

Art of Mixology returns to Theatre Square, live, on Oct. 16



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Portia Battistini from The Coop, who is competing this year, serves her winning cocktail at An Arts Affair in 2018.

By Sora O'Doherty

The major fundraiser for the Lamorinda Arts Council, the Art of Mixology will be live in Theatre Square from 4:30 to 7

p.m. Saturday, Oct. 16, with over 16 bartenders creating signature drinks and sampling them to the crowd of ticket-holders. Five food sponsors, Batch and Brine, The 4th Bore,

The Cooperage, Republic of Cake and Town Bakery will be offering bites to go with the sips.

Tickets are \$75 in advance or \$85 at the door and include craft cocktail tasting, bites from five local restaurants, 17 tasting tickets, a shot glass, a wrist band, and program, music and fun. Tickets will be available at either of the two entrances to the event, one by the fountain on Moraga Way and one as you come up the stairs from the garage. In order to maintain safety, a decreased number of tickets have been made available, designed to result in a less crowded event. All COVID-19 precautions will be observed. Masks will be required between sips and bites. Proof of vaccination is required to enter.

The competition occurs on two levels, professional bartenders and amateur mixologists. Professionals compete for the title of Mixologist of the Year, a cash award of \$500 and a trophy. The title of Mixologist of the Year is highly sought after by area professionals. A panel of judges will also select second and third place winners, who will win certificates of \$350 and \$300 respectively.

There will also be an audience vote for favorite among the amateurs and professionals.

The mixologist receiving the highest audience votes will

win the Audience Award, with a trophy and \$200, and the best amateur will win the Home Craft Cocktail Award, with a trophy and \$100. In addition, there is an Art of Table Staging trophy.

Among those competing are bartenders from The 4th Bore in Orinda; Canyon Club, Moraga; Forge and Parlor in Oakland; Balarco, Tiki Tom, Ben Venuti, and Bounty Hunter in Walnut Creek. Portia Battistini, The Cooperage, Lafayette, 2016 Mixologist of the Year, will also be competing.

This year's competition is sponsored by Tahoe Blue Vodka, but competitors may use any spirit they choose.

Last year's competition was not in person, but via Zoom. The audience could purchase cocktail kits containing everything needed for each cocktail except for the alcohol. The kits, presented by Saloonbox Curated Cocktails, proved to be a huge hit, and some who purchased them asked if the kits could be available later in the year, as they would make excellent holiday gifts. In response, this year the cocktail kits will be available in November. Kits can be ordered at the event or online during October. Each kit makes up to six drinks and contain recipes and ingredients for two different cocktails. Kits do not contain the alcohol. Any alcohol must be purchased separately. There

will be five kits. All five may be purchased for \$200 or each kit for \$50. Pre-ordered kits may be picked up on Nov. 6, 13 or 20 from 10 a.m. to noon at Theatre Square. Delivery for a fee will be provided in the Lamorinda area, or kits can be shipped.

Denise Nomura and Stacy Giglio co-chaired the Art of Mixology Committee and everybody from the Lamorinda Arts Council helped. This major fundraiser for the year, helps support all of the Lamorinda Arts Council's programs, including Lamorinda idol, the high school visual arts competition, Art Embraces Words, the super-short film festival, Art in place, and the two art galleries curated by the Council, one at the Orinda Library and the other at Wilder.

The Art of Mixology received support from Morrison Jewelers, Republic Services, Tahoe Blue Vodka, Saloonbox; and Morgan Stanley Theatre Square. In addition, three companies sponsored bartender tables for this eighth annual competition.

Following Art of Mixology, there will be a post party at the 4th Bore in aid of Notes 4 Hope, a breast cancer awareness and research fundraiser. On offer will be a live band, and a signature beer made by Canyon Club: the FU Cancer Brew. Part of the proceeds goes to its research fund.

Orindan wins prestigious lifetime professional achievement award



Chris Laszcz-Davis

Photo provided

Submitted by Thomas Black

Chris Laszcz-Davis, a longtime resident of Orinda, has won the highest professional honor in management and operations regarding environment, health and safety (EHS). The citation is known formally as the ABIH Lynn O'Donnell Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Board for EHS Credentialing. (O'Donnell is a pioneering executive director of the profession's credentialing board.)

Laszcz-Davis is president of her own consulting firm, The Environmental Quality Organization, LLC, founded in 2004.

Her career spans more than three decades. Fresh out of graduate school with a master's degree in environmental engineering from the University of Minnesota, she went to work for

the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (predecessor to the U.S. Department of Energy), first in Washington, DC., then on the west coast as a regional manager, and later at UC Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories. She subsequently worked at Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical as corporate vice president of environmental affairs, health, safety, product stewardship and operational integrity.

Additionally, both in industry and in government she has experience in risk management, strategic planning, and corporate acquisitions and divestitures.

Laszcz-Davis has garnered numerous other professional accolades. In 2011-12 she was recognized by a leading industry publication, Industrial Safety & Hygiene News, as one of the "101 most influential EH&S leaders in the U.S." In 2017 the California state

legislature passed a resolution (#967) hailing her professional achievements and civic leadership.

Her contributions locally are no less impressive. She currently is on the board of the Orinda Association and is chair of the tri-community Lamorinda Presents. In 2018-19 she served as president of Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, one of some 35,000 Rotary clubs worldwide.

Her involvement with the American Association of University Women (AAUW)-OML Branch has generated successful Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) STEM Conferences, held at Saint Mary's College, for middle-school girls. She also helped to coordinate a series of virtual STEM-related webinars for high-school girls.

Local nonprofit helps Afghan refugees in resettlement



Photo provided

Ebne Mujadidi of E's Auto Service and Repair in Moraga hands car keys to an Afghan refugee.

Thanks to a donation of a car to Keeping Our Promise, East Bay – a local nonprofit that serves former U.S. military translators and their families from Afghanistan who resettle in Alameda and Contra Costa counties – one lucky Afghan refugee was recently handed keys to a car so he could get to work. Ebne Mujadidi of E's Auto Service and Repair on Canyon Road in Moraga, who is also from Afghanistan, donated his repair services to get the car "street worthy."

"We have structured our car program to offer cars to working refugees with the needed repairs paid for by the recipient in a 0% interest loan," said Carol Sebilja, the Education/ Employment Director of Keeping Our Promise, East Bay. "At a future time, when they feel they are sufficiently financially stable enough to repay, they pay back the loan and we have money for the next loan."

Keeping Our Promise tries to assist families by offering advice for em-

ployment, résumé writing, English language classes and tutoring, household donations and recycled adult bicycles, education and scholarship information, and more. "We simply see what their needs are, and see if we can meet the need," Sebilja said.

Two talented high school students, Selma and Nilab Ahmadi, also recently started a Keeping Our Promise club at Miramonte. "These energetic young sisters have recruited classmates to tutor Afghan children aged 12 to 17," Sebilja said. "They tutor via Zoom in order to increase their grades in English, math and science, and offer homework help. This is been a wonderful support for Afghan parents who may not understand enough English to help their children with homework."

If anyone is interested in donating, email: CarolSebilja@KeepingOurPromise-Eastbay.org

- J. Wake

In Memory

Elizabeth "Betty" (Frazier) Karplus

March 22, 1925 – Sept. 22, 2021



Elizabeth "Betty" (Frazier) Karplus passed away at home on Sept. 22, aged 96. Born on March 22, 1925 in Burlington, Vermont, Betty and her family moved to Connecticut where she grew up. She worked as a welder for Yale & Towne during WWII to fund her bachelor's degree in physics from Oberlin College, continuing into graduate studies in physics at Wellesley College. While there she met Robert "Bob" Karplus, a Harvard graduate student. They married in 1948, moved to Princeton University, then Harvard, and came to California in 1954 when Bob accepted a physics faculty position at UC Berkeley.

The mother of seven children, Betty was always ready for adventure, and a passion for education and service infused her life. She did research on reasoning and math education and was a pioneer in protecting rights for students with disabilities. She earned a master's in special education at Saint Mary's College, spending the last 18 years of her teaching career as a resource specialist at Campolindo. She also served on the Orinda School Board and was honored as Orinda's 1982 Citizen of the Year. Betty retired from Campolindo in 1986, launching a 30-year "volunteer career:" leading a program at Mills College to train scientists and engineers as teachers, serving in the Peace Corps in Jamaica, teaching English in China, becoming an Americorps leader, bringing weekly hands-on science lessons to El Sobrante Elementary, and helping in many ways at the Orinda Community Church. For her exceptional contributions to science education, Betty was elected a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in 2019.

Betty is survived by her seven children – Beverly Hartline (Fred), Peggy Hellweg (Horst Rademacher), Richard Karplus (Michelle Delore), Barbara Karplus (Rod Womer), Andy Karplus (Karen), David Karplus (Catie), and Peter Karplus – 16 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, brother-in-law Martin Karplus (Marci), 10 nieces and nephews, and many, many dear friends. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Bob, her parents, and her four brothers. Her legacy of caring, curiosity, and commitment to action will live on in all those she touched.

A memorial service is pending. Donations in her memory can be sent to the 'Robert and Elizabeth Karplus Outdoor Nature Lab' under construction at the Lawrence Hall of Science (<https://capitalstrategies.berkeley.edu/karplus-outdoor-nature-lab>), or to the Orinda Community Church.