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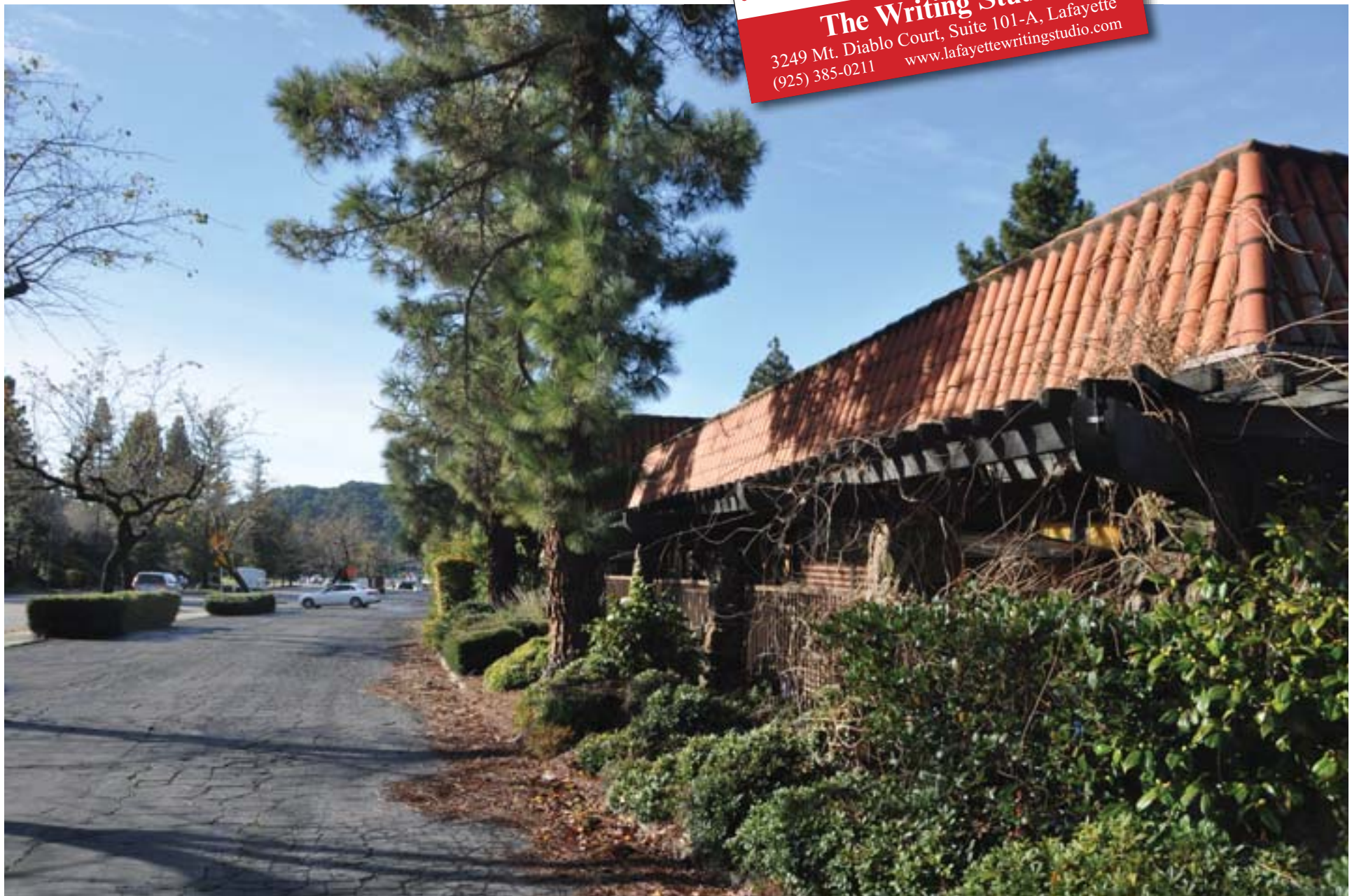
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A lot of work needs to be done around this structure under the newly proposed fire code. Photo Andy Scheck

MOFD chief proposes aggressive, radical fire code

By Nick Marnell

With California wildfires increasing in their rage and frequency, and with the entire response area of the district defined as in a Wildland Urban Interface, Moraga-Orinda Fire District Chief Dave Winkacker proposed a drastically revised fire code

which will affect existing parcels, remodels and new development in Moraga, Orinda, and unincorporated sections of Contra Costa County that fall within district boundaries.

“I’ve not seen anything quite like this,” said district President Steven Danziger, after the chief presented the updated code at two recent governing board meetings and at a public meeting in Orinda.

The new code proposes the district weed abatement compliance date be pushed up from June 15 to May 31, with the actual abatement period extended from 10 to 15 days. For existing parcels, eucalyptus and Monterey pine trees within 6 feet of a structure must be removed, and all new developments must use ember resistant construction.

... continued on Page A8

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Residents pull together to restore native planting on creek banks



Residents showed up in force Jan. 12 to get the job done. Photo Pippa Fisher

By Pippa Fisher

Gathered next to Sotheby’s Realty on Mt. Diablo Boulevard toward Lafayette’s western end on a recent Sunday morning, a group of about 30 willing and able folks of all ages were eager to help with a planting project on the banks of the creek.

With some background knowledge delivered to the assembled group by John Zentner, chairman of the board for the Restoration Trust – an Oakland-based organization whose mission is to assist in restoration of land to native conditions and to promote native habitats – the volunteers got to work in small groups to plant native grasses, replacing the highly invasive, non-native plant, arundo.

Zentner explained how arundo, first planted by early European immigrants, has grown out of control especially along the creeks and is a flood and fire hazard that chokes out native, perennial plants, which are naturally more fire resistant and which provide food, shelter and breeding habitat for wildlife.

Armed with small trowels, the volunteers planted creeping wild rye on the sunnier upper edges of the creek and Santa Barbara sedge and field sedge lower down near the water.

... continued on Page A3

Lamorinda Weekly website

Our Website has temporarily moved to www.lamorindanews.com. We are working on a solution to bring back all of our archived content. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience.

Civic News A1-A12 Staff to oversee Orinda Downtown Precise Plan - Page A6 Fire Districts A8 New MOFD fire marshal - Page A8	Life in Lamorinda B1-B6 Lafayette native joins fire fight in Australia -- Page B3	Sports C1-C3 Lamorinda girls soccer battle in Diablo League - Page C1	Our Homes D1-D12 Preparing the home for Chinese New Year - Page D1
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