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Energy, healing and fitness. Master Marilyn Cooper of the Little River Kung Fu School teaches Orinda seniors the slow, synchronized movements of T'ai Chi Ch'uan. From left: Delafrooz Mostaghimi, Azam Moini, Erika Bojnowski, Ron Clendenen, Lupe Jimeno, and Tasha Benjamin, social work coordinator, Orinda Senior Village. Photo Ohlen Alexander

# Boomers and Beyond Take Aging in Stride

By Laurie Snyder

**N**ews flash: You're aging. Whether you're keeping Mother Nature at bay with a Botox-filled syringe or are letting laugh lines deepen as you march gleefully forward with Father Time, you will be older by the time you reach the end of this article.

The good news is that you're not alone. According to "Creating Aging-Friendly Communities," a 2009 report by the Center for the Advanced Study of Aging Services at the University of California, Berkeley, the number of Americans aged 65 and over will balloon from 1 in 8 in 2000 to 1 in 5

in 2030. This seismic shift is already being felt in Lamorinda as active baby boomers are making clear that they will not "go gently into that good night." Many will skip the nursing homes of old to age in place, they say, until they age no more.

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**Quote of the Week:**

*"It's not enough to curse the darkness of the past. Above all, we have to illuminate the future."*  
Read Yom HaShoah – What the Holocaust Can Teach Us, on page B2.

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# At Long Last, a Labor Agreement

By Nick Marnell

**N**o corks popped out of champagne bottles. No confetti fell from the ceiling. No party banners unfurled at the April 16 district meeting after the ratification of the tentative agreement between the Moraga-Orinda Fire District and the United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County.

In fact, the mood was downright funeral.

Local 1230 officials and a smattering of the rank and file sat silently in the back of the room as Moraga resident and past MOFD director Dick Olsen assailed the proposed labor agreement. "I am absolutely astonished," said Olsen, the only member of the public to speak out. "This is one of the most one-sided documents that I have ever seen." He noted that the contract terms included a potential increase in firefighter pay of over 12 percent (see sidebar) along with a reduction in district service of 21 percent, as the number of on duty firefighters has recently decreased from 19 to 17. "The sacri-

fice should be shared equally between the union and the public," he said.

Director Alex Evans agreed that there will be service cutbacks, and he also acknowledged that the contract was not perfect, but he stressed that the district had to make the deal in order to continue as a sustainable entity. Along that same line, fire chief Stephen Healy later said that in order to produce an agreement, the district agreed to the revenue sharing compromise: The district needed an early wage reduction to help stabilize the general fund, and "asking the union to agree to pay cuts – with no guarantee of restoration or future wage increases – when they hadn't had a raise since 2008 and their health care rates capped since 2010, was never going to lead to an agreement," said the chief.

A big concern for director Steve Anderson was the automatic nature of the wage increases. Anderson noted that not long ago, the district was close to becoming insolvent;

should tough times reoccur, the district will be forced to pay the wage increases promised in the agreement. "We could be in a position where we will have no choice but to lay off people," said Anderson. He cast the sole dissenting vote, as the motion to approve the tentative agreement passed 3-1, with director Fred Weil absent.

By a two-thirds majority, the union ratified the agreement earlier in April.

"I lose sleep that we agreed to this contract," said Vince Wells, Local 1230 president, after the meeting. Sounding similar in tone to Evans, he continued. "We didn't agree because we think it's best; we agreed to it because it would settle a labor dispute."

He explained that the union had no idea what contract terms the district may have imposed had mediation not succeeded. "If MOFD had imposed the 9.5 percent pay cut, that could have continued forever," said Wells.

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