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Current Claims Life of Local Teen



Photo provided

A large crowd of family and friends gathered at the Moraga Commons Park Nov. 2 to pay tribute to the life of 18-year-old

Bryan Capdevielle, who is presumed drowned after he and a younger brother got in trouble in the water off Asilomar State Beach near Monterey on Oct. 25. A nearby surfer was able to rescue the 16-year-old boy. Search teams were not able to find Capdevielle and the effort was called off the next day. Capdevielle recently graduated from the Acalanes Center for Independent Study. He is remembered as a wonderful young man full of life, creativity and happiness. He is survived by his parents, grandparents and three siblings.

- S. Braccini

In Memory

Ralph Uhrig



Ralph Uhrig of Orinda, California passed away peacefully after a brief battle with cancer on October 29th at the age of 81. Ralph was born and raised in Bellingham, Washington. After serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, Ralph attended Western Washington University where he met his wife of 56 years, Betty. After graduation, the couple established their home in Northern California. They

have been residents of Orinda for the past 53 years. Ralph was a teacher with the Oakland Unified School District where he taught wood shop, drafting and math for 22 years while also earning his Master's Degree in Education at the University of California, Berkeley. A gifted woodworker, Ralph parlayed that skill into a second career, founding Uhrig Construction Company in 1980. Ralph is survived by his wife, Betty; children Heidi Guest of Paradise Valley, AZ, Katherine Merhige of Afton, VA and Robert Uhrig of Valencia, CA; sons-in-law Monte Guest and Robert Merhige; daughter-in-law, Julie; grandchildren Caitlin, John, Lauren, Beau, Nicholas, Caroline and Avery; and his sister, Marian Boe of Bellingham, Washington. A memorial service will be held on Monday, November 10th at 2pm at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephen's Drive, Orinda, CA 94563. The family is grateful for those who wish to make a contribution to Hospice of The East Bay; 3470 Buskirk Avenue; Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only).

Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis.

email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Editor:

We were interested to read Bill Brown's letter to the *Lamorinda Weekly* (October 22) wherein he categorically rejects the reasonable assertion that older Orindans living in large homes might someday want to downsize and remain in Orinda, calling this notion "a complete fabrication."

We beg to differ.

Many older homeowners downsize for a variety of reasons. We know Orindans who made this decision and would have preferred to remain in Orinda but had to relocate elsewhere because of the lack of suitable housing alternatives. In fact, one of the signatories to this letter, a prominent Orinda volunteer who owned a large home here for many years, has just moved to a home in Moraga after a fruitless search for suitable replacement housing in Orinda. One-third of Orindans are 65 or older. Mr. Brown says he knows several, but clearly he doesn't know them all. There are many, like the undersigned, who moved to Orinda for the same reasons he did and who want to continue to enjoy living here.

But we are realists who take a long view. We expect that at some point we—like many before us—may wish to downsize for any number of reasons: perhaps to free up equity in our current home, eliminate the burden of maintenance, and/or transfer our home to children who grew up here and who now have families of their own and wish to live here. A condominium or apartment downtown, within walking distance of restaurants and other retail services, public spaces and amenities including BART, would be an attractive alternative to moving elsewhere in Lamorinda or Walnut Creek.

No one is asking Mr. Brown or anyone he knows to move from their homes in the semi-rural areas of Orinda. They should stay in their homes as long as they wish and are able to do so, as will we. But Mr. Brown does not speak for us and others who, when we have outgrown our homes, may wish to remain in Orinda, specifically in a smaller and more conveniently located residence in a downtown with village character.

Bob and Karen Burt, Dennis Fay, Cassandra Forth, Mark and Carol Penskar, Mark Roberts, Tom Trowbridge
Orinda

Editor:

There goes Moraga, really. I am stunned. Personally, I was so accustomed to reading about these monster development plans year after year. Yet these plans never moved forward ... until now.

If you have a sentimental bone in your body, do not turn right onto Moraga Way when you drive out of Safeway; you will be sickened to see what is coming. And truly do not turn right off Moraga Way onto Camino Ricardo! I am warning you.

If you enjoy our annual Pear Festival, you will be saddened to see all of these old pear trees being ripped out, and the ground being plowed. Seeing this actually happen after being numbed into thinking that it never would ... and, just how many additional homes are being built across from the Rheem Shopping Center? Can you even imagine? If you live on the other side of town, maybe you don't realize the scope of the new construction that is already underway. Only by seeing where the construction has started will you begin to realize the impact that this huge swell in population will have on our community. Personally, I am going to avoid the Camino Ricardo construction area; I have already seen enough to get this upset.

This rapid-fire development is nightmarish. Nothing could have prevented this because it was privately owned property? What happened to preserving our "semi-rural suburb?" I remember the outcry about OSH and how that one store would bring trucks and all sorts of additional traffic into

Join our Public Forum

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to letters@lamorindaweekly.com and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.

Civic News Moraga

MPD's New Lieutenant – and Next Police Chief?

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"If I have one person in this town who does not feel safe, then I still have a lot of work to do."

He is working with Priebe on pushing out body-worn cameras for Moraga's officers. "These are fantastic tools," said King, who has experienced wearing one himself. "We're transparent, we act in public places; there is nothing wrong with

recording things." He explains that as a supervisor, these tools give him an opportunity to sit down with officers and have them review how they do their jobs; but there are limitations – a single camera provides only one angle on a story. He cites the example of a BART shooting where 23 different camera records were needed to get

an accurate picture of what happened.

King admits that he hopes to take the helm when Priebe retires. Right now he is enjoying learning from the experienced chief and meeting the community. "Life is grand," concluded King. "I cherish every day, and I want to continue to go out and make a difference."

Moraga. Wait until we see the impact of hundreds of new homes, and thousands added to our population. Traffic, roads, our schools! What is the total number of new homes, residents, and vehicles coming soon to Moraga? Surely one of our incumbent Town Council Members know. While the number of new "units" might have been discussed, what is the estimated growth in population in the next 6 months, or one year, or however long it will take? Are the schools prepared for the influx of this many new students all at once?

My guess is that most residents of Moraga don't even know this is going on, but it will affect every citizen of Moraga. Think of the number of additional cars on the road ... think of the lines at the checkout at Safeway, or at our remaining post office. I think the majority of Moraga residents were lulled into believing that this would never happen, or who thought it might happen, but far in the future, and certainly not all at once. Now, there is nothing to stop it.

Jari Hazard
Moraga

(Editor's note: We received the following election-related letter too late for inclusion in our Oct. 22 issue. The writer subsequently requested that we publish it in this issue.)

Editor:

Eve Phillips and Dr. Linda Delehunt, two new names to select for Orinda City Council.

Why new councilmembers? Because the city approved the massive Eden Senior Housing building, constructed across from the fire station on Orinda Way. The structure is almost 50' high (35' is the limit); it covers the entire lot, all the way up the hill. Many asked, "How did this building come about? Is this the type of development we can expect in the village?" Probably -- if the same people are re-elected.

I am an independent resident, aligned with no groups. I attended most of the downtown meetings for years. I noticed if residents speak out, the city demeans them as "disgruntled" and "uninformed". This would change with Eve and Linda at the helm. Eve was valedictorian of her '95 Miramonte class, has engineering degrees from MIT with an MBA from Stanford, and is a technology entrepreneur. She returned to Orinda two years ago; she and her husband plan on having a family here.

Linda has her doctorate, is an educator/administrator, and worked in Sacramento. She and her husband raised two daughters in Orinda; she has volunteered extensively.

While beautification and updating are essential, Eve and Linda focus on keeping height and density issues within the law. They are consensus builders. The city seems only interested in residents' opinions that agree with theirs (e.g. www.OrindaVision.com). With the Orinda Association no longer our watchdog of city government, residents formed www.SaveOrinda.com and later came www.OrindaWatch.com with extensive followings. I do not support the following candidates: incumbents Dean Orr & Amy Worth plus Carlos Baltodano (formerly of the planning commission/PC) voted for the huge Eden project and voted down Montessori School. Bob Thompson declines to state his support of the 35' limit. View candidates' interviews on www.insideorinda.com. Google newspaper articles, especially the ones about private emails circulated by the PC chair, a vice-mayor & a developer to "educate" (coerce?) the PC to vote against Montessori and the recusal/apology to the community at a city council meeting.

Yes, please only vote for Eve and Linda.

Ann O'Connell-Nye

Orinda