in raw and cooked in the broth. Then you can serve chunky or pureed into a smooth soup.



Mallow seed pod (aka mallow cheesewheel or wild okra)

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 can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.



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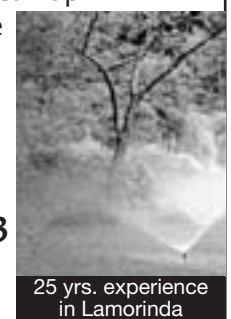
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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Baseball Begins in Lamorinda

Dons, Cougars face off on Thursday

By Scott Wu

The high school baseball season is under way in Lamorinda and each team is vying for an NCS title. DFAL league play began on March 17. Division rivals Campolindo (5-2 overall) and Acalanes (7-2 overall) will face off in their first DFAL game of the season on Thursday, March 27.

Last year Campolindo took the DFAL title and the Division II NCS title. Acalanes finished second behind Campolindo and went on to win the Division III NCS title. Miramonte had a rebuilding year, but the Mats (4-3 overall) are now looking to get back to the top of the DFAL behind their senior leadership.

This year the Cougars started the season ranked 11th in the state. Campolindo head coach Max Luckhurst is optimistic about the upcoming season despite losing some key graduates. "We will try to keep our momentum going by getting the new guys on this year's team up to speed," Luckhurst explained.

He expects strong leadership from returning seniors Denis Karas and Matt Ledrech, both of whom were first-team all DFAL players in 2013. Other crucial players on the Cougars' roster include juniors Adam Remotto and Conor McNally who also earned all-league rights last season.

Luckhurst is focused on instilling baseball fundamentals to his team. "Throwing strikes, taking care of the

baseball defensively, and having competitive at bats will be the keys to our success," he said. Whether they're on the diamond or in the classroom, Luckhurst will look to instill discipline and determination into his players this year. "I expect my players to be good students, good people, and to work very hard and pay attention to details when they practice."

A win over the otherwise undefeated Berkeley High School in pre-season play showcased their ability to contend with the best. With motivation and momentum, the Campolindo Cougars will be a force to be reckoned with this spring.

The Acalanes Dons, coached by Justin Santich-Hughes, are also looking to continue their success. The Acalanes squad will rely on its upper-classmen for guidance. "Seniors Grant Henderson and Austin Fisher will be two vital players to our team this year," Santich-Hughes said. Henderson, a second team all-league player will serve as a utility infielder this season, whereas gold-glove winning Fisher will play shortstop.

"Returning sophomore Jake Berry will also be key to our success," Santich-Hughes noted. Berry, a stand-out second team freshman in 2013, returns to the diamond as the starting second baseman for the Dons.

Even with key returners, the Dons will have to replace five all-league seniors. "Although graduating these

players was tough, we are confident that this year's team can fill their shoes," Santich-Hughes said. They have been able to do so early with pre-season victories over NCS powers College Park and San Marin.

Despite coming off of a rough 2013 season, the Matadors look capable of rebounding this season. "Our team has 13 seniors and five captains who provide excellent leadership," coach Vince Dell'Aquila explained. Key returning players include seniors Bennett Stehr and Andrew Rozensweig. Stehr, a 2013 second team catcher and star lineman on the football field, is the first Miramonte player since now MLB slugger Brett Jackson in 2009 to hit a home run over the fence into the Miramonte pool. Rozensweig, Miramonte's lefty ace, led the NCS in strikeouts during the 2014 pre-season and is looking to continue his pitching success.

"Sophomore James Vacarro will also be a crucial factor in our pitching success this year," Dell'Aquila said. Miramonte, who has shown that it can play at an elite level, should be a serious contender during the 2014 spring baseball season.

With significant wins over Tenynson and Skyline in pre-season play, the Mats have shown their strength. "We're a good, cohesive team that is looking to play solid baseball, be smart defensively, and pitch well," Dell'Aquila said.

Girls Qualify Two Teams to State Tourney

Mats reach regional finals

By Conrad Bassett



Ashley Ewing Photos Gint Federas



Megan Adachi

top tier of Northern California teams in the Open division. The Mats took two road games before falling in the Regional Finals to Salesian.

Their first trip was to Delta College in Stockton where they beat St. Mary's (Stockton) 94-79.

The Mats employed their ferocious press and deep bench and pushed out to a 24-16 lead after one period and led by seven when sophomore Keana Delos Santos went on a personal 7-0 run to double the lead – all in about 20 seconds. She nailed a three from the corner followed by a layup and then a steal and another layup.

Sophomore Sabrina Ionescu led all scorers with 31, senior Mariah Seals added 15 and Delos Santos finished with 14.

With the win, the Mats advanced to face Carondelet before a loud and packed crowd.

Coach Kelly Sopak and the team were thrilled with the community support. "It was so cool the last two weeks to see the tremendous support. It really means a lot to the kids and coaches. Heck, I even tried to fire them up near the end of the game. The fans were very much a part of both wins here in Nor Cal."

The game was tightly contested from the beginning. Carondelet had their biggest lead of the game at 30-23 when an unsung player came off the bench for the Mats. Freshman Elle Louie hit a corner three point shot and then a second one a few minutes later to get the Mats back in the game.

Coach Kelly Sopak remarked, "Elle is a tremendous player. She makes a lot of active plays that sometimes don't get credited as a stat. Tonight she stepped up and delivered some big shots and timely rebounds. She has come a long way."

Miramonte had a 43-40 lead at the half.

The game was tied at 80-80 with 2:32 to go. Louie hit a free throw to give the Mats the lead with 1:44 to go – a lead they would not relinquish as Ionescu hit six clutch free throws in the last minute to seal the 92-87 win.

"I don't really think about the makes or the misses. In our system, I have the green light to make plays and fortunately tonight I started to feel it



Keana Delos Santos



Mariah Seals

late in the game," said Ionescu.

Ionescu led the team with 33 points and Seals added 23.

These wins led to a rematch, at Sleep Train Arena in Sacramento on March 22, with Salesian (Richmond), who had handed Miramonte its only loss of the regular season.

The Pride pulled out to a large early lead and the Mats came back, but not quite enough and lost the CIF Northern California championship game 78 to 64. Ionescu led all scorers with 23.

Miramonte finished with a 30-2 record.

"To make the Nor Cal championship in the Open bracket is just an amazing feat for this school and community," said Sopak. "I am extremely proud to have coached this team."

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Boys' Basketball Make State Title Run

By Michael Sakoda



Luke Hoyle

Photos Gint Federas



Ray Clark

Lamorinda's seniors were huge for their schools during an exciting stretch of games in the CIF Tournament.

Campolindo (23-8, 11-1 DFAL) advanced to the NorCal semifinals, beating Vanden 96-64 on March 15 before being ousted 72-68 by Archbishop Riordan in an overtime thriller on March 18.

Campo's offense clicked against Vanden as four players scored in double figures—seniors Justin Dunn (27 points, 7 rebounds), Luke Hoyle (16 points) and Andrew Zolintakis (12 points, 7 rebounds, 4 assists), and junior Chris Hansen (11 points, 6 rebounds, 8 blocks).

Just three days later, the shots weren't

falling against Riordan. The Cougars trailed 35-41 entering the final quarter. However, Campo went on a 12-3 run, capturing a 49-44 lead with less than five minutes to play.

With four seconds left, Zolintakis was intentionally fouled while shooting a three, giving him free throws, and more importantly, giving Campo the ball. The senior went 2/3 from the line, and knocked down a shot over the hands of three Riordan defenders, sending the game into overtime.

The Cougars lost momentum in the overtime period, and Riordan edged Campo 72-68. Zolintakis was remarkable, scoring 32 of his 38 in the second half and overtime. Chris Hansen



Matt Thomas

added 12 points, 9 rebounds, and 2 blocks to pace the Cougars.

"This game was tough ... our worst offensive output, shooting percentage-wise, of the season," said head coach Matt Watson. "But what these guys have accomplished has been impressive ... definitely a special team."

Campo will lose eight players—Zolintakis, Dunn, Hoyle, Isaac Christian, Andrew Cassidy, Walter Brennan, Anderson Clarke and Ryan Smith—to graduation.

Miramonte (18-13, 6-6 DFAL) stole two games on the road, at Fairfield 74-70 on March 12, and at Burlingame 78-76 on March 15, advancing to the NorCal semifinals before being

eliminated 70-61 at Drake a week ago.

The Mats came back from three 10-point deficits, and cut Drake's lead to 56-60 with under two minutes to play, but they never made it over the hump.

"I think we were just too worn mentally from being on the road for so long," said head coach Drew McDonald. "We played our best basketball down the stretch ... and I'm proud of the way our guys coursed out this season."

Miramonte will graduate five players, Joey Goodreault, Scott Rein, Connor Wong, Ray Clark and Drew Anderson, who averaged 31.6 points, 18.3 rebounds per game during the CIF run.

Both Anderson and Goodreault have made their mark in Miramonte school history. In the history of the basketball program, a player has only scored 31 or more points in 25 occasions. "Drew has a half dozen of those himself," said McDonald. "And Goodreault will be a leader in 3-point field goals made as well as assists."

Acalanes (17-13, 5-7 DFAL) was upended in the opening round by Christian Brothers 60-46 on March 12.

Trailing 28-22 early in the third quarter, the Dons, led by Buster Souza (15 points, 15 rebounds), went on an 8-2 run, tying the score as the period expired. But the Dons struggled to get their offense going in the fourth. They were outscored 23-9 in the final eight minutes.

"The game turned quickly," said coach, Bill Powers. "They were hungrier and we didn't match their effort."

The 17 wins Acalanes notched this year is a marked improvement from their eight wins a season ago, and Powers credits his players for the growth.

"The guys bought in to what we were trying to do," he said. "They were starving for direction ... put in the work and improved."

Acalanes graduates six players including standouts Souza and Matt Thomas as well as Kyle Kinnear, Ross Teichman, and Zack Kisner.

SMC in WNIT for Fifth Year in Row

By Caitlin Mitchell



Jackie Nared

Photos Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's women's basketball qualified for the Women's National Invitation Tournament and earned a first round win at home against Bakersfield.

The Gaels (23-9) faced the Roadrunners on March 21. SMC found themselves down 13-4 early, but they responded with a 20-3 run to take the lead. Bakersfield opened the second half hot to build a lead. The Gaels caught back up to tie it at 55 all with seven minutes to play. They took the lead and never looked back.

SMC was led by senior Jackie Nared, who had a game-high 27 points and 11 rebounds. Senior forward Danielle Mauldin added her 10 points and 12 rebounds for her 24th double-double of the year. Senior guard Kate Gaze added 10 points and five assists.

They advanced to face UTEP in Texas on March 24 after the press deadline. Follow @LamorindaSports for score reports and tournament updates.



Danielle Mauldin

Gaels Reach Second Round of NIT

By Caitlin Mitchell



Stephen Holt

Photo Gint Federas

Saint Mary's men's basketball team struggled with consistency during their NIT run. The Gaels (23-12) qualified as a No. 4 seed. They came from behind to beat No. 5 Utah in the first round and jumped to an early lead in the second round against No. 1 Minnesota but could not hold on for the win.

On March 18 against Utah, Saint Mary's found themselves down as many as 13 in the first half. In the second half, they battled back behind baskets by senior center Matt Hodgson to cut the deficit to 44-59 with eight minutes to go. In the midst of the Gaels' come back run, senior guard Stephen Holt was charged with an offensive foul—his fifth of the game. Averaging 37 minutes a game, a WCC best, an emotional

Holt was forced to sit with a little over five minutes to play.

Despite losing Holt, the Gaels went on a 13-0 run to take the lead and the game, 70-58. Senior guard James Walker III led the team with 23 points, tying a career high. Holt had 15 points.

With the win, Saint Mary's advanced to take on the Gophers on March 23. Instead of finding themselves down early, the Gaels jumped to an early 14-0 lead. Minnesota responded with a 15-2 run. The Gaels were up 26-22 at halftime, but the Gophers took the lead and eventually hung on for the 63-55 win.

Holt put up 24 points in the game, his last as a Gael.

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Divers Make No Waves at Championships

Submitted by Steve Sherman



Sherman divers traveled to Provo, Utah to compete in the Region 10 Diving Championships March 7-8. Morgan Matranga competed in the 16-18 girls' springboard and finished 15th out of 41 divers on the 3-meter and 16th out of 46 divers on the 1-meter. In the 14-

15 girls' springboard, Brenna Cetrone placed 8th on the 1- and 3-meter boards, Audrey Lundgren finished 18th and 16th, Camille Valvur placed 21st and 19th, and Sara Koenigsberg finished 24th and 23rd, respectively.

Final Four

Submitted by Andrew Ward



Photo provided

Andrea Ward, a former Orinda Aquatics and Campolindo swimmer, represented UC Santa Barbara at the NCAA Women's Swimming and Diving Championships. She swam the 100 Fly and the 200 Fly. She also qualified for a spot in the 500 yard freestyle.

In the 100 Fly, Ward finished in fourth place with a school record, 51.47 seconds. With the

finish, Ward earned a spot on the podium.

A senior, Ward has dominated the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation, winning at total of 18 titles at the conference championships. She added six titles and two conference records in just this year. Her accomplishments earned her the MPSF Swimmer of the Year award.

Young Gymnast Earns Top Finish at State

Submitted by Mizushima Sullivan



Kian Sullivan on the high bar at the NCBGA State Gymnastics Championships in San Luis Obispo.

Competing for the Head Over Heels Athletic Arts boys' gymnastics team, Kian Sullivan of Orinda competed in the NCBGA State Gymnastics Championships. Sullivan placed fifth in the All-Around in 8-year-old category and second on Vault.

His scores from championships on March 8 put him in good standing to compete in the upcoming regional meet in Phoenix, where he is planning to compete in all six events (floor, pommel, rings, vault, parallel bars, and high bar).

Water Polo Club Wins in SoCal

Submitted by Mark VandenBerghe



Front row, from left: Mike Winther, Scott Murphy, Jaime Steingraf, Mark Laurland, Chase McFarland, Jay Mills; middle row: Dash McFarland, Tyler Smith, Luke VandenBerghe, Aidan Vollmar, Logan Estes, Mac Darin; back row: Coach Doug Smith, Tom McGuire, Coach Tor Jensen, Soren Jensen, Coach Kirk Jensen; not pictured: Dylan Grausz.

The Lamorinda-based CC United Water Polo Club's 12-and-under team won the KAP7 International Water Polo Tournament in Irvine in February. CC United was undefeated through the tournament beating Vanguard of Huntington Beach 11-6, Orange County Water Polo 12-4, San Clemente Tritons Water Polo 13-

9, and Laguna Beach 11-9. The final game against Laguna Beach was a huge victory for the team as they came back from a deficit at half time with a strong third quarter. The tournament is great preparation for the team as they prepare for the Junior Olympic National Championships in July.

Dons Dry Spell Ended

Submitted by Bob Chance



From left: Coach Bob Chance, Andrew Nakahara, Assistant Coach Micah Canestaro.

Four wrestlers represented Acalanes at the NCS Wrestling Championships at Newark Memorial on Feb. 28 and March 1: Tai White, Brian Lilienstein, Andrew Nakahara, and Sam

Ridge. Nakahara reached the medal rounds, coming in at 8th place, breaking a 15-year dry spell for medaling at NCS for Acalanes.

A First Championship

Submitted by Karl Richtenburg



From left: Bryce Bergerson, Erez Waite, Henry Werner, Camden Sinha, Charles Richtenburg, Augie Martinez, and Micah Cockrum.

The Blue Renegades won the Lamorinda Kindergarten Saturday Indoor

Soccer championship on March 15. They won 4-2.

CYO Champs

Submitted by Meredith Meade



Back row, from left: Coach Jim Gebhardt, Coach Steve Haggerty, Coach Dan Meade; middle row: Erin Meade, Claire Rowell, Madison Rogers, JoJo Flower, Morgan Coolbaugh, Makenzie Sauer; front row: Mia Mastrov, Julia Haggerty, Grace Gebhardt.

The St. Perpetua fifth grade girls captured the American Division Oakland Diocese Champi-

onship on March 8 with a 41-25 win over Good Shepherd of Pittsburg.

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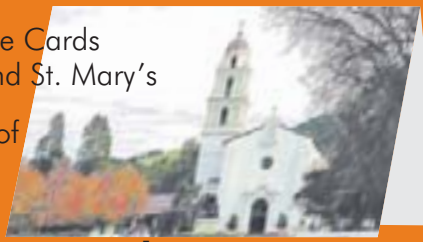
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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 08 Issue 2 Wednesday, March 26, 2014



Gardening Guide

...read on page D8

Award-Winning 'Wine Cave' Goes Beyond a Refrigerator

By Chris Lavin

Wine is important to many Lamorinda families – some even have dedicated specialized refrigerators to store the good stuff. But if you have a winery, why not dig a cave? Yes, a real cave.

“We wanted someplace with temperature and humidity control,” said David Rey, who with his wife Dianne and two more generations owns the Reliez Valley Vineyards in Lafayette. They have grapes, they have machinery. They needed space.

To get a cave, one must dig. To find out how and where, Rey called the Orinda architect who designed his home and outbuildings back in the early 1990s, Rick Kattenburg.

“I originally designed the home on the 2-and-a-half acre property in 1991,” Kattenburg said. He added a pool cabana, an outdoor kitchen, and a garage with a game room on top almost 10 years later. Then they started on “the cave.”

The Reys' grape vines were already in the ground, and doing well. But the resulting wine needed space to age.

Spelunkers have known the secret for years – crawl down into an existing cave some 20 or 30 or more feet, and you get into the special thermal realm of 50 to 55 degrees, a perfect temperature for storing wine. It can be 100 degrees outside, or even below freezing, and still 55 down in the caves. So Rey called Kattenburg, and Kattenburg called in the bulldozers. The equipment started



It might look like a barn, but this seasonal storage shed is equipped with a winch on steroids to lift heavy equipment back and forth.

Photo provided

humming in 2012.

Architect Kattenburg has been in business for 35 years in Orinda, and specializes in residential projects. Rey's home was a big project, complicated, he said, but it helped that the homeowner was so involved.

...continued on page D4

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	8	\$735,000	\$1,950,000
MORAGA	6	\$500,000	\$1,300,000
ORINDA	11	\$700,000	\$1,525,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

- 3305 Ameno Drive, \$1,231,000, 3 Bdrms, 2055 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 2-19-14
 1130 Glen Road, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 2099 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 2-18-14
 110 Haslemere Court #4, \$735,000, 3 Bdrms, 2025 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 2-26-14
 860 Hope Lane, \$1,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 1689 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 2-25-14;
 Previous Sale: \$450,000, 04-29-99
 3858 Quail Ridge Road, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2883 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 2-19-14;
 Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 07-07-05
 25 Richelle Court, \$1,325,000, 3 Bdrms, 2284 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 2-26-14;
 Previous Sale: \$951,000, 10-29-09
 3351 Springhill Road, \$1,950,000, 3 Bdrms, 1396 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 2-25-14
 3142 Sweetbrier Circle, \$885,000, 4 Bdrms, 1624 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 2-21-14;
 Previous Sale: \$76,000, 08-18-76

MORAGA

- 116 Corliss Drive, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2288 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 2-26-14;
 Previous Sale: \$995,000, 02-23-11
 107 Fairfield Place, \$650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1760 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 2-21-14
 120 Merion Terrace, \$985,000, 3 Bdrms, 2725 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 2-21-14;
 Previous Sale: \$375,000, 02-25-88
 533 Moraga Road #230, \$756,000, 2706 SqFt, 2008 YrBlt, 2-20-14
 454 Rheem Boulevard, \$500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1322 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 2-21-14
 42 Sea Pines Street, \$985,000, 3 Bdrms, 2828 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 2-18-14;
 Previous Sale: \$745,000, 08-17-01

ORINDA

- 31 Charles Hill Road, \$975,000, 3 Bdrms, 1911 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 2-14-14;
 Previous Sale: \$142,000, 10-17-78
 25 Dias Dorados, \$810,000, 4 Bdrms, 1966 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 2-19-14;
 Previous Sale: \$950,000, 03-21-05
 16 East Altarinda Drive, \$1,525,000, 3 Bdrms, 2577 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 2-19-14;
 Previous Sale: \$1,450,000, 06-19-13
 10 Ellen Court, \$850,000, 3 Bdrms, 1523 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 2-19-14;
 Previous Sale: \$347,000, 11-17-93
 1 Estates Court, \$1,075,000, 3 Bdrms, 2184 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 2-14-14;
 Previous Sale: \$310,000, 07-29-96
 1 Estates Drive, \$700,000, 1 Bdrms, 1138 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 2-19-14;
 Previous Sale: \$36,000, 05-28-71
 3 Fleetwood Court, \$1,155,000, 4 Bdrms, 2241 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 2-19-14
 29 Las Piedras, \$749,000, 2 Bdrms, 1017 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 2-20-14;
 Previous Sale: \$480,000, 03-11-11
 103 Oak Road, \$950,000, 4 Bdrms, 1795 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 2-14-14;
 Previous Sale: \$790,000, 01-16-09
 31 Vista Del Orinda, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1238 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 2-25-14
 535 the Glade, \$1,000,000, 2 Bdrms, 2175 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 2-25-14



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Wine Cave

...continued from page D1



Architect Rick Kattenburg in his Orinda office.

Photo Chris Lavin

Kattenburg says he loves working with Rey, who was involved at every step of the project.

They both watched as the 20-foot hole became a magnificent 1,000-square-foot barrel storage area, with a huge dining table in the center for entertaining, tasting and mixing. Now it's not only a center for tasting, but for socializing.

"It's incredible," Kattenburg says.

But the road to fruition was long. The first step was, where to put a cave? Kattenburg gets out a piece of paper.

"We built the house originally with a fire truck turnout above the house," he said, his pencil outlining a driveway in his architect's hand. "We didn't want guests having to look down on cars." Face it, would you want to gaze out into the valley with a glass of wine in your hand, or onto a parking lot?

They decided to dig the cave under the turnout – again thinking of unobstructed views, should equipment be in use. But at about 10 feet, the soil turned to rock. Heavier equipment like jackhammers were ordered. The hole got deeper.

...continued on page D6



Owner David Rey and architect Rick Kattenburg decided on adding an entertainment area to the "wine cave," so tastings and dinners could be had right alongside barrels of aging wine. The chandelier in the center is made from a wine barrel.

Photos courtesy Rick Kattenburg



Reliez Valley Vineyards has more than one area for tasting and mixing, including this subterranean room that also serves as a tasting area for micro-brewed beer.

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*Per tax records



Wine Cave

...continued from page D4

In the digging of the cave, Kattenburg and Rey discovered veins of shells that signified the edge of an ocean. Lamorinda Weekly covered that discovery of 6-million-year-old clam fossils (see story at <https://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0610/Beachfront-Vineyard-in-Lafayette-Cave-Dig-Unearths-6-10-Million-Year-Old-Fossils.html>). The geology caused Kattenburg to modify the access to the



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cave, and a bent tunnel was built underground on a downward slope to tie in with the wine cave. Rey knew that the lime-rich history of the soil would be good for his grapes.

The project ended up, after completion, winning the 2014 Houzz Design Award, a coveted architectural prize awarded by the 16 million users of the Houzz site. "We are so honored," Kattenburg said. "It's a big deal."

Rey's relatively small 2-plus acres have cabernet sauvignon, zinfandel, syrah and other grapes lining the property. He also has a micro-brewery in the family, with the wine cave at its center. "It's a working wine cave," he said. "It's beautiful."

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Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for April

"April hath put a spirit of youth in everything." – William Shakespeare

By Cynthia Brian

Beginning at age 8 when we were taught to drive, it was the responsibility of my siblings and me to water our crops one plant at a time starting in April and continuing throughout the warm months. My parents were "dry farmers," meaning that we had no source of irrigation for our fields. My dad built a stainless steel tank on the back of his World War II Willy Jeep, and every day my sisters and I would pump water from the creek or well into the tank, then drive through the fields stopping at each vine or tree to offer a drink. The work was tedious and arduous yet necessary for the survival of our family farm. Although not always pretty, the fruit from our dry farming techniques was super sweet, delicious, and perpetually in high demand. In another act of water management, my dad snaked the washing machine hose to the asparagus patch where after a long day on the tractor, we'd smother our aches in the warm mud. H2O was precious and never a drop was wasted. April is the month for youthful romping and creative conservation. Get busy digging in the dirt as spring has sprung.

- **CUT** back all plants, vines, trees, and bushes damaged by winter frosts.
- **PRUNE** shrubs scheduled to bloom in summer before their growth spurt. Lilacs, forsythia, and tulip trees can be pruned after they finish their spring bloom.
- **GROW** hardy, low maintenance cordylines, also known as festival grasses, in large containers or use in your landscape to provide splashes of vertical color.
- **CELEBRATE** Earth Day by honoring our planet, the supplier of life to over seven billion humans.
- **SUFFERING** from arthritis? Seed tape is a quick and easy way to sow seeds when mobility is compromised. Burpee, Park Seed, and Territorial Seed are among the suppliers available at your favorite retailer.
- **WATCH** your water usage. Be responsible with irrigation by watering in the morning or evening, using gray water whenever possible.
- **TAKE** pictures of your spring garden to share with others and to use as a guideline for harvesting times.
- **APPLY** two to three inches of compost around perennials, trees, and shrubs.
- **SKIP** tilling your soil unless you are starting a new bed. Tilling has been found to be harmful to the beneficial microbes, fungi, worms, and insects that help your garden grow.
- **CONTINUE** planting root crops of turnips, carrots, beets, radishes, and potatoes. Succession sowing keeps your harvest hearty.
- **PULL** or cut weeds as soon as they sprout to conserve water and nutrients for the plantings you want to showcase.
- **ATTRACT** beneficial bugs, bees, butterflies, and birds to your landscape by eliminating all pesticides and insecticides while providing a natural habitat for abundant food, shelter, water, and protection from prey.
- **PROPOGATE** drought resistant sexy succulents from cuttings.
- **PLANT** onions, chives, blueberries, lilies, dusty miller, alyssum, dianthus, and oregano.
- **PICK** fragrant lilacs and wisteria to decorate your interiors.
- **SET** out plants that you started indoors in February.
- **APPRECIATE** the shrill calls of the red-tailed hawks as they rid your garden of moles, voles, gophers, mice, and rats. These hunters can detect a mouse from 360 feet.
- **LOOKING** for the perfect rose that isn't in your local nursery or garden center? Check out Edmunds' Roses at www.edmundsroses.com for a huge selection in every color including hybrid teas, grandifloras, floribundas, groundcover roses, climbing roses, antiques, and tree roses.
- **CHOOSE** bird feeders that are appropriate for the birds that visit your yard. Make sure to keep all feeders away from windows to avoid bird strikes and injuries.
- **TRELLIS** a dwarf fruit tree for easier harvesting. Apple, peach, pear, plum, and apricot can be trained to grow vertically or horizontally. You may need two trees as pollinators.



A parade of spring color with delphiniums, tulips, and pansies.

Photo Cynthia Brian

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Anne Knight

Realtor
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5 Corte Bombero, Orinda

Located on a sunny court just minutes from downtown Orinda, 5 Corte Bombero is a dream home on a .65 acre lot. Traditional in style and thoughtfully updated, this home has it all.

- 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms
- Open, inviting floor plan for all to enjoy
- Vaulted, exposed wood ceiling in living room with traditional wood burning fireplace
- Beautifully updated and meticulously maintained
- Hardwood floors throughout
- Secluded court location minutes from downtown Orinda, BART and freeway



Single Story Ranch in the heart of Burton Valley!

567 Silverado Drive, Lafayette



This fabulous home offers a flexible floor plan including 3 bedrooms, two full baths and a family room. From the white picket fence surrounding the level, professionally landscaped front yard, to thoughtful details such as crown molding, Bamboo floors, recently installed bay windows, and several access points to the backyard, this home combines traditional character with modern comforts and seamless indoor outdoor living. Ideally located just steps away from Burton Valley Elementary School, Merriewood Children's Center and Ranchos

Colorados Swim & Tennis Club. Convenient to downtown, Lafayette Community Center, and Lafayette Regional Bike Trail. A wonderful home in the heart of Burton Valley!

**Offered at
\$1,185,000**

virtual tour at www.567silveradodrive.com



Presented by

SUE LAYNG

Cell: 925-963-7189 • Sue@SueLayng.com • www.SueLayng.com
CalBRE # 000970956



- **FILL** Easter baskets for the garden lovers on your list with essential garden tools including a pair of sturdy gloves, hand forged trowel, packets of seeds, a water wise nozzle, and a pot of Dutch tulips.
- **PROVIDE** privacy with pathway plantings of tall, upright grasses. Screening grasses which may grow to seven feet tall or more include feather reed grass, switch grass, and maiden grass.
- **SCATTER** seeds of self-sowers such as cosmos, California poppy, blanket flower, nasturtium, sunflower, and pot marigold for annual fireworks of color.
- **STOCK** up on cacti, succulents, and other drought tolerant plants at the Spring Opening Plant Sale on Saturday, April 12 at the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek (<http://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/>).
- **DELIGHT** in the pop of multihued tulips, delphiniums, aquilegia, muscari, hyacinths, and freesia parading in your landscape.

Swing into spring and feel like a kid again. Our gardens are abloom. This earth is yours.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.

©2014 Cynthia Brian

The Goddess Gardener

Cynthia@goddessgardener.com

<http://www.goddessgardener.com>, 925-377-7827

Cynthia is available as a speaker and consultant.



Grasses can be privacy screens. This Australian grass tree also sports fascinating spires that resemble horns at the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek. Photos Cynthia Brian



Lic.: #611120

& Landscaping

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Mulching trees and shrubs conserves water

Mulching is important for trees and also shrubs. Besides being attractive, mulch can be used to conserve soil moisture, to buffer soil temperature extremes, to control weeds and competing vegetation and to replenish organic matter and nutrients in the soil.

The majority of landscape trees evolved in a woodland environment with natural mulch around them. Often the practice is to rake up or blow away any natural mulch in a home landscapes.

In a natural environment, trees generally do not grow in lawns or meadows and their root systems do not compete well against lawn grasses. A mulched area around a tree should be provided for the benefit of the tree. The size of the mulched areas around a tree depends on the size of the tree.

So don't wait until it's too late have a complete inspection by a Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping.

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ORINDA



New Listing

171 Camino Pablo Original 1936 custom 3bd/2ba. Great rm w/Cathedral ceilings & views of beautiful yd. Fam. rm opens to well-appointed kit. w/SS appliances, island. Master Suite retreat w/patio. Indoor/outdoor living.

\$935,000

ORINDA



Pending

5 Corte Bombero Traditional 4bd/2ba beautifully updated home w/ kitchen/ family great rm, exposed wood beam ceiling & fireplace in LR. On .65 ac fenced lot w/plenty of sunshine & outdoor living. Lvl lawns, gardens & brick patios.

\$1,050,000

ORINDA



9 Las Piedras Picturesque private 6bd/3ba home in park like setting w/panoramic views, level lawn & pool. 3745sf classic custom w/vaulted ceilings, walls of windows, hdwd flrs, den, workout rm, FR & well-appointed kitchen.

\$1,329,000

ORINDA



New Listing

52 Singingwood Lane Two story brick enhanced 5bd/2.5ba home on 1.06 ac. Formal entry, living & dining rms, spacious eat-in kit. & large family rm. Mstr retreat upstairs along w/ 3 other bdrms. Dwnstrs bdrn could make perfect ofc.

\$1,495,000

ORINDA



New Listing

14 Silverwood Court Cul-de-sac living at it's best. Enjoy privacy, views, level lawns, pool, spa, full guest house. Ideal for in/outside entertaining & comfort. Incredible luxury living, features & amenities. Great convenient location.

\$1,589,000

ORINDA



New Price

17 Tappan Lane Vistas across Orinda come alive from all rooms of this spacious 4,155 sf with 6 bd/4 ba & 2 half ba. High ceilings & light & bright. Perfect for fun in the sun with yards, decks, pool, & vineyard on 1.15 ac.

\$2,275,000

ORINDA



New Listing

81 Mossbridge Lane Beautifully updated approx. 4540 sf, 6bd/5.5ba Traditional Orinda Downs gem! Form meets function in this exquisite home perched on a private lane. This is the home you have been waiting for!

\$2,795,000

ORINDA



11 Scenic Drive Gorgeous 4bd/3.5ba, 4695 sf single-story Orinda estate on .64 ac lot w/exceptional style & quality; LR & DR; office; showplace kitchen/dining/fam rm; 1bd/1ba guest house; solar heated pool & lrg poolside patio.

\$2,998,000

ORINDA



New Listing

92 Sandhill Road Estate setting of unmatched appeal. Large spaces+ modern design allure for appealing family living or grand scale entertaining. Fab. views of valley & Briones reservoir/sunsets. Walls of windows, high ceilings.

\$4,850,000

MORAGA



Pending

1018 Del Rio Way Updated St. Mary's Garden Home. Level lot with one story five bedroom home - hardwood nearly throughout. Near to Moraga Commons and Saint Mary's College.

\$1,179,000

MORAGA



New Listing

119 Sandringham Dr. S. Light & bright executive cul-de-sac rancher w/ indr/outdr feel, gourmet granite kitchen, hdwd flrs, custom wndws, Anderson sliding drs, mstr ba w/steam shwr & heated flrs. Lvl yd, flagstone patio, views.

\$1,399,000

LAFAYETTE



971 Pleasant Hill Road Light & airy contemporary on private .50 ac Mt. Diablo view lot. 4 spacious bd & 3.5 ba incl. 2 mstr suites. Updated kit. w/brkfst bar. Large LR&DR. Huge mstr suite w/priv. deck, ofc area, 2 car attached gar.

\$995,000

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

567 Silverado Drive Fabulous traditional ranch on lvl lot, completely fenced, great for family living indoor & outdoor. Lovely bamboo flrs, vaulted ceilings, tons of natural light & easy access to schls, Swim Clubs & Lafayette Bike Trail.

\$1,185,000

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

1110 Via Media Ideally located 5bd/5ba home near town & commute w/Mt. Diablo views. Amazing in-lav suite w/kitchen & laundry room. Bedroom upstairs is great office. Four bedrooms downstairs, each w/own bath.

\$1,395,000

LAFAYETTE



New Listing

1250 Laurel Lane Stylish 4bd/3.5ba family home on a picturesque .9 acres. Great layout. Fully remodeled with high end finishes and thoughtful extras. Central courtyard, level lawns, gardens and views!

\$2,300,000

BLACKHAWK



New Listing

20 Chestnut Place Extraordinary Blackhawk Country Club 4980 square foot, country French style estate with pool on sought after cul de sac. Vaulted ceilings, Master suite with fireplace and adjoining office.

\$1,999,000



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