

# Massage Envy Opens in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Jesse Waters, Diana Recalde, Laura Lott, Dillon Lowe, Joy Moore and Jasper Gillespie.  
Photo Sophie Braccini

Massage Envy is a fast growing franchise with more than 950 spas opened over the last 12 years. The business formula combines a membership-based fee, which makes massages and facials more affordable, with a selection of specialized massage therapists and beauticians. The two friends who purchased the first license in Lamorinda, Laura Lott and Joy Moore, met in the corporate world and wanted to start something together that fed their souls. Their grand opening celebration is on May 8 in Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center.

Massage Envy clients are greeted in a large, softly colored entryway by friendly staff and ushered into one of the 11 private treatment rooms; one room is dedicated to couple's massage and another is fragrance-free.

Lott and Moore met 20 years ago while working in human resources for Motorola. They kept in touch over the years even when careers and families took them to different places. "We were just looking for something that would resonate for both of us," says Lott. Then one day Moore was visiting Lott in Atlanta and was treated to a massage at Massage Envy by her friend. "When I saw how it was run, and I got this really great massage, it just spoke to me," recalls Moore. "As we left the place Laura and I looked at each other and the light bulb went off; this would be the perfect business for us."

They contacted the company's headquarters, were interviewed and then quickly accepted into the system. It took them a while to find the right place and get trained. "Massage Envy's regional developer recommended different places," says Moore. "When we looked at Lamorinda we immediately loved it." They searched for a place that was large enough, had enough parking, and would be safe. The Rheem Shopping Center was a good fit; they combined two existing retail spaces and, aside from a few incidents common in construction, things moved smoothly toward the soft opening on April 21.

Recruiting the right massage therapists has been their highest priority. "Massage Envy has very strict requirements regarding the massage

therapists we hire (never use the word *masseuse* in front of them), licensing, experience, criminal background check," says Lott. "The hard part about the interviews is that we have to get a massage ourselves," adds Moore with a smile.

Moore says that she trained with the No. 1 store in the region for 18 months to understand not only the business model but also what makes the difference between a good massage and a great massage. They hired massage therapists who have additional specialized training in areas such as treating migraines or sports injuries. "We are now training them to make sure they master all the details, such as warming hands, being able to really listen to the person's preference, and accommodating differences," says Moore.

The marketing concept behind the success of Massage Envy is the membership that people purchase to get massages at a discount. For \$59.99 a month, clients get a monthly one-hour massage (the regular price is \$109.99), additional massages are \$49.99. "We got calls from Lamorinda residents who are already Massage Envy members and go to Walnut Creek for their treatment," explains Moore. "With their membership, they can go to any Massage Envy nationally."

"People can give one or many of their monthly massages to someone of their choice," adds Moore, "for example, there is a local small business owner who purchased a membership and gives a massage to the employee of the month."

Services include relaxation, deep tissue, sports and foot massage, and specialized treatments such as cranial sacral therapy, geriatric and prenatal massage; they also offer aromatherapy and facials using skin products by Murad. Massage Envy is open every day at 558 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center; call (925) 376-3689 or go to [www.facebook.com/MassageEnvyLamorinda](http://www.facebook.com/MassageEnvyLamorinda).

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

## Trivia Bee Buzz

By Amanda Kuehn



From left: Chamber president Sylvia Jorgensen; winning Aklan Boy Scouts team members Eric Jorgensen, Ruth Helsel, Ed Isely, Joe Squeri, Patricia Young, and Michele Poloka; Rotary president Sue Breedlove.  
Photo Cathy Dausman

A buzz of excitement filled the air of the Orinda Masonic Lodge the evening of April 25 as Sue Breedlove, president of the Orinda Rotary Club, took the stage. Clad in a yellow and black-striped costume, black antennae headband and white synthetic wings, Breedlove grabbed the mic and announced the start of the first ever Orinda Trivia Bee, presented by Orinda Rotary and Orinda Chamber of Commerce.

What is the name of the Pillsbury dough-boy? Muffled whispers filled the room, as members of the Lamorinda Weekly Team debated between Puffy and Puff, before settling on Pop-pin' Fresh (the correct answer).

Sixteen teams participated in four rounds of trivia queries. Team Lamorinda Weekly was tied with the Orinda Arts Council for first place at the end of Round A. Though some argument had ensued over the meaning of antepenulti-

mate, the team was doing well. Round B brought 20 more questions, including a local fact about the elevation of Orinda and a challenge to name a popular Vietnamese sandwich. The Weekly fell to second place, with four other teams tying for first. By the end of Round C, tension had grown, with team members debating over the third color in a barber's pole and the lyrics to YMCA. Round D proved the most challenging for the members of Team Lamorinda Weekly, none of whom knew the common name for sodium hypochlorite (bleach).

At the end, four teams were tied at 69 points each; the Weekly eked out a total of 66 points. Based on their scores in Round D, the orange-shirted friends of the Aklan Boy Scouts were deemed the winners of the evening and rose to the stage to claim their prize – an \$800 check made out to their favorite non-profit organization.

## business briefs

### Total Clean Receives Moraga Small Business Award 2014



Kimberly Winter, owner of Total Clean, received Moraga's Small Business of the Year Award.  
Photo Ohlen Alexander

Kimberly Winter's Total Clean has taken care of hundreds of homes in Lamorinda for almost 30 years. The service business started by the graduate of Saint Mary's College employs some 20 people who can be seen driving around the area in the spotless white cars displaying the company logo. At the Chamber of Commerce meeting on May 1, Winter received the Small Business of the Year award from the chamber and she is invited to participate in the 14th Annual Small Business Awards Luncheon on May 9 at the Concord Hilton, honoring award winning small business owners selected by their respective chambers of commerce throughout Contra Costa County and the Tri-Valley. Total Clean is located at 329-B Rheem Blvd. in Moraga, (925) 376-1004, and on the web at [totalclean.biz](http://totalclean.biz).

### Filice Insurance East Bay Relocates to Moraga

1150 Moraga Way, Moraga  
(925) 962-1980, [www.filice.com](http://www.filice.com)



Filice Insurance; women, from left: Joyce Manasala, Britney Baker-Goodgame, Nancy Centeno, Michelle Rumberg, Denise Kelly, Jansmine Perez; men: Tony Hart, Eric Pogue, Ryan Preston, Dan Michellini and Eric Bjornson.  
Photo Sophie Braccini

Filice Insurance is a benefits consulting firm that was created by Ron Filice in San Jose in 1989. The company steadily grew and now has a presence in Sacramento, Irvine and San Jose. The East Bay office, led by Dan Michellini, was located on Mount Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette but a few months ago it acquired a completely renovated office building in Moraga. "We have 34 employees here," says Michellini. "The previous office had a great location near the Veterans Building, but it was run down. This one has been completely remodeled to our needs." The new site is wide and lets plenty of natural light in, the offices are spacious and there is even an exercise room for the team. Many of the staff live in Lamorinda and all are quite happy to be in Moraga. "We have started to explore our options for lunch around Moraga," says benefit consultant Eric Bjornson, who lives in Orinda and who would not divulge his favorite. "We are already part of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce and will continue to be very active in the business community," adds Michellini.

### GemLust Opens in Lafayette

3529 Mt Diablo Blvd., Lafayette  
(925) 385-7121



GemLust Photo provided by Renée Kubryk

Renée Kubryk is a professional jeweler who works with private clients to procure and design unique presents such as engagement rings. For a while, she's had an eBay store where she sold jewelry and also used designer bags and accessories. She also recently decided to open her first retail shop in Lafayette. "I chose Lafayette because I love the diversity

of this community," she says. "I had great pleasure designing a clean and elegant look for my store, to give clients the feeling that they are in a celebrity closet." The shop is inviting and elegant. "I learned that the customer experience must be flawless, whether people come here to buy or sell," adds Kubryk, "and since we have a college here, I added a bargain corner." GemLust is open three days a week, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and by appointment the rest of the time. "I continue to be a private jeweler, that is why the store is open only part time," she adds. The soft opening of GemLust was in April and Kubryk plans a grand opening with the Chamber of Commerce in the near future.

### Moraga's Parkmon Vineyard Wins "Best of Show – White"

(925) 631-7981

[www.parkmon.com](http://www.parkmon.com)

Parkmon Vineyard won "Best of Show – White" at the Brentwood Contra Costa Winegrowers Commercial Wine Competition. A panel of six judges spent the morning sipping 40 wines from nine wineries, seven of them in Contra Costa County, during the association's third annual event. Parkmon Vineyard belongs to the Lamorinda Wine Growers Association.

### Honorees at Coldwell Banker Residential in Orinda

5 Moraga Way, Orinda

(925) 253-4600

Nancy Stryker has earned membership in the Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage International President's Premier Society and Andi Peterson Brown was named to Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage International President's Circle. Stryker grew up in Berkeley and has lived in Lafayette for 39 years. A graduate of the University of Washington and an active member of the community, she is a professional member of the Contra Costa Board of Realtors and the California Association of Realtors. Brown is an Orinda native who joined Coldwell Banker in 2009 after five years of marketing and selling homes with The Mark Company in San Francisco. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa and Magna Cum Laude from UCLA, and was a member of the 2008 USC Lusk School of Real Estate's Ross Fellowship program. She currently enjoys membership in both the California and National Association of Realtors. Reach Stryker at (925) 890-6911 or [nancystryker@gmail.com](mailto:nancystryker@gmail.com) and Brown at (925) 818-4588 or [andi.brown@camoves.com](mailto:andi.brown@camoves.com).



Nancy Stryker



Andi Peterson Brown

### News from the three Chambers of Commerce

Ribbon cutting at Massage Envy, 558 Center Street in the Moraga Rheem Shopping Center, at 5 p.m. on May 8; both the Lafayette and Moraga chambers of commerce will participate.

#### Lafayette

Monthly mixer at Wine Thieves from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on May 14, 3401 Mt Diablo Blvd. A variety of wines and fresh artisan cheeses will be served.

The Tour de Lafayette, on May 18, is co-sponsored by Go Lafayette and the Chamber of Commerce. Cyclists from all over the area will tour downtown Lafayette as a short tribute to le Tour de France from 2 to 6 p.m. Riders will be stopping in businesses all over Lafayette, who might give a "take-away" ranging from a cookie, to a small cupcake, to a mug of cold beer. The Melt, a local food truck, will be parked in La Fiesta Square parking lot, serving comfort food, like grilled cheese sandwiches and tomato soup. 12th annual Taste of Lafayette, May 20 from 5:30 to 9 p.m., starting with music, wine and appetizers at the Lafayette Plaza. Tickets on the Chamber of Commerce website, [www.Lafayettechamber.org](http://www.Lafayettechamber.org).

#### Moraga

Community Faire on May 10 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; fun, discovery, food, and activities for the whole family.

#### Orinda

Mixer at RPM Mortgage from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on May 22 at 51 Moraga Way #2.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact  
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