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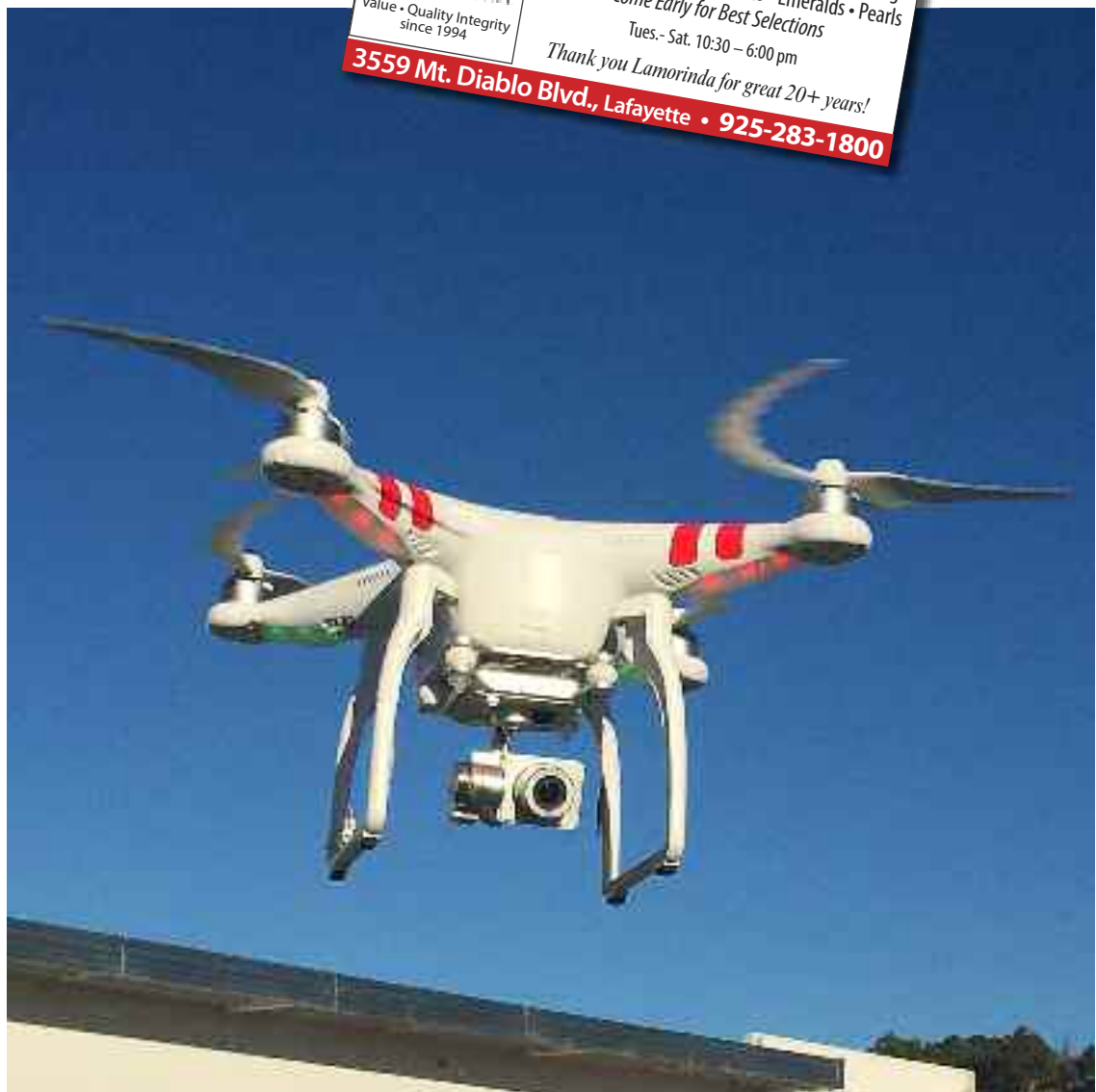
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Weighing in at just 3 pounds, Mark Culpepper's quad copter is loaded with high-tech instrumentation.

Photo Mark Culpepper



Realtor Vlatka Bathgate uses her drone to take spectacular photos of homes.

Photo Andy Schreck

Drones in Lamorinda

The good, the bad, the unmanned

By Cathy Dausman

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird ... it's a plane! No, it's a drone – that 21st century unmanned aerial vehicle quickly making its way into commercial and private sectors even in Lamorinda.

While drones are undeniably part of today's automation trend (drones made the cover of the August *Popular*

Science magazine), their use falls where technology meets government regulation, and threatens personal privacy.

Simple safety issues regarding their flight remain as-yet unsolved. Peg Shasky of Moraga recently experienced a personal close encounter with a drone while driving. "I was on Moraga Road near Campolindo (high school)

when a drone flew right in front of my windshield," she said. It hovered there a few moments before its operators, a group of young adults on the nearby soccer field regained control. Shasky considered confronting the drone operators, but decided instead to drive off.

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Moraga Raises the Rent

By Sophie Braccini



Holes 13 and 14 (both par 5) are on part of the leased land at the MCC golf course, as photographed here from Mulholland Ridge. The Moraga Adobe is on the right.
Photo Andy Schreck

The Moraga Country Club has paid the Town of Moraga \$4,200 per year, for the last 20 years, as rent for roughly 60 acres of land on which holes nine to 18 of the golf course are situated. The complex deal is a remnant of the surrender of a freeway project that dates back to the 1970s. Now the town, carefully adhering to an agreement laid out more than 20 years ago, has increased the annual rent to \$63,250.

The stage was set in the '70s and the story played out as the 20th century wound down. The state had purchased land to build a highway in Moraga that was to run from Route 24 through the Gateway Valley (now the Wilder development), behind Miramonte High School, and down to Moraga Way. Due to lack of both funding and local consensus, the state finally abandoned the project in 1987 and proceeded with the sale of the land. "The property belonged to Caltrans, and as a municipality we had first right to buy it," recalls Al Dessayer, who participated in 12 years of negotiations with the state and the country club, and was Moraga's mayor when the final agreement was signed.

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California Reads event opens discussions of war and the wounded - page B2.



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