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Photos Jeff Heyman

# Postcard-perfect start for festival fun in Lamorinda

By Jeff Heyman

Tens of thousands of people from Lamorinda and beyond filled the streets of Lafayette this past postcard-perfect weekend for the city's ever-growing annual Art & Wine Festival, always a regional favorite that has grown ever more popular in the last two years.

It's not just about art and wine, actually. Lafayette's festival, put on by the city of Lafayette and the Chamber of Commerce with help from a host of generous supporters, is about food, music, dancing, crafts and games, and dogs – so many well-behaved dogs! And if you didn't come with a dog, you could have certainly gone home with one, thanks to the

many animal rescue organizations joining the festivities.

Kids areas provide activities ranging from miniature golf to gold mining and face painting. Food offerings included made-on-the-spot gourmet sandwiches, wood-fire pizza and traditionally made paella, served steaming hot. All this, plus multiple stages providing dramatic entertainment and – what Art & Wine is known for – fantastic bands that rocked the crowd with Tom Petty and Tower of Power covers, in addition to country and alternative rock favorites, much to the delight of the dancers who swayed to the rhythm and played air guitar in front of the stages.

What about art? Colorful booths featured a

plethora of handcrafted tchotchkes as well as fine art sculpture, painting and photography. Local public agencies also staffed booths with giveaways aimed at providing festival-goers with information on safety, transportation, sustainability and free city and county services.

But in the end, the Art & Wine Festival is what it has always been about: having good, old fashioned fun – something Lafayette does very, very well. Next up in Lamorinda? The Moraga Pear & Wine Festival is just around the corner, and will feature food, wine, live music, kids' activities and community booths from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 30 at Moraga Commons Park.

Advertising



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# SMC offers students a myriad of support through annual Wellness Fair

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

## Bart the Horse provides Pet Therapy to SMC students.

Saint Mary's College began its 2023-24 school year with its annual Wellness Fair, which is held every September. The fair's purpose is to provide vocational, spiritual, financial, environmental, physical, social, mental, and emotional support for not only freshman but for anyone needing a "well-being" void filled in their lives.

Held Sept. 20 at Dante Hall's grassy quad, with the scent of free barbecue wafting in the air, students in

between classes came out to enjoy the moment and receive information at several booths touting a variety of services to meet anyone's needs.

Megan Gallagher, SMC Director of Campus Assault Response and Education (CARE) Center, and Interim Administrative Director of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and Wellness, explained that the Wellness Fair is designed to help the student community become oriented to campus life. After giving them a few weeks to settle into a new scholastic environment, some students may discover that certain aspects of college life are more difficult than expected, she said. It is with that expectation that SMC has chosen to provide answers in order to create a holistic experience and make sure that the students are taken care of.

One surprising aspect this year was seeing a horse named Bart surrounded by students who were gently stroking his coat. It was hard to determine who enjoyed the experience more, Bart or the students. This wellness exercise is classified as "pet therapy," and Gallagher explained that in the past, puppies as well as goats (for yoga) have been a success at bringing smiles to faces.

Other booths included the PAW Club (Peer Advocates in Wellness) which hosts on-campus events, the University Credit Union which offers financial services, and County Veterans Service Office which pro-

vides representation to the veteran community with regard to benefits. The Center for Women & Gender Equity provides advocacy needs, Student Disability Services works with students to identify barriers and develop effective plans for support, CAPS offers counseling and psychological services through 10 sessions that are included with tuition, both The Gael Pantry and CalFresh help students stretch their food budget, the Mission and Ministry Center provides pastoral support and counseling, and SMC's library displayed examples of wellness-related materials available to check out.

Many booths were manned by students such as the Office of Community Life which focused on the effects of alcohol abuse, Campus Recreation which highlighted recreation center events and retreats, Club Sports that help student athletes start new friendships with their new teammates, and both CARE and SCAAR (Student Coalition Against Abuse and Rape) booth offered information about confidential support provided for assault victims.

And, since wellness comes in many forms, there were also tables set up for students to design their own tote bags, create miniature bottles containing dried flowers in oil (the 2023 version of a lava lamp), and use boxes of crayons to fill fun pages of coloring book-style pictures that helped tap the Leonardo da Vinci hiding in everyone.

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Door-to-door solicitation warning by MPD — Page A8

**Life in Lamorinda B1-B4**

Campolindo student works to protect seniors from scams — Page B1



**Sports C1-C2**

Lamorinda Boys and Girls Water Polo teams poised for success — Page C1



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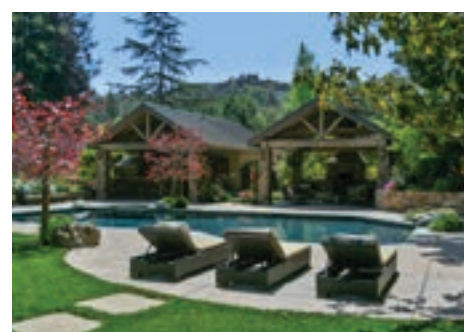
Local council member pursues pottery hobby at home — Page D6







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# Lafayette teachers ask district to make them whole

By Sharon K. Sobotta

Reading Specialist Lindsay McCormick is usually one of the first people parents and caregivers see when dropping their kids off at Lafayette Elementary School, as she directs traffic before and after clocking into the reading lab each morning. On Sept. 13, however, McCormick carried a sign saying “Lafayette Teachers have the lowest career earnings in the county” as she stood alongside more than a dozen of her

colleagues and another dozen parents, students and community members staging an informational picket.

The Lafayette credentialed teachers are seeking a 14% raise for their new contract and have rejected the district's offer of 12%.

With over a decade of combined experience in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District, Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District, and at Saint Mary's

College, where she taught literacy courses for credentialed candidates, McCormick says she couldn't pass up the opportunity to work at LES when the position opened up four years ago. “I stumbled upon the job posting while supporting my credential students in their job search and knew that it was a rare find: a full-time Reading Specialist at one site in a highly supported school district,” McCormick recalls.

McCormick says she and her colleagues are ready to be made whole. “Every teacher I speak with here loves their students, loves the community, and wants to stay here more than anything. But when you see that you can get paid \$30,000 more just by going to a neighboring district, it starts really causing us to prioritize our family's needs over our professional needs.”

Kristi Gingrich, a third-grade teacher at LES and the Lafayette Education Association President, was among the more than two dozen teachers, accompanied by just as many aides, parents and students, standing in front of the school during morning drop that week. “We're asking the district to prioritize teachers over other things because teachers drive the classroom,” Gingrich said. “Parents support us and passed a tax parcel with the intent to help hire and retain teachers and unfortunately that money hasn't surfaced on our salary schedule yet.”

Lafayette has a reputation for being one of the top school districts in the state and in the county. It's also thought of as an affluent place – even as nearly a third of its residents are renters. Gingrich says the assumption that Lafayette teachers are doing fine because the school district is good and the median income of the city appears high compared to others is just plain wrong. “We are part of a coalition of teachers in the county and we are currently the lowest paid district



Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

Lafayette Elementary School teachers at the Sept. 13 informational picket.

with that. It's misinformation to think that we're well paid because we're in Lafayette,” Gingrich says. “We had to hire 50 teachers this year.”

While the 12% increase teachers have been offered may sound significant at face value, Gingrich says it's not enough to make up for what she says amounts to a not-so-good deal that teachers agreed to as they were transitioning back to the classroom after the pandemic.

“In February 2021 we were tired and were grateful to have our kids back in the classroom. We'd worked so well with the district, we were proud to bring our kids back. We were talked into signing a two-year contract with a 2% COLA [cost of living increase],” Gingrich says.

This meant that in 2022-23, as the state offered a 6.55% cost of living increase, the teachers in Lafayette were already locked in to a 2% increase. “Those around us negotiated for a 7.5% and an 8% increase and we'd already accepted the two. We had made a mistake,” Gingrich says. “We can see that there are huge surpluses in our budget every year. And now we're asking our district to prioritize the budget and prioritize teachers who've invested

years and years of their time in students so that we can continue having successful students and great teachers.”

Another point of contention is the years of transferable service. Gingrich says that while surrounding districts have lifted the cap for numbers of transferable years, Lafayette is still at five. This means that if someone from San Francisco moved to the Lafayette school district with 20 years of experience, only five of those years of service would be reflected in their salary.

“There is a shortage of teachers – especially seasoned teachers with experience,” Gingrich says. And, she doesn't want teachers to be penalized for opting into the Lafayette School District.

Superintendent Brent Stephens says the district remains committed to ensuring that teachers are paid competitively and that a sound budget is maintained in the future. “We see the same issue about competitiveness that our teachers do. Two years ago, in the pandemic, we entered into a two-year contract with our teachers,” Stephens said in a written response.

... continued on Page A10

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## Lafayette Res Run returns to benefit local schools, Oct. 22

Plans are in place for the annual Lafayette Res Run for Education, which will be held on Sunday, Oct. 22 in person through downtown Lafayette and virtually, through the Reservoir Challenge, Oct. 12-21. Options include the traditional 2-mile fun run/walk, 5K along Mt. Diablo Boulevard, or the 10K route which takes you around the Lafayette Reservoir. Participants of the Reservoir Challenge “run” around the 2.7-mile paved trail of the Lafayette Reservoir.

According to information provided by the Chamber, the Reservoir Challenge is “a great opportunity to safely walk or run the Reservoir on your own, perhaps beating your time from last year! It’s also a great option if you just want the commemorative shirt,” but it is not an option on Sunday, Oct. 22 as the Reservoir will be closed for the 10K runners.

“The Res Run is one of our favorite community events,” said Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Communications Director Holly Sonne. “It delivers dollars to each Lafayette public school – Lafayette Elementary, Springhill Elementary, Burton Valley Elementary, Happy Valley Elementary, Stanley Middle School, and Acalanes High School through their PTA/PTO – plus Campolindo High School in Moraga and Miramonte High School in Orinda receive funds through MEF and ONE, allow-

ing them to build community, host special events, and appreciate teachers, all while promoting health and wellness.” A Healthy Lifestyles Fair will be located on Lafayette Circle adjacent to La Fiesta Square from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. on race day.

There is also a Race-Before-the-Race, which is an additional fundraising opportunity for the Lafayette School District. It takes place three-fold: The Lafayette School District school with the most registrations by Sept. 30 will receive an additional \$500 donation. The school with the most registrations in total will also receive an additional \$500 donation. The school with the most registrations compared to last year will also receive an additional \$500 beneficiary check.

“All ages and abilities are welcome! Kids love to run the streets, which are only closed twice a year in Lafayette (for the Lafayette Art & Wine Festival and for the Res Run),” Sonne said. “Serious runners raise their challenge level enduring the unique 10K around the Lafayette Reservoir.”

For information or to register, visit [www.lafayettechamber.org/resrun](http://www.lafayettechamber.org/resrun) – J. Wake

## New Chamber Music series comes to Lafayette

Submitted by Joanne DePhillips



Photo Martyn Selman

**Alexander String Quartet – Zakarias Grafilo and Yuna Lee, violins; David Samuel, viola; and Sandy Wilson, cello**

Berkeley Chamber Performances (BCP) is about to start its 31st Season at Julia Morgan’s historic Berkeley City Club. Since 2017 they have been members of the Bay Area Music Consortium (BAMC), presenting concerts with their partners, Chamber Music Marin (Mill Valley) and Gold Coast Chamber Players (GCCP).

After 35 seasons GCCP closed their doors last spring, leaving a chamber music void in the Lamorinda area. BCP has enjoyed collaborating with GCCP and is looking forward to presenting three chamber music concerts at the Lafayette

Library, GCCP’s former venue.

The first concert will be the Alexander String Quartet in a program of Haydn, Ravel, and Schoenberg, on Oct. 28. Following that will be the Black Oak Ensemble, a string trio, presenting music by composers who lost their lives in the Holocaust, on Jan. 27.

Their final concert of the season features the Naumburg Prize-winning Telegraph Quartet on May 4. All concerts are Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m., in the time slot previously occupied by the GCCP concert series.

Visit the BCP website for more information at [www.berkeleychamberperform.org](http://www.berkeleychamberperform.org)



**Lafayette Public Meetings**

### City Council

Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, Oct. 10, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

### Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, Oct. 2, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

### Design Review

Tuesday, Oct. 10, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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**Chamber of Commerce:**  
www.moragachamber.org

**Moraga Citizens' Network:**  
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**Town Council**  
Wednesday, Sept. 27, 6:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m.

**Planning Commission:**  
Tuesday, Oct. 3, 6:30 p.m.

**Park and Recreation Commission:**  
Tuesday, Oct. 9, 7 p.m.

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## Town of Moraga's 6th Cycle Adopted Housing Element approved

By Vera Kochan

Moraga Planning Director Afshan Hamid received a letter dated Sept. 14 from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) informing her that the State of California had certified the Town's 6th Cycle Adopted Housing Element for 2023-31.

"HCD is pleased to find the adopted housing element, including technical modifications, in substantial compliance with State Housing Element Law (Gov. Code § 65580 et seq) as of the date of this letter," wrote HCD Senior Program Manager Paul McDougall. "The adopted element, including technical modifications was found to be substantially the same as the revised draft element that HCD's July 11, 2023 review determined met statutory requirements."

After two years of planning, analysis, and extensive community input, the Town Council adopted the Housing Element on Jan. 25. "Our

Housing Element reflects the Town Council's and community's vision for providing better housing opportunities in Moraga while maintaining our semi-rural feel and preserving our hillsides, open space, and existing residential neighborhoods," stated Mayor Renata Sos.

According to the Town's Sept. 19 press release, the certification allows Moraga the eligibility "to seek federal, state, and regional public infrastructure, environmental sustainability, affordable housing, and numerous other grants and funding sources that are not available to municipalities without a current Housing Element."

Additionally, Moraga will retain local control over land use while setting its sights on providing a wider range of housing opportunities for seniors, young families, local teachers, and the Town's essential service providers.

McDougall's letter reminded the town that it must continue with its implementation of all programs with special attention to areas concerning the General Plan Update, Phase One and Phase Two Zoning Text Amendments, Phase One Zoning Map Changes, Facilitate Access to Affordable Housing Subsidies, Adoption of an Affordable Housing (Inclusionary Zoning) Ordinance, ADU Production along with Compliance and Monitoring, SB 9 Projects, Amendments to Parking Regulations, Fee Deferral and Calculation Methods, Streamlined Review Process, Allowances for Special Housing Types, and Affirmatively Further Fair Housing.

Town Manager Scott Mitnick commented, "This Housing Element is good for Moraga businesses, because it will revitalize our two commercial areas to better attract and retain retailers, restaurants, and

other amenities that our residents have been requesting for years." Mitnick hopes that additional residential units in the heart of both shopping centers will attract more foot traffic which in turn will spark better retail, dining, and entertainment prospects.

Both the HCD letter and the town's press release spoke of the dedication and hard work by all involved with Moraga's 6th Cycle process and eventual certification, calling it a team effort. While noting the residents, businesses, landowners, and prospective developers for their collective participation, along with the Town Council, Planning Commission, Town staff, outside consultants (Barry Miller and BAE Urban Economics), and partners at HCD, the highest accolades go to Hamid and her team for their long hours and commitment to the process.

## Council approves Livable Moraga Road conceptual design work

By Vera Kochan

The Livable Moraga Road (LMR) project was devised with the intention of creating continuous bicycle and pedestrian safe routes, in addition to improving the aesthetics of the streetscape along two miles of Moraga Road between Campolindo Drive and St. Mary's Road.

Initiated in 2013, the LMR project went through a three-year process of public comments, surveys, information gathering, concepts and alternatives before being endorsed in 2016 by the Town Council. The project was placed on hold due to staff turnover and limited planning resources, but had remained in the Capital Improvement Budget. With funding from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), the current task at hand is to complete concept level drawings.

"The Planning Department is seeking to reestablish

a professional services agreement with Alta Planning and Design to resume and complete the last phase of the conceptual design work on the Livable Moraga Road project," stated Planning Director Afshan Hamid and Senior Planner Brian Horn in their Sept. 13 staff report. "Staff is now seeking approval to complete the remaining technical task of the concept level design drawings. The scope of work would only include completing the conceptual design drawings for up to four of the Livable Moraga Road segments and providing a cost estimate for the construction of the road improvements. Construction level drawings or construction is not proposed at this time."

The four segments included are: Segment 1 – Campolindo Drive to Rheem Boulevard; Segment 2 – Rheem Boulevard to Donald

Drive; Segment 3 – Donald Drive to Corliss Drive; and Segment 4 – Corliss Drive to St. Mary's Road.

When the 2016 Town Council approved a final concept, they did so with comments and proposed changes. With respect to Segment 1, "For the time being, no movement of the high visibility crosswalk at the intersection at Woodford Drive and Moraga Road adjacent to Campolindo Drive." Regarding Segment 3, "Remove the proposed central turning lane and restore it to a full southbound travel." And, Segment 4, "Have staff continue to investigate whether there is enough real estate available adjacent to Laguna Creek (West of Moraga Road) for the proposed west side pedestrian/bicycle path to be viable and return to the Town Council with a further report on that segment at a future Town Council meeting."

With the LMR project having sat on a shelf for the past seven years, it is a perfect time for Moraga to dust it off as future development of the Rheem Valley Shopping Center and Moraga Shopping Center roadway improvements begin to appear on the horizon. More importantly, a completed concept would allow staff to seek out grant funding.

On Sept. 13, the Town Council approved the reestablishment of a contract with Alta Planning and Design to resume and complete work of the LMR project in the amount of up to \$63,080 with a 15%



Image Moraga Planning Dept.

### Livable Moraga Road Segments 1 - 4

contingency of \$9,462 for a total amount not to exceed \$72,542 within a two year period. They also approved the carry forward of \$79,000 of Measure J Fund 210 funding from Fiscal Year 2022-23 to Fiscal Year 2023-24 and appropriate \$144,000 in Fund 700.

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## Town authorizes Safe Streets for All funding agreement

By Vera Kochan

The portion of Moraga Road and Canyon Road between St. Mary's Road and Sanders Drive has been identified as having safety issues noted in the 2016 Moraga Walk and Bike Plan, the 2022 Moraga Local Roadway Safety Plan, and draft 2023 Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) Lamorinda Action Plan.

"In the summer of 2022, CCTA prepared an application in response to the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Discretionary Grant Program," stated Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp in his Sept. 13 staff report. "CCTA selected five safety improvement projects distributed throughout the county to be included in the SS4A Grant Application. The five safety improvement projects were identified through CCTA's comprehensive safety planning efforts based on their anticipated impacts on: 1) safety; 2) equity engagement and collaboration; 3) effective practice and technology; and 4) climate change adaptation and sustainability with emphasis on areas with a high rate of crashes and located within Equity Priority Community; historically disadvantaged communities; and Priority Development Areas." In addition to Moraga, the grant applica-

tion included East Bay Regional Park District, and the cities of El Cerrito and Antioch.

In February 2023, USDOT awarded \$28.9 million to CCTA for distribution towards the various municipalities' proposed projects. Of that amount, Moraga's grants will come to approximately \$3 million and will fund the Smart Signals projects for upgraded traffic signals, CCTV cameras, video detection, battery backup systems and more.

In June, a \$3.975 million CIP project budget was approved by the town council. This comprised \$2.984 million in SS4A and a matching of funds from Moraga for \$991,000.

Originally, the SS4A grant application cost estimate was based on the town staff's managing of the project as non-reimbursable, but USDOT requires that CCTA act as the lead sponsoring agency for such projects with Caltrans providing regulatory reviews. As such, the town council approved the execution of a Project Cooperative Agreement and an increase of \$62,000 for the Moraga Road and Canyon Road Complete Streets Project (CIP No. 23-411) during its Sept. 13 meeting, to cover the administrative costs of the additional participation of the two agencies.

## Rancho Laguna Park to receive fitness equipment donation

By Vera Kochan



Photo provided

**Bobbie Preston (second from right) and friends enjoy fitness equipment.**

Best known as a dog park that happens to also have a children's playground and a monarch butterfly habitat/garden, Rancho Laguna Park will soon add another feature to its premises. In memory of her husband Tom, who recently passed away, Moraga resident Bobbie Preston is working on raising funds to donate fitness equipment to the park.

Parks and Recreation Director Mackenzie Brady's Sept. 13 staff report stated, "Bobbie reached out to staff in July inquiring to the possibility of donating fitness equipment to Rancho Laguna Park in Tom's name. Staff worked with Bobbie on an appropriate location that would allow the monarch butterflies to retain their quiet, allow dogs to not have access, allow parents to use the equipment while children may be playing, provide shade, and add value to currently unused space."

Tom Preston was a resident that kept himself involved in the community with projects such as Cycle Recycle, the Pear Festival, the Rancho Laguna Monarch Butterfly Garden, Moraga Community Fair, and pruning the pear trees on the Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School property. He was a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) provider, and more.

According to Preston, her husband was a "lifelong exer-

cise fanatic and worked out every morning and walked at Rancho Laguna Park almost every day. He was attending a three-week fitness camp in Utah when he passed away at 80 in May."

Greenfields Outdoor Fitness will install eight of their state-of-the-art machines, two of which are ADA-compliant and can all-together accommodate 22 people at the same time. The equipment is designed for use by ages 14 and older and will be enclosed by a fence to keep dogs from entering the area. Also included on the premises will be an automated external defibrillator (AED) device, a bench and possibly a water fountain. The project is expected to cost approximately \$99,000 with funding through private donations. The only cost to the town will be staff's installation of the equipment. Bobbie Preston is hoping that the "Fitness Zone" will be ready for use by the end of October.

One of her husband's favorite mantras was "Motion is the lotion," said Preston. "Exercising was a way of life for Tom and very important to him."

Anyone wishing to participate in the tribute and gift to the town of Moraga can send a tax-deductible check (annotated: "Preston Memorial") to: Lamorinda Lions, 17 El Camino Flores, Moraga, CA 94556.

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## Orinda Council agrees to accept land behind Chevron station, allow convenience mart

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

**Area behind Chevron Station, station on left, retaining wall center back**

The plans of Chevron Corporation to remodel the gas station at the corner of Orinda Way and Santa Maria Way were advanced on Sept. 19, when the Orinda City Council agreed to accept ownership of the land behind the station and introduced changes to city law to facilitate a ExtraMile convenience store. The matter will return to the council for final approval after some issues around liability are ironed out.

Chevron's plans had been enthusiastically approved by the Orinda Planning Commission on July 12, after the commissioners heard public comments both in support of and in opposition to the project. The project will convert empty service bays at the station that have been unused for nearly three decades into an ExtraMile convenience store.

As part of the plan, Chevron said it would transfer title to the creekside land behind the station to the city and provide an access to the creek alongside the station. If the city did not accept the land, Chevron said that they would go ahead with their project, but would not allow access to the creek over their property.

Controversy has focused on a few aspects of the project. The transfer of the land and implications concerning liability for the area is of con-

cern to the city. Some members of the public expressed concern that the presence of a 24-hour store close to the entrance to Highway 24 and the sale of alcoholic beverages would encourage more crime in the city, and others were concerned that the convenience store would not sell nutritious fresh food and isn't a necessary addition to Orinda.

The project is enthusiastically supported by the Friends of Orinda Creeks, who view the proposal to transfer land beside San Pablo Creek to the city as a major step forward toward the revitalization of the creek, which has been one of the most wanted improvements to downtown Orinda expressed by members of the public as the city moves forward on downtown development.

Michael Bowen, president of Friends of Orinda Creeks, stated that "for the first time in a very long time, or ever, a private business owner is 'all in' on downtown development and creek restoration." Bowen suggested that city staff had omitted some facts regarding the land transfer. According to Bowen, the city already has an easement over the land and is the existing floodplain manager. Bowen told the council that there is recreational immunity for public parks, trails, and so forth under the California Government Code. The council members expressed interest in hearing about that immunity in greater detail between the introduction of the enabling ordinance and its adoption when it returns to the council.

Sandy Pearson reminded the city council about something that occurred in her neighborhood of 20 houses on 60 acres. The city asked the developer to provide a trail, which was liked by the residents, but they did not want their homeowners association to bear the liability for the trail. After "thinking long and hard" Pearson said, the city accepted a donation of the trail land. Since then, she added, "the residents do the trail maintenance, it hasn't cost the city a penny, and

there hasn't been any problem."

Council Member Latika Malkani was particularly struck by a comment from Maria Brando, a board member of the Friends of Orinda Creeks, that "it is the job of cities to make beautiful spaces for their residents." Malkani said that she agreed with that.

Council Member Brandyn Iverson said that she supported the project and added, "I really want that creek land. I only support the changes in the zoning if we get the creek," she added, stating that she supported the city taking fee title to the property. Without creek access, she would not support the project.

Roy Hutchinson, president of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, urged the council to allow the Chevron project to proceed. He said that there is wisdom in working with Chevron, a gigantic commercial property owner. "We no longer have a Starbucks or a Subway," and the approved memory care facility cannot proceed because of rising costs, Hutchinson stated. "Let's get on and make something happen in Orinda for its citizens."

Several representatives of Chevron Corporation were at the meeting to discuss the project. Juliet Don encouraged the council to adopt the changes to the municipal code necessary for the project to proceed. She also noted that although Chevron is no longer required by law to pay a parking in lieu fee because it is located within a half mile of a major transit stop, the company is going to donate the money to the city for pedestrian projects. It was determined that the amount equivalent to the fee would be around \$26,000.

There was also discussion between the council and staff about whether the proposed changes to the law would have unintended consequences that might affect other gas stations. However, city manager David Biggs explained that if another applicant came in, such as the 76 Station in Orinda, they would have to meet the criteria of discretionary planning review.

City attorney Osa Wolff said that staff would return to the council with a binding legal agreement for the dedication of the land to take place at a time of the city's discretion, specific indemnity terms both for environmental hazards and for any fact specific thing, such as the retaining wall behind the station. Although ordinances usually come back for approval at the next council meeting after introduction, Wolff said that this may require a longer time. The measure passed with a vote of four to zero, with Vice Mayor Darlene Gee on an excused absence.



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## Storm cleanup continues at Wagner Ranch Nature Area

By Alison Burns



Photo Reg Barrett

**San Pablo Dam on Wagner Ranch property at height of storm.**

Since the Lamorinda Weekly last reported (July 5, p. A7) on the severe damage wrought by this year's winter storms at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area, progress has been slow ... but steady. And on Monday, Sept. 11, Orinda Union School District Superintendent Aida Glimme delivered an impressive summary of her board's achievements to date.

From its formation almost 20 years ago, the nonprofit Friends of Wagner Ranch Nature Area, has always been extremely supportive, but there has never been any state funding directed toward the almost-19-acre OUSD property, and years of deferred maintenance have taken their toll: this year's constant onslaught of winter rains resulted in the downing of ancient trees, washed out pathways and a dangerous rerouting of the San Pablo Creek where it borders the Nature Area.

As Glimme described it, a pathway that was once safely away from the creek, now has water flowing beneath it, and you can find yourself standing on something that she describes as "a little cavernous." She also reported "really significant overgrowth ... with a lot of poison oak."

There is no instant fix to this disastrous state of affairs, particularly while, as Glimme put it, "the storm continues to work itself out" as the ground and trees become dryer. At present, it is impossible to count just how many trees have fallen or will continue to fall but eventually many more must be removed because it is "just a matter of time" before broken branches some crashing down.

Orinda's historic nature preserve is home to thousands of native plant and animal species. Owned by OUSD and certified as a Schoolyard Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation, this unique outdoor education site has had an immeasurable impact on over 15,000 children since its 1970 inception. To date, only elementary school children have been taught there, but prior to the double whammy of COVID and heavy winter storms, OUSD was looking at ways to expand opportunities to middle school students and possibly even other districts.

While it is still a question of playing the waiting game, Orinda's residents have not been slow in reacting to the crisis.

The two fenced-off Wagner Ranch and Nature Gardens

have now been cleared and students are already gardening, thanks to the Wagner Ranch Parent Club. OUSD is also working in partnership with the Boys Team charity, which provided funding and volunteers. East Bay Tree Service, too, has been very supportive.

But the quarter-of-a-million-dollar question now is where OUSD will find the money to remove the dead and damaged trees. Restoring safe pathways and general accessibility will add more to the total bill and OUSD does not yet have an estimate for this. The District has not allocated additional funds for the Nature Area, which means that any monies used for maintenance of the area must come from the General Fund.

In 2022, the District applied for a \$4.5 million state allocation through the office of Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan's office, which was rejected. However, after the grant was resubmitted in 2023, OUSD gained approval for \$1.5 million – with certain demands, such as designating 15 acres as Open Space – while still remaining wholly owned by OUSD.

Glimme concluded her presentation with effusive thanks to the Friends of the Nature Area which, "clearly kept the area alive," as well as the WR Parent Club, Boys Team Charity, ONE Orinda, and the "many community members who have supported the area through funds and hours of volunteering."

## Do parking in lieu fees stymie Orinda downtown development?

By Sora O'Doherty

As the clock ticked ominously towards 11 p.m. on Sept. 19, the Orinda city council agreed, with a minimum of discussion, to ask staff to come back with a proposal to amend its Master Fee Schedule to reduce the Parking Variance In Lieu fees to support business revitalization. Staff suggested that the council might like a nominal fee for changes in use, perhaps reducing the in-lieu fees of between \$50 and \$200 for existing buildings. The council would retain the option to consider increasing the fees at a future date, such as the Master Fee Schedule update made annually in July.

The matter appeared on the council's agenda as a result of a matter initiated on Sept. 5. On Sept. 18, Harvey Stein, legal counsel for Mo Mashhoom and Mash Petroleum, which has its headquarters in Orinda's Theatre District, wrote to the city council explaining the difficulty Mashhoom is having leasing a space in the Moraga Way building.

Stein reminded the council that the building had been granted a Mayor's Award of Excellence upon its completion in 2019. He continued to explain that two potential tenants for a small, 800 sq. ft. space on the

ground floor of the building had fled, when they were apprised of potential parking in lieu fees ranging from \$60,000 to \$75,000.

Mashhoom is now considering an offer to lease the space as a bicycle sales showroom at 50% below market rate, but he will only do so if the city does not impose a burdensome, "deal-killing" parking fee. "Unless the City alters its position on the parking fee, the space will remain vacant for the foreseeable future," Stein warned.

Council Member Brandyn Iverson, who had requested the matter initiated, said that she was suggesting a limited proposal suspending parking in lieu fees for about a year for vacant spaces downtown. She specified that she was not proposing a change to the rules for new development nor looking at the broader issue of state laws.

Mayor Inga Miller inquired if the action would affect the Chevron project, and was told that it would not apply to gas stations. Given the lateness of the hour, the council agreed to authorize staff to develop a proposed action and bring it back to the council in the future.

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# Moraga PD warns residents about door-to-door solicitations

By Vera Kochan

Within this past month, Moraga experienced a swarm of solicitors knocking on residential doors without the proper permit issued by the Town's police department. MPD received three complaint calls on Sept. 5 from residents located on Devon Drive, Whitethorne Drive, and Selborne Way. While police managed to locate the solicitors from the first two streets, the Selborne Way individual was not found. The resident told dispatch that the male first rang the doorbell and waited for quite some time before he began knocking on the front door so aggressively that the door rattled, all while shouting loudly to attract the occupant's attention. The resident never opened the door, and two hours later the male in question came back using the same tactics. At that point,

police were called.

MPD Chief Jon King surmised that this group of individuals was hired by a "company" to sell goods (whether legitimate or not) in well-to-do neighborhoods. They are driven as a group to a location and then disperse on foot to their targets with the promise of hefty commissions if sales are made. Some may claim that they're earning money for a trip, while others say they are selling magazines that oftentimes never show up in the purchasers' mailbox. King said that some may use aggressive tactics out of desperation to make a sale.

Moraga's Ordinance No. 239 requires that anyone wanting to sell door-to-door must fill out a Peddlers and Solicitors Permit Application. An appointment must be made when submitting

the application along with Live Scan fingerprinting, having a photo taken, and a background check completed. The permit costs \$125 and is good for one year after issuance. Even with a permit, no soliciting is allowed if a residence has posted a sign prohibiting it on their premises.

Besides the standard personal information on most general applications, the applicant must provide vehicle and business/activity descriptions. Lastly, any criminal record information must be divulged other than traffic violations. When a solicitor's permit is granted, the applicant will receive a laminated permit from MPD containing pertinent information along with a photo of the solicitor that will hang from a lanyard and must be worn in plain sight while

soliciting.

"Most companies that target cities to make sales will check out the cities' ordinances," stated King. However, there are those, as mentioned earlier, who don't do their homework, and MPD relies on calls from residences to draw attention to them. After running a check, "legitimate businesses will be told they need a permit. Some will get a warning and won't listen. When that happens our officers will cite them."

Moraga adopted Ordinance No. 239 in early 2013. "It's my understanding that this ordinance came about from an assault that happened in Lafayette involving a solicitor on a female resident," recalled King.

In Chapter 9.10.010 - Findings and Purpose, the ordinance

states, "The Town of Moraga routinely responds to complaints regarding the conduct and impact of peddlers and solicitors operating within the town who peddle or solicit door-to-door. These complaints have involved misrepresentations or fraud in solicitations or sales, aggressive, threatening and intimidating tactics and the refusal to leave the premises when requested. These complaints implicate the town's interest in protecting the privacy, safety and general welfare of its residents."

King recommends using the services of reputable businesses. "We have a lot of fine local businesses, but we also want residents to know that when someone comes to their door wearing a permit that they have been vetted."

## Letters to the editor

### Lafayette Crosses

I am a US Army veteran who loves the Lafayette Crosses. I write because there have been so many letters to you recently which have been so negative about them that I thought I might try to offer a different perspective. And perhaps suggest a compromise.

Let me begin by acknowledging that my deployment for a year as an infantry officer leading night ambush patrols under fire does not qualify me at all to tell anyone how to respond to places of reverence. I can only describe the experiences I have had when out visiting them and say that based on many, many conversations I have had with fellow combat vets over decades now those experiences are strikingly similar.

In a nutshell, we walk around and in between the crosses (and, of course, the Stars of David, the Buddhist faith emblems, and so on) and we talk to the fallen. We thank them, naturally, we express guilt feelings that we survived and somehow, they did not, and sometimes we tell them how sorry we are that their lives were unnecessarily taken by stupid decisions our leaders made, many of whom never served a day in uniform. Over the course of a walk, our emotions range widely from pride to outrage and beyond. To have a place like this to attend on Memorial Day or Veteran's Day or July 4 or 9/11 is a kind of restabilization we — and maybe many non-vets too — need from time to time. The placard at the top of the hill which formerly carried a number of the dead, updated from time to time, was not maudlin but truly stunning.

Some of the negative letters said that combat vets don't like the

crosses because they don't have names but the vets I walk with strongly disagree. We remind all that any simple visit to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier shows that names are not needed. (Actually, quite a few crosses do have names and touching personal notes). Before the crosses I would visit the Presidio cemetery and while on my walks there I obviously saw names but I rarely remembered those particulars and did not need to do so in order to accomplish my mission.

That mission was and is to continue my practice of thanking and remembering and regretting and just having intensely human emotions at a tragic sight. One of the letters to you said we have "moved on" and that we need need to erect condos so as to avoid the eyesore of worn out pieces of wood but I truly hope for our nation that we never move on from such a place of reverence. It is simply not enough to watch a TV show of patriotic songs, one must walk that walk and experience it first hand.

But wooden crosses don't last forever. Like our uniforms they fade, and so I suggest that when the time comes to do something, then it should include preserving a decent-sized (not tiny and tucked into a corner) parcel with upgraded crosses and Stars and Buddhist signs of faith. Names are not needed, just the opportunity to be there and feel, really feel, the suffering and the sacrifice that we vets placed our lives on the line to honor and preserve. William Norman Orinda

### Lafayette Hillside Memorial

In response to the Moraga letter re-

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 must be factually accurate. Lamorinda Weekly reserves the right to refuse publishing a letter submission. Visit [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) for submission guidelines. Email: [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com); Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C #202, Moraga, CA 94556

garding the Lafayette Hillside Memorial, I would like to say that he has every right to genuinely react to the memorial as he does, as the Memorial brings up strong feelings for people, all of which are valid. However, before assuming that the people involved in erecting this memorial did not care about the victims of these wars, I would suggest that he inquire further into the history of the memorial and those who were involved in its conception and execution. This memorial was put up on private property by a group of all-volunteers, with no financial backing or help, other than their own personal contributions of money, time and donated materials. The memorial has continued to be preserved in the same way. These symbols were made simply in the backyards of local people's homes with scrap wood and other materials. The intent was to show the extent to which these wars cost and hurt individuals, and further to try to impress upon the public the great number of lives lost. Many of those working on the hillside can assure you that countless times there were veterans and relatives of veterans who came there to personally mourn their losses. And, yes, many of the symbols are personalized by family members and are not anonymous; in fact, one has just been added recently. The appearance of the memorial may not be as polished as some, but it has its purpose to remind us to be grateful for the sacrifices made and the tragic costs of war. Kay James Moraga

slain victims who have fallen in conflict zones around the world remain unidentified and unnamed. In a word, they remain "unknown", often being buried in unmarked graves. As a child visiting Westminster Abbey in London, I was dumbstruck when someone explained the meaning and reason behind the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier there. The power of a memorial to the unnamed is equally inspiring and moving, and for me, fills the gap of ensuring that all slain victims in all conflicts - both named and unnamed - are remembered.

Later in life, I was struck by the power of three words I started seeing on memorials around the world.

First used in 1897, by Rudyard Kipling (a poem called: Recessional) the phrase "Lest We Forget" is so simple and yet so powerful, and I have subsequently seen these three words on many memorials around the world. I have also seen many memorials to The Unknown Soldier in my travels. Clearly, these concepts have universal meaning.

And so, returning to Lafayette, CA, where I have only recently begun to spend my time, I have to say that the Lafayette Hillside Memorial installation makes me proud to be here as it reflects the spirit and energy of a community that is thoughtful, aware, and civically engaged.

I learned the history of the Memorial by reading your recent article and visiting the Hillside Memorial's website and was surprised how controversial it was in the beginning. Now it seems to be part of the fabric of the community; something accepted and appreciated by many when I have inquired about it. It is even marked on Google Maps as The Crosses of Lafayette (whilst failing to recognize the other symbols of remembrance evident on the hillside). Yes, the memorial is a bit weather beaten which is partly why it is so effective in reminding us to not "forget" our freedoms that are so easily taken for granted, and yet which are also so fragile. The Memorial is both a piece of history and a present-time statement giving those who drive or walk by it the chance to pause and reflect.

I end with a quote by renowned war correspondent Robert Fisk, who

described war as being "primarily not about victory or defeat, but about death and the infliction of death. It represents a total failure of the human spirit."

In my view, the message that the Lafayette Hillside Memorial presents is a powerful and relevant attempt at reminding us what the opposite of that total failure can look like. For me it represents the compassionate, empowering, and honoring elements of the human spirit, and is one of the things that makes this city special. Max Anderson Lafayette

### Updates on Crimes in Lamorinda

I frequently hear anecdotal reports of crime in our area, specifically about car theft, burglary and retail theft and, on at least one occasion, have encountered it in person. Yet, there is never any mention of crime in the Lamorinda Weekly. We have articles about wildfire preparedness, flood preparedness but never anything about the crime situation in our collective community.

Granted, we have the weekly blotter report but that tells us nothing about trends, prevention or the effectiveness of crime prevention on the part of our local police departments. Somewhere between the apocalyptic whining on 'Next Door Las Trampas' and sticking our heads in the sand and pretending there is no crime in our pristine communities, there must be a happy medium. It would be most helpful if we could get periodic articles from the three police departments, addressing trends in crime, recommended preventative measures and the effectiveness of our police in solving crimes when they happen. Byrne N. Sherwood, Jr. Lafayette

*Editor's note:*  
The Chief of the Lafayette Police gave a briefing to the Lafayette City Council and Lamorinda Weekly reported in our April 12 edition. The article can be found at [www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1704/Lafayette-Police-Chief-presents-2022-crime-stats-to-council.html](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1704/Lafayette-Police-Chief-presents-2022-crime-stats-to-council.html)



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### To whom it may concern

Having recently moved to Lafayette, and only slightly less recently become a citizen of this country (30 years and counting), I am saddened to read the two recent letters in your publication (9/13/23 issue).

I read them both with curiosity, especially ex Medical Service Corps officer John Dutton's. While I understand his points about the power of memorials showing the names of the fallen, I think there is an equally strong and powerful point about memorializing war, death, and destruction, and that is - many of the

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Police Department Tip Line  
94549Tip@gmail.com  
Police Department Traffic Issues  
94549Traffic@gmail.com  
**Moraga Police Department:**  
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055  
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049  
**Orinda Police Department:**  
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820  
Chief of Police, Ryan Sullivan  
925-254-6820  
[Orindatip@cityoforinda.org](mailto:Orindatip@cityoforinda.org)

### Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Sept 3 - Sept. 16

Alarms	37
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	12
Traffic	104
Suspicious Circumstances	6
Suspicious Subject	16
Suspicious Vehicle	9
Service to Citizen	37
Patrol Req./Security Check	32
Public/School Assembly Check	3
Supplemental Report	19
Vacation House Check	15
Welfare Check	12
Ordinance Violation	0
<b>Vehicle violations</b>	
AAuto Burglary	
1000 Block Serrano Ct.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.	
3800 Block Happy Valley Rd.	

Police Department	
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.	
Reckless Driving	
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Happy Valley Rd.	(2)
Reliez Station Rd./Olympic Blvd.	
Oconner Dr./Moraga Rd.	
Pleasant Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd.	
Vehicle Theft	
3200 Block Stanley Blvd.	
10 Block Old Millstone Ln.	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
<b>Other criminal activity</b>	
Commercial Burglary	
3400 Block Hall Ln.	
Computer Fraud	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Fraud False Pretenses	
80 Block Silverwood Dr.	
Police Department (2)	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Grand Theft	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Identity Theft	
800 Block Broadmoor Ct.	
3200 Block Lucas Cir.	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
900 Block Happy Valley Ct.	
Petty Theft	
1000 Block Carol Ln.	
900 Block Moraga Rd.	
El Nido Ranch Rd./Sunnyhill Rd.	
Petty Theft From Veh	
Brook St/Hough Ave.	
Residential Burglary	
3900 Block S Peardale Dr.	
Shoplift	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (4)	
<b>Nuisance to the Community</b>	
Disturbance-domestic	
1400 Block Tichenor Ct.	
Loud Motorcycle	
900 Block Village Center	
Loud Music	
3400 Block Black Hawk Rd.	
1400 Block Rancho View Dr.	
Loud Noise	
St Marys Rd./Glenside Dr.	
Public Nuisance	
Sundale Rd./Highland Rd.	
Marsha Pl./Silverado Dr.	
3500 Block Golden Gate Wy	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)	
700 Block Los Palos Dr.	

600 Block Murray Ln.	
Reliez Valley Rd./Mcgraw Ln.	
4000 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Vandalism	
Hough Ave./Brook St.	
<b>Other</b>	
Animal Cruelty	
3500 Block Moraga Blvd.	
Fireworks	
Fairholm Ct./Reliez Valley Rd.	
H&S Violation	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
In Custody Theft	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Trespass	
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
20 Block Samantha Dr.	
Unwanted Guest	
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
Violation Restraining Ord	
1400 Block Tichenor Ct.	

### Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report Sept. 12 - Sept. 18

Alarms	7
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	20
Traffic	20
Suspicious Circumstances	1
Suspicious Subject	2
Suspicious Vehicle	4
Service to Citizen	15
Patrol Req./Security Check	12
Public/School Assembly Check	3
Supplemental Report	6
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	1
Ordinance Violation	1
<b>Vehicle violations</b>	
Excessive Speed	
St Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd.,	
Rheem Blvd./Fernwood Dr.	
Rheem Blvd./Chalda Way	
St Marys Rd./Ifo The College	
Moraga Rd./Skatepark	
St Marys College	
Moraga Rd./Moraga Way	
Reckless Driving	
Canyon Rd./Camino Pablo	

<b>Other criminal activity</b>	
Fraud False Pretenses	
100 Block Brookfield Dr.	
Identity Theft	
Police Department (2)	
700 Block Crossbrook Dr.	
Warrant Arrest	
Rheem Valley Shopping Center	
<b>Nuisance to the Community</b>	
Loud Music	
70 Block Miramonte Dr. (2)	
Loud Party	
100 Block Ascot Ct	
Vandalism	
Not Available	
2100 Block Ascot Dr.	
<b>Other</b>	
Litter	
Moraga Rd./Moraga Way	
Trespass	
1400 Block Camino Peral	
Unwanted Guest	
St Marys College	

### Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report Sept. 3 - Sept. 16

Alarms	50
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	8
Traffic	57
Suspicious Circumstances	7
Suspicious Subject	10
Suspicious Vehicle	6
Service to Citizen	56
Patrol Req./Security Check	19
Public/School Assembly Check	1
Supplemental Report	22
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	4
Ordinance Violation	3
<b>Vehicle violations</b>	
Accident Property	
Moraga Way (2)	
Auto Burglary	
500 Block Tahos Rd.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
600 Block Miner Rd.	

Reckless Driving	
Camino Pablo/Los Amigos	
100 Block Brookwood Rd.	
Moraga Way/Brookwood Rd.	
Camino Don Miguel/Miner Rd.	
Camino Pablo/Moraga Way	
St Stephens Dr.	
San Pablo Dam Rd./Wildcat Canyon Rd.	
<b>Other criminal activity</b>	
Fraud Credit Card	
20 Block Irwin Way	
Petty Theft	
80 Block Via Floreado	
Petty Theft From Veh	
100 Block Casa Vieja Pl.	
<b>Nuisance to the Community</b>	
Disturbance-fight	
Camino Pablo/Miner Rd.	
Disturbing The Peace	
Camino Pablo	
Loud Music	
Camino Sobrante	
Loud Noise	
30 Block Marston Rd.	
50 Block Stanton Ave.	
Loud Party	
No House Number	
Public Nuisance	
10 Block Broadview Terrace	
10 Block Whitehall Dr.	
80 Block Davis Rd.	
Moraga Way (3)	
Vandalism	
20 Block La Madronal	
Vandalism - Felony	
100 Block Camino Pablo	
<b>Other</b>	
Brandishing Weapon	
Donald Dr.	
Corporal Injury Spouse	
Alta Vista	
10 Block Irving Ln	
Failure To Obey	
Wilder Rd./Big Leaf Rd.	
Mentally Ill Commit	
Altarinda Rd.	
Revocation Of Probation	
Orinda Way/Camino Pablo	
Orinda Way/Santa Maria Way	
Terrorist Threats	
Moraga Way	
Trespass	
80 Block Davis Rd.	
500 Block Orindawoods Dr.	



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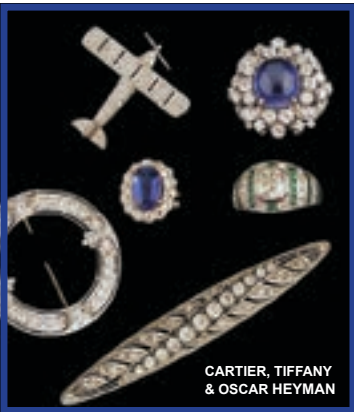
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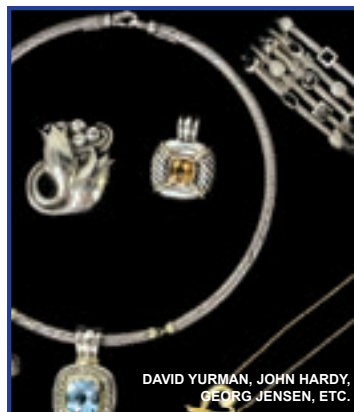
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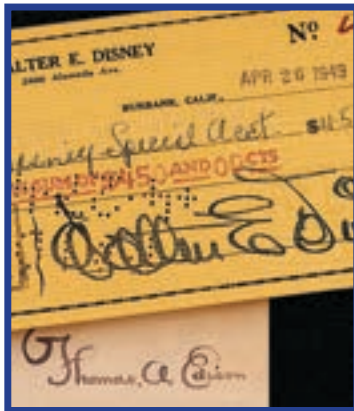
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# Mindful Littles' event and Orinda's last Concert in the Park end the summer season

By Sora O'Doherty



**Mindful Littles Carnival**

Photo Sora O'Doherty

Mindful Littles and Orinda Parks & Recreation teamed up on Sept. 21 to celebrate the International Day of Peace at a one-of-a-kind event. The nonprofit organization founded by Tanuka Gordon seven years ago held its fifth Annual Peace & Kindness Carnival at the final

Orinda Concert in the Park. Gordon noted that it was much easier to host the carnival with the assistance of Orinda Parks & Rec.

At the event, kids could engage in fun, kindness-themed activities, like face painting, games, and service oriented

tasks such as assembling dental health packs to be distributed to unhoused people, assisted by Gordon's sister, a dentist. During its existence, the nonprofit organization has seen thousands of students and is expanding to events at workplaces to help adults guide children to compassion and empathy. Gordon has given up her employment to donate her volunteer work to the nonprofit, which also employs two assistants.

The event and the concert coincided with the Orinda Thursday night food trucks, and Contra Costa County Animal Services was also on hand with a kitten adoption event. The concert was performed by Patron Latin Rhythms, and many people enjoyed the perfect weather on the evening sitting on the grassy lawn of the Orinda Community Park. The band's music was also broadcast to the Library Plaza, where tables and benches were available for people to enjoy their dinners from the food trucks.

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## Lafayette teachers

... continued from Page A2

“Since then, the District received more money than we could have predicted, and now that the contract is open again, both sides want to make meaningful strides on teachers' salaries. Our 12% offer is reflective of that commitment.”

Stephens called the district's current 12% offer “very strong” and says it will amount to “meaningful pay increases for teachers.”

Teachers say that although the district's offer may seem strong, even the 14% that they are asking for is a concession

they're willing to make – when the cumulative discrepancy in pay between Lafayette teachers who prematurely settled for a 2% cost of living wage a few years ago and their peers, who were able to factor in the state-rate of over 6%. “We'll still be behind, but this will be a step in the right direction,” Gingrich says.

When asked about the possibility of a strike, Gingrich and her colleagues remain hopeful that a win-win solution can be found. “None of us want it to come to that,” Gingrich says when asked about the strike. “We love the district,

we love the kids, we just want a fair, competitive contract.”

Parents like Jeanine Smith, the mother of a Lafayette elementary school student and a Stanley middle school student, who joined the teacher's informational picket line before school, say they're on the side of the teachers.

“I support the teachers and advocate for them having higher salaries because they do such a great job teaching our students,” Smith says. “I would like to see all teachers make a great living no matter where they live or where they teach.”

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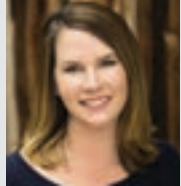
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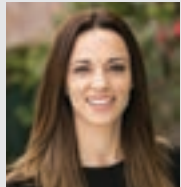
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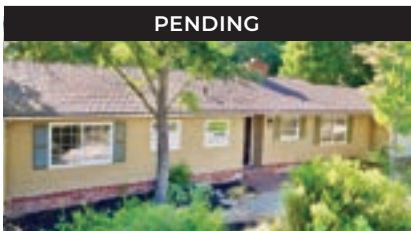
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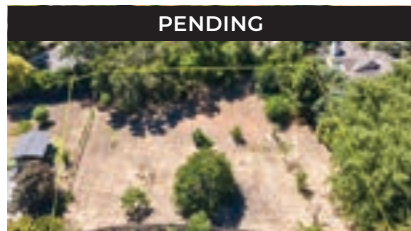
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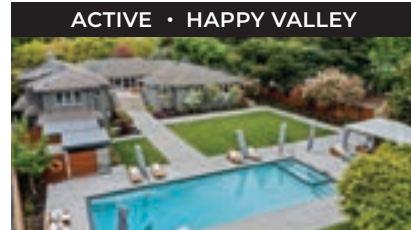
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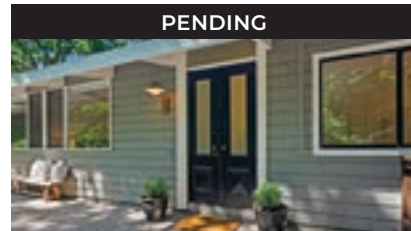
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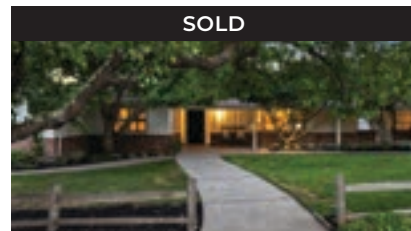
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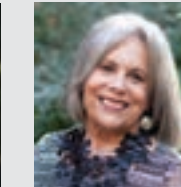
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# Mark your calendars and join the Community Foundation of Lafayette on September 30 for its FREE Senior Symposium.

**Location: Acalanes High School, Time: 8:30 am - Noon**

You will have access to valuable senior health and wellness updates as you stroll the various exhibitor information booths and hear from a panel of experts. Confirmed speakers include:



**Chip Conley** - Former AirBnB Global Strategist and Joie de Vivre Hotels CEO/Founder  
Topic: *Wisdom @ Work: The Making of a Modern Elder*

**Alan Brast, Ph.D., CCHT, CSA, NLP** - Comprehensive Wellness  
Topic: *Connecting Mind and Body While Navigating Life's Changes*

**Linda Fodrini-Johnson** - Geriatric Care Manager, Eldercare Services  
Topic: *Feed the Body, Fuel the Mind: How Proper Nutrition and Positivity Help Prevent Dementia*

**Robineve Cole** - CEO/Founder, Robineve & Co Interiors  
Topic: *Universal Design: Design Principles For A Home That Nurture You Through All Life's Stages*

And remarks from Honorable

Registration and Sponsor at <http://www.lafayettetcf.org>



## ~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

### Campolindo student works to protect seniors

By Diane Claytor



Matthew Sugiyama (left) and his sister, Megan, with their grandmother, Alice Lin Photo provided

When Moraga's Matthew Sugiyama learned what happened to his beloved grandmother, he, like everyone else in his family, was both devastated and very angry. How could something like this happen, wondered the 16-year-old Campolindo junior.

His 80-year-old, widowed grandmother, Alice Lin, lives in Southern California and cares for her son, who is on disability. She and her late husband immigrated to America many years ago to raise their family and work hard so they could live the American dream. That dream was crushed when she was scammed out of more than \$720,000.

As Sugiyama describes what happened to his grandmother last year, his voice often cracks and his emotions are apparent. "She lost almost her entire life's savings," he sadly says.

She received a message through an online mobile messaging app from a man calling himself "Justin." An online relationship slowly developed, Sugiyama explains. "He was able to make himself relatable, make her feel sympathy for him."

Lin began to trust "Justin," who informed her of some wonderful investments he'd made, convincing her he could successfully help her with her own investments. Lin began to

make financial transactions through a mobile app for investments she believed were legitimate. They weren't. Over a period of three weeks, Lin walked into the local branch of a large financial institution seven times and, based on instructions from "Justin," wired various sums of money until, ultimately, her scammer had \$720,000 of Lin's money.

Although it had been many years since Lin had ever initiated any wire transfer, no one at the bank questioned her about these seven transfers or did anything to make them slow down or stop.

It wasn't until Lin, talking to her oldest daughter, mentioned that she was making these investments, that anyone had any idea that something was amiss. The family contacted the FBI, as well as local law enforcement. The money, they confirmed, was gone.

Sugiyama was angry. He saw the effects this had on his grandmother and his entire family and knew he wanted to do something. "I don't want anyone else to ever have to go through what my grandmother did," he says.

Sugiyama was already a young community activist. He founded a Lamorinda chapter of Lion's Heart, where members are encouraged to give back to their communities; he was a youth ambassador for

Act To Change, a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to protect AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) youth from bullying; and he is currently a chapter leader and legislative board member of AAPI Youth Rising, a student-led organization that takes small actions to make positive changes. He was recently selected to serve on the Moraga Youth Involvement Committee, which provides young people with opportunities for civic involvement.

"It's vital for youth to speak up as our society needs to hear from the next generation," Sugiyama believes. "Empowering young people gives them self-confidence and educates them to create a better society."

With this mindset, Sugiyama took action to do what he could to help both his grandmother and other victims of senior scams, of which there are many. The FBI reports that last year, about 88,000 people over the age of 60 lost more than \$3 billion to financial elder abuse, with almost 5,500 people losing more than \$100,000 each.

The first thing Sugiyama did was start a petition on change.org, asking the California Legislature to pass Senate Bill 278, introduced by Sen. Bill Dodd.

... continued on Page B3

Patricia Camras - Parenting Coach in Lamorinda



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# Crisp apple cider adds flavor boost to pancakes, perfect for fall

By Susie Iventosch



Apple Cider Pancakes

Photos Susie Iventosch

It's definitely apple season, and with that comes delicious apple cider. One of my favorite childhood memories is my mom giving us powdered sugar donuts and fresh local apple cider for after school snacks during the fall. She was that mom who always made us breakfast ... every single day, and always had fun and exciting snacks waiting for us after our walk home from the school bus. Those are such fond memories! To this day, even though I rarely eat donuts, if I had to pick one after school treat, it would be those powdered sugar donuts and apple cider.

Apple cider and apple juice are not the same thing. In fact, they both start with apples, but where cider is generally pure 100% raw, unpasteurized and unfiltered juice, (and therefore more seasonal), apple juice is mostly made from a concentrate. The water content along with the natural pectin and fibers are filtered out during the concentration process, with the

result being less nutritional value as well as less flavor. Then to make juice, the water is added back to the concentrate often along with artificial flavors and coloring, corn syrup and preservatives. Natural unfiltered apple juice is more or less the same thing as apple cider, and will have a more intense apple flavor, like cider. If you cannot find apple cider, try to find natural, unfiltered apple juice and if you cannot find that, you can use apple juice, but add some puréed or finely diced apple to the pancake batter to give a flavor boost.

I recently guided a bicycle tour in Northern Idaho and one of the inns where we stayed specializes in apple cider pancakes. They really were delicious, and, naturally, I decided to try them at home. Instead of the apple glaze they served, I opted to caramelize apples in brown sugar, butter and apple juice, and spoon that over the top of the pancakes. It was delicious and the flavor reminded me of a good

tarte tatin — the quintessential French caramelized apple pie! As the apples cook down and caramelize in the butter and brown sugar, it creates a syrupy sauce that can be drizzled over the pancakes in place of syrup.



## Apple Cider Pancakes

(Serves 4)

### INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
4 tsp. baking powder  
2 tbsp. light brown sugar  
1/4 tsp. salt, or more to taste  
1/4 tsp. cinnamon  
1/4 tsp. cardamom  
1 1/4 cups apple cider (or unfiltered natural apple juice)  
3 tablespoons melted butter, or canola oil  
1 egg  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 tsp. cider vinegar  
Topping  
2 medium apples (I use Honeycrisp), core removed and cut into small bite-sized chunks. (Keep skins on the apples for color, flavor and nutritional value.)  
4 tbsp. brown sugar  
2 tbsp. butter  
1/4+ cup apple cider

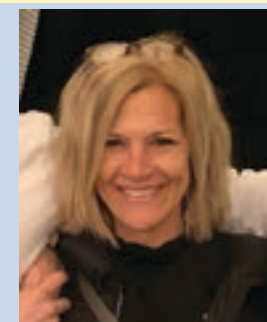
### DIRECTIONS

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and cardamom. Blend well with a whisk or fork. Set aside.

In another smaller bowl, blend apple cider, egg, brown sugar, melted butter or oil, vanilla and cider vinegar. Whisk until blended. Stir these liquids into the dries and blend until incorporated. Batter will thicken as it sits. (If you add puréed or finely diced apple, add it to the liquid ingredients before blending the batter.)

Meanwhile, melt butter for caramelized apples in a large skillet. Add brown sugar and stir until bubbly. Pour apple chunks into the skillet and cook over low heat for approximate 25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until apples are caramelized. Add 1/4 cup apple cider and cook down until reduced to the thickness of syrup.

Once the caramelized apples are ready, heat oil or butter in another skillet. Cook pancakes until golden brown. Serve hot with a big spoonful of caramelized apples and the apple reduction sauce. A dollop of whipped cream or whipped cream yogurt would also be delightful on top of each pancake.



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com). If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>

## Looking Good in Lamorinda Fun fall fashion trends

By Moya Stone

Gracing the cover of Vogue magazine this month are the four super models of the 1990s – Linda, Cindy, Naomi, and Christy – wearing the monochromatic trend for fall 2023. While “Barbie Pink” was the unofficial color of summer, the trend this season is Oppenheimer head-to-toe neutrals – beige, grey, and black. I say, why not add a touch of color to the neutrals with accessories? Such as a red scarf, a magenta handbag, or purple shoes. All black may be chic, but all black plus a pink belt is better than chic!

Other trends for the season include the loafer shoe, pleated skirts, narrow scarves, oversized everything including shirts, sweaters, and blazers. (Consider adding a wide belt to the blazer.)

We might think of fall as the season of cooler weather, but often the temps are still warm if not hot. So how does one shift into fall attire and stay cool? I do it with cotton fabrics and color. Lightweight cotton dresses, skirts and tops in autumnal shades such as

green, brown, burgundy, and dark blue are perfect for fall, but are comfortable in the heat.

Speaking of cotton, the Cotton Patch in Lafayette was recently featured in Quiltfolk, a quarterly magazine about all things related to quilting. The latest issue highlights quilt artists and businesses from all around the Bay Area. The Cotton Patch, which opened in Lafayette in 1978, is family run and the go-to shop is not just for local quilt artists, but also for seamstresses looking for novelty cotton prints, which make for unique sartorial creations.

It was a loss to the community when SewNow Fashion Studio in Lafayette closed, but luckily there's a new sewing studio in Walnut Creek. Studio Dawnatella located at 546 Ygnacio Valley Road just opened in July and offers an array of sewing and jewelry making classes for kids and adults. Proprietor Dawn King says that the class schedule includes Basic Machine Sewing, where students learn how to

use a sewing machine, as well as a hand sewing class “for the little ones who can't use the machine yet.” In other more advanced classes students can make pajama pants, circle skirt, or a fairy (tulle) skirt, which King points out is “a fun Halloween costume, or fun anytime.” As for jewelry, sign up with a friend for the Silver Spooky Halloween Pendant class or the Silver Stack Ring class. Also, think ahead to the holidays and take one of the gift making classes.

King is also offering Permanent Jewelry. A popular trend in recent years, Permanent Jewelry is a piece of jewelry, usually a bracelet or necklace, with no clasp. “It's soldered on by means of a very precise welder,” explains King. And therefore permanent (but it can be easily removed with a pair of kitchen shears). “People many times choose to get one with a partner or child as a symbolic piece of jewelry,” says King. Find out more about Permanent Jewelry and all the classes at Studio Dawnatella on the website: [studiodaw-](http://studiodaw-natella.com)



Photos provided

### “D.V.” by Diana Vreeland

natella.com.

My favorite reads are fashion memoirs because each one is a unique peek into the inner workings of the fashion industry. I recently reread “D.V.” by Diana Vreeland (Knopf Inc.), fashion editor at Harper's Bazaar magazine in the 1930s, then editor-in-chief of Vogue magazine until she was unceremoniously let go in 1971. Undeterred, the flamboyant Vreeland soon moved on to become consultant to the Costume Institute of the Met-



### Make a set of three Stacker Rings at Studio Dawnatella.

ropolitan Museum of Art. Vreeland's memoir was first published in 1984 and is akin to an evening of theater. Her writing style is informal and chatty, as if she's sitting in front of you sipping champagne while sharing her extraordinary life. The travel, the people, the parties, the fashion are all presented in vivid detail, and embellishment. She spills the tea about the fashionables of the day – Chanel, Balenciaga, Wallis Simpson and the Prince of Wales among many others. It's an entertaining, informative, and sometimes shocking read, but also an important contribution to fashion history.

Embrace the colors of autumn and go forth in style.

Moya Stone is a fashion writer and blogger at [www.overdressedforlife.com](http://www.overdressedforlife.com).

## Author event to focus on helping students find ‘true north’

The Campolindo Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) committee will be hosting an author event with Tim Klein – an award-winning urban educator, clinical therapist, and school counselor on Oct. 11. Klein, together with Belle Liang – a professor of Counseling Psychology in the Lynch School of Education and Human Development at Boston College – developed True North, a curriculum and web-based application for creating purpose profiles to be used in schools and universities.

Klein and Liang are the authors of “How to Navigate Life: The New Science of Finding Your Way in School, Career, and Beyond,” which offers a framework and set of questions to find kids’ “true north” – what really turns them on in life, and how to harness the

core qualities that reveal this, allowing them to choose a course of study, a college, and a career.

“Many of our families are focused on getting into the most competitive colleges and universities. While this is not a negative pursuit, I think students could use guidance on the deeper work of thinking about finding their purpose in life,” Campolindo Principal Pete Alvarez said. “My hope is that students are signing up for classes and activities that they find interesting, that bring them joy, which personally resonate, and that foster growth. But this is not always the case and often leads to students just ‘doing school’ and not discovering the joy of being a learner.”

Dr. Paul Espinas has seen an increase in anxiety and de-

pression and other mental health issues for teens. “I would hope that students engage in work and activities that fit their values and purpose,” he said. “Also, there are many different pathways to having a fulfilling, successful life.”

Alvarez says some families and students are experiencing greater pressure to get into and afford college. “The most competitive schools market their low acceptance rates and increases the performance anxiety for students. Having a myopic view that college is the only pathway to success leaves many students blind to the multitude of possibilities in life. For students who do chose different pathways in life, this can lead to a feeling of marginalization and failure, which couldn't be further from the truth.”

DEIB Co-Chair Anne Murrin hopes this event teaches students that “they matter for who they are, and not what for they do, get to know themselves/their values and make personally relevant decisions.”

The event will be held at the Campolindo Performing Arts Center at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 11 and is open to the public. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

– J. Wake

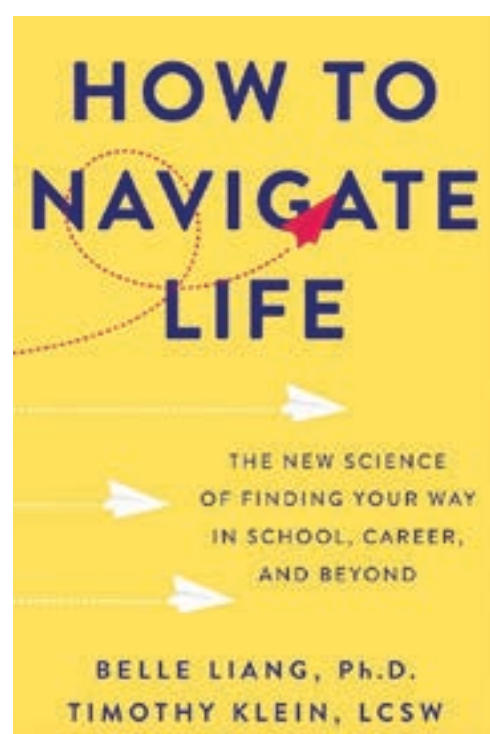


Image provided



# Campo's CPAC launches new fundraising campaign, plans benefit concert



The Campolindo Performing Arts Center at Campolindo High School has launched a fundraising campaign to purchase and install state of the art technology and equipment, as well as upgrade the technological infrastructure of the CPAC. Since its opening in 2003, the CPAC has been a gathering place, a performance space, and a literal training

ground for thousands of performing arts students. "Amplify the Arts" chair Heather Davis explains the campaign is a partnership between Campolindo High School, Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD), Moraga Education Foundation (MEF), Campolindo Choir Fund (CCF), Campolindo Instrumental Music Boosters, parents, and the community. According to the "Amplify the Arts" website, "Significant advancements in technology over the last 20 years have made existing equipment woefully outdated and, in some cases, inoperable. The installation of projected updates to audio, communications and lighting systems will enhance the experience for performers and audience members alike. The CPAC, which impacts the arts education of hundreds of students each year, also provides a vibrant arts environment for the benefit of the greater community."

"The first phase focused on the audio portion of

the project and installation was completed in September," Davis said. "Equipment and upgrades included sound mixing equipment, surround sound, speakers, microphone banks and more. The project also includes a lighting phase which is in process and will be purchased and installed as soon as funds are available." To date, the campaign has raised over \$125,000, Davis noted.

"Amplify the Arts" will host a benefit concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 14 and at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 15 which will feature performances from Campo's performing arts alumni - Maddie Browning (2015), Nate Correll (2017) and Arriana Glenn (2019) - now seen professionally on stage, in the pit, and on screen. - J. Wake

For information, visit [www.amplifytheartscpac.org/](http://www.amplifytheartscpac.org/)

# Local students facilitate STEM summer program at Concord elementary school

Submitted by Cathy Chang



Photo provided

Mason Friedrich, a ninth-grader at Campo, tests students' barge made with aluminum foil sheet during STEM challenge.

Oliver DeyToth and Brian Harrison who have learned coding for years and competed in various robotics and computer science competitions came up with the idea of volunteering with their coding skills before they graduated from Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School ("JM") in Spring 2023. The offer of their time and coding skills resulted in the creation of the new summer service project called "Meadow-Moraga Coding Community." Thirteen students from JM, Campolindo High School and Miramonte High School were recruited to participate in the Coding Community. They went through training on coding and

STEM tournament curriculum development before teaching at Meadow Homes Elementary School in Concord.

Meadow Homes has over 737 students and more than 97% of the students rely on the government meal program year-round, including school breaks, as most families live under the poverty line. The school does not have resources to offer computer classes historically. The Coding Community's youth instructors were mentored and supported by six parent volunteers from Moraga. Teaching plans were reviewed with mentors before the summer program started and daily review was required after each class. The trained youth instructors taught six coding sessions and facilitated daily STEM challenges every afternoon during the month of June at the Title 1 elementary school. Guy Sandler, a current ninth-grader at Campo, rehearsed his approved teaching plan by teaching his younger sister in elementary school at home prior to his teaching week.

Meadow-Moraga Coding Community's youth instructors taught over 120 students from TK thru fourth grades during the elementary school's 4-week summer program. Sydney Paige Foundation in Walnut Creek generously donated over 80 prizes for the Coding Community's STEM tournaments.

"Seeing kids interested in coding and trying their best really makes our work meaningful," said Eric Mu, a current ninth-grader at Campo who taught in Meadow Home's TK/K class. Ms. Emily, a Meadow Homes staff member who supervised the second- and third-grade class asked Mislav Benko, another ninth-grade youth instructor from Campo, if she could also sit with the class and learn after she observed the impressive progress the class has made within just two days of learning.

"Watching how much progress Meadow Homes students made every week and seeing how they became confident and believed in what they could do were amazing feelings," Brian Harrison said.

Talia Walsh and Sara Harrison, current seventh-grade students at JM who taught TK/K and first/second-grade classes found the project most impactful as they helped Meadow Homes students learn new skills that were not available to them in the past. Jayin Joshi, a current ninth-grader at Campo, who taught in the second/third-grade classroom with Oliver DeyToth, enjoyed teaching Meadow Homes students that they could apply in the future.

Matija Benko and Emma Wang, current 10th-grade students at Campo and Miramonte, bonded with the students quickly as the students looked up to them. Students high-fived with the youth instructors in hallways and constantly asked when they would return to teach again. The experience of teaching at Meadow Homes also inspired a new level of appreciation for teachers and staff. "It took a lot to prepare and teach. I have so much more appreciation and empathy for teachers after working in the classrooms," said Leo Rudiger-Real, a current seventh-grader at JM who volunteered in TK/K and first/second-grade classes. Stephanie Lee, a Campo ninth-grader who taught the fourth-grade class, appreciated her teaching assistant's support. Assistant Principal Estrada-Dennis set the example of learning and knowing every student by their first name and helping everyone with a smile and calm voice.

In addition to the in-kind donations from Sydney Paige Foundation, Meadow-Moraga Coding Community also received a generous grant from Foundation Source. Instead of getting team T-shirts, the youth instructors voted to use 100% of the grant toward Meadow Homes students' learning. The Coding Community purchased 800 computer mice and 800 headsets for the school as they realized that the school had no resource to provide students computer mice and headsets. The Coding Community spent the remaining balance on Scholastic gift cards for Meadow Homes school library to purchase STEM and coding books.

# Eagle Scout project for retired US flags

Submitted by Steven Bartis



Photo provided

Many Americans proudly fly a United States flag at their homes or businesses, but what do you do with it when it's tattered and torn? It's considered disrespectful to throw a flag in the trash like any other item.

Just as there is etiquette for displaying Old Glory, there is also etiquette for disposing flags in a dignified manner. In 1923 when the National Flag Conference met in Washington D.C., its members created the Flag Code which states that "the flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing." Furthermore, "the approved method of disposing of unserviceable flags has long been that they be destroyed by burning." This service is specifically performed by various organizations such as American Legions, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Boy Scouts of America.

2023 Campolindo High School graduate and Eagle Scout Griffin Bartis completed his Eagle service project in December, 2022 - a permanent retired U.S. flag repository, located at the Russell J. Bruzzone memorial hut (the red hut) located at 1279 Moraga Way.

In Lamorinda, you may deposit your unserviceable United States Flag (no other types of flags please) into Bartis's U.S. flag drop box and rest assured that it will be respectfully retired by the Boy Scouts of Moraga Troop 212 in a dignified service.

**Community Service:** We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions may be sent to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com) with the subject header In Service to the Community.

# Campolindo student works to protect seniors



Photo provided

... continued from Page B1

The bill, currently going through the legislative process, will strengthen elder financial abuse protections by holding financial institutions and banks more liable for suspicious transactions elders make. As Sugiyama writes, "My grandma's life has been forever shattered because of a scammer and a bank that didn't protect her."

Sen. Dodd writes, "Banks must do a better job protecting the most vulnerable Californians. This bill clarifies that if these institutions assist in financial elder abuse, either knowingly or otherwise, they can be held responsible."

Sugiyama next created a website, [protecting-seniors.org](http://protecting-seniors.org), which provides information to spread awareness of elder fraud, "because it's so prevalent," he says. The site offers resources for seniors on how to avoid being scammed and who to contact if they have been scammed.

To continue spreading the word and raising awareness, Sugiyama wrote and submitted an opinion piece to the San Francisco Chronicle, which ran on the newspaper's website earlier this month. He is also reaching out to the local community, speaking at senior residences and organizations with the goal of educating them about the scams that are out there. He recently made his first presentation to residents at Moraga Royale.

Fortunately, Lin is doing better, Sugiyama gratefully reports. "After realizing she had been scammed, she was depressed, angry, embarrassed. She even considered ending her life," he confesses. Sugiyama and his family are confident that his grandmother is now feeling better and he sincerely hopes that his positive efforts support his grandmother and also make a difference in the lives of other seniors.

# In Memory

## Kenneth M.S. Tom

March 24, 1933 - Aug. 28, 2023



Kenneth M.S. Tom departed this life on the evening of Aug. 28, 2023.

Ken was born on March 24, 1933, in Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii. He graduated from Baldwin High School and attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

Shortly thereafter, he enlisted in the United States Air Force where he attained the rank of Staff Sergeant and, among other things, worked in the up-and-coming computer field. After leaving the Air Force, he continued his education and earned a bachelor's degree from the California State University at Long Beach, and a master's and doctorate degree from UCLA. He worked at UCLA and later, Cal State Long Beach where he ran the school's data processing center. After moving to Moraga, Ken founded TTK Associates, a communications and computer company in business for 30 years.

His leadership and tireless energy manifested itself in his volunteer work with the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. He also volunteered with the local Red Cross, the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and was a member of Moraga Kiwanis. In 2008 Ken was recognized as Moraga's Citizen of the Year.

Ken's love of life was infectious. He savored good food and drink, especially from his beloved Hawaiian Islands. He will be missed by all whose lives were touched by his warmth, humor, and heartwarming smile. He will be especially missed by his family in whom he instilled a deep reverence for relationships and hard work.

Ken is survived by his wife Mary, three children - Lani, Karen, Brian - and their spouses, seven grandchildren (four spouses), and one great grandchild with another on the way.

# Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 200 words) to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com), and include "Celebrations or Remembrances" in the subject line.



## Not to be missed

### Art

**The Lafayette Public Art** Committee is excited to present "The Morning Bell Project," an exhibition, featuring a community quilt and moving drawings by children, that raises awareness around keeping schools safe from gun violence. The show is on view now until Jan. 9 at the Library Public Art Gallery located in the Don Tatzin Community Hall, adjacent to the Lafayette Library and Learning Center (3491 Mt Diablo Blvd). The venue is only open during public events at the Community Hall. A reception will be held on Oct. 10 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. Families and children are welcome.

**Lamorinda Weekly photographer** Jeff Heyman's series of photographs of oak trees, "Oak Scars No. 3," was selected to hang in The de Young Open 2023, an exhibit showcasing Bay Area artists at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. The exhibit runs from Sept. 30 to Jan. 7, 2024. There is a free public opening on Saturday, Sept. 30. [www.famsf.org/exhibitions/de-young-open-2023](http://www.famsf.org/exhibitions/de-young-open-2023).

**The Lafayette Public Art** Committee announces the opening of "Whispers and Echoes," an exhibit of black and white photography by Lafayette artist Ozgur Aydogdu. The exhibit is on view now at the Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School St., during theatre hours. Join us for an opening reception on Oct. 1 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Meet the artist and enjoy refreshments provided by the Public Art Committee. The event is free and open to the public.

**The Orinda Library Gallery** presents "Glover Group and Friends," Oct. 1 through Nov. 3. Seventeen local plein air artists will display paintings done on location in the Bay Area and beyond. Gallery Hours: Monday - Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday - Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Sundays.

**Eight of the East Bay's** favorite art galleries offer a tour between Oct. 6 and 15, the public is encouraged to visit any of the eight participating galleries (listed below) to collect their free Art Passport, which gets stamped each time a gallery is visited during the event, for a chance to win a gift certificate to be used at any participating gallery. aRT Cottage, Concord; Blackhawk

## Lamorinda Weekly

is an independent publication for the residents of Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda, CA. 25,000 printed copies; delivered to homes in Lamorinda.

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## Not to be missed

Gallery, Danville; JOR Fine Art Gallery, Clayton; Main Street Arts Gallery, Martinez; Moraga Art Gallery, Moraga; Valley Art Gallery, Walnut Creek; Village Theatre Art Gallery, Danville, Studio 55 & Art Gallery, Martinez

### Music

**Ensemble Mirable performs** the first concert set of San Francisco Early Music Society's exciting 2023-24 season from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1, in a concert that unearths and brings to light lesser-known early music gems. "Beyond Bach and Handel" showcases buried treasure in that it highlights less familiar Baroque composers such as Salamone Rossi, Dietrich Becker, Biagio Marini, and Jean Zewalt Triemer, who rub shoulders in this concert set with their more famous colleagues such as Bach, Vivaldi, and Handel. Friday, Sept. 29, 7:30 p.m., in Palo Alto; Saturday, Sept. 30, 7:30 p.m., in Berkeley; Sunday, Oct. 1, 4 p.m., in San Francisco. Tickets between \$30 and \$40 per ticket; attendees are encouraged to pay more if they are able to. <https://www.sfems.org>

**Local breast cancer research** and prevention nonprofit Notes4Hope presents its annual benefit concert on Friday, Oct. 6. Headliner is Michael Franti with special guest, Bay Area favorite, LUCE. VIP Doors: 4:30 p.m., VIP Experience: 5 p.m., GA Doors: 6 p.m., Show: 7 p.m., The Bruns, Home of Cal Shakes, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way, Orinda. All ages, no outside food or drink. Tickets & more info: [notes4hope.org/franti](http://notes4hope.org/franti)

### Theatre

**Town Hall Theatre Company:** "The Turn of the Screw," adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher, story by Henry

James. Sept. 28 and 29 (Previews), Sept. 30-Oct. 21. Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School Street, Lafayette. Tickets: \$20-45, Pay-What-You-Can tickets will be available at all performances at the door. [www.townhalltheatre.com/turnofscrow](http://www.townhalltheatre.com/turnofscrow)

**Improv comedy company** Synergy Theater is invading the Leshner Center for the Arts, at 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, with its mad-cap improvised horror spoof, "Z is for...Zombie: An Improvised Zombie Apocalypse!" Oct. 19 - 29, Thursdays - Saturdays at 8:15 p.m. and Sundays at 3:15 p.m. The Leshner Center for the Arts, George & Sonja Vukasin Theatre 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, tickets: \$25 buy online at [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org) or by phone at (925) 943-7469.

### Other

**The Moraga Community Service** Day will be held Oct. 6-8, with the goal of bringing the townsfolk together to assist those in need, and help beautify our schools and town. Sponsored and led by a Steering Committee of Moraga Community groups. Moraga families and individuals are encouraged to sign up and volunteer 1-3 hours to help. To view all the projects and sign up for your favorite one or two, visit <http://moragaserviceday.org/>

**Lafayette Juniors Rummage** Sale will return on Oct. 7. Lafayette Juniors and local community members donate their gently used items for the Rummage Sale. Shoppers find everything from gently used clothing, designer clothing, furniture, household items, toys, electronics, and sporting goods at truly unbeatable prices. Early Bird entrance will begin at 7 a.m. and

general sale hours will be 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. All proceeds go to our beneficiaries. Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church - 49 Knox Dr, Lafayette, [www.LafayetteJuniors.org](http://www.LafayetteJuniors.org).

**Lafayette Sustainable Sunday** 2023. Oct. 1, 3-6 p.m. Community Center at Jennifer Russel Building, 500 St. Mary's Rd., Lafayette. Amazing local speakers who will share their experiences in green building concepts for your home, how to add permaculture to our gardens, and how to live a more sustainable life. Tickets at [www.sustainablelafayette.org](http://www.sustainablelafayette.org)

**Lafayette Community DEIB** Webinar Oct. 12, 7 to 8 p.m. "Education about LGBTQI+ - Beyond the Binary." Hosted by the Rainbow Community Center in Concord. During the webinar, participants will learn the foundational concepts of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression, identify current outcomes of rigid gender norms in our communities, and devise ways we can begin to break through dominant narratives around the gender binary. There will be a facilitator and a moderator provided by RCC as well as a Lafayette DEIB committee moderator for the session. To register and post questions for the webinar, go to <https://tinyurl.com/lafayettedeib>

**Wine and Tapas Speaker** Series Presents: Sacred, Secular, and the Shifting Boundaries of American Religion - Featuring: Professor of Religion and Society, Jerome Baggett. Sunday, Oct. 1, 4:30 to 6 p.m. Main Hall at Creekside Commons; 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette, Entry B. Bring a bottle of wine and/or a small plate to share. Register to attend at [creeksidecommons.org/upcomingevents](http://creeksidecommons.org/upcomingevents)

## Not to be missed

**Reverend Matt Warren** will be blessing the animals at St. Stephens Episcopal Church on Oct. 8 in the memorial garden, 66 St Stephens Drive, Orinda. The service at 4 p.m. is in honor of St Francis day to honor the patron saint of animals, creation, and the environment. Everyone is invited to attend with their furry, scaly, or feathered pets. Refreshments will be served for people and pets.

**This fall, join us in person** for one of our most-loved community events of the year: Empty Bowls! Families, local business leaders, and long-time Food Bank supporters come together to share a meal and fill the bowls of our community. \$25 per ticket or \$60 for 4-pack, simple meal served and a handcrafted bowl included. Oct. 14, Time: 4 -6 p.m. [www.foodbankccs.org/events-promotions/empty-bowls/](http://www.foodbankccs.org/events-promotions/empty-bowls/)

**American Association of University Women (AAUW)** Orinda Moraga Lafayette Branch will meet on Tuesday, Oct. 17 at 9:30 a.m. at the Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. All are invited to a discussion on "Book Banning and Curricula Censorship in California?"

### Garden

**The Walnut Creek Garden Club** will hold its free monthly meeting on Monday, Oct. 9, at the Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive Walnut Creek. Join us for a special program Bonsai View for Beginners. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a brief meeting, social time and an educational program, Complimentary tea and coffee are available. [www.WalnutCreekGardenClub.com](http://www.WalnutCreekGardenClub.com)

## Lamorinda's Religious Services



10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | [www.orindachurch.org](http://www.orindachurch.org)

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Sunday Service 10 am or join us online.

Mondays 9:30 am Centering Prayer in the Chapel

Wednesday 10 am Contemplative Worship in the Chapel



### Lafayette United Methodist Church

955 Moraga Road 925.284.4765 [thelumc.org](http://thelumc.org)

Sunday 10am in person worship

We are a church that strives to love as Jesus loves. Our congregation welcomes, includes, and affirms everyone on their journey of faith regardless of race, ethnicity, age, economic status, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

### ORINDA CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

24 Orinda Way (next to the Library)-925-254-4212

Sunday Services and Sunday School 10-11 am

Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm

All are welcome

[www.christianscienceorinda.org](http://www.christianscienceorinda.org)

### Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church

433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422

[www.holyshepherd.org](http://www.holyshepherd.org)

ONLINE WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Facebook Premiere Community Worship every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. Go to [facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/](https://facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/)

WORSHIP SCHEDULE In person worship at 9:30 a.m. Live stream on [facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/](https://facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/)

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# LAMORINDA SPORTS

Submit sports stories and story ideas to [sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

## Lamorinda girls water polo teams showing early success

By Jon Kingdon



Photo Ann Murphy

**Miramonte shooter Tali Stryker. Campolindo goalie Sydney Kring. #11 London Menard**

Lamorinda girls water polo has established itself as an area of top talent with winning records so far.

### Miramonte

Coming into the season with three consecutive undefeated seasons, two NCS and CIF NorCal championships and an 11-0 COVID shortened year in 2020, Miramonte has won their first eight games this season, extending their undefeated streak to 75 games. Or to put it another way, it's been 1,046 days since they've last lost a game.

Head coach John Roemer does not rule out the possibility of another undefeated season, but with the graduation of nine players that are now playing college water polo, with eight new players on the varsity roster, he sees another undefeated season as not such a sure thing.

Roemer has his players keeping the streak in perspective. "I told them, 'If we lose a game, don't get discouraged because going undefeated the last three years is an anomaly. If we lose a game, it's not the end of the world and in a way, it might be better for us in that we can just move on and learn from it.' It's really good for water polo in our area that winning does not come automatically. It's possible but not likely that we will go undefeated this season. The key is to keep getting better with so many new starters and bringing them up to speed and be the best that we can be by the end of the year."

Roemer continues to run a triangle offense despite so many changes in personnel. "We're really struggling with getting our players on the same page," Roemer said. "We have a lot of physical talent and speed, but the younger players just don't have that water polo IQ yet. We're going to try and run a high tempo offense again this year, but it's going to be more difficult because we don't have the depth that we had before."

Key to the chemistry of the team has been the work of the team's three senior captains, Rosalie Hassett, Tali Stryker, and Mira Halder. "They're doing very well taking on that responsibility," Roemer said.

There is a solid core of six starters for the team's offense, Stryker (10 goals), Bea Hearey (22 goals, 7 assists), Hassett (15 goals, 9 assists), Ally Larsen (6 goals) and Allison Sagara (7 goals, 10 assists).

Stryker has proven to be the key player on both offense and defense, despite coming off an off-season surgery. Tali is playing primarily with her right hand as she is still rehabbing her left wrist," Roemer said "She does so much for our team because she is so fast and so smart. She makes everybody else better. She sets up our offense with her ability to think a step ahead and makes good decisions getting the ball in the right place."

Of the 98 goals the Matadors have scored, 46 have come off of assists. "That's a good percentage but I would like to see almost even and that's our goal and I believe that percentage will improve as the year goes on with our players playing for each other," Roemer said. "They will pass up a good shot to pass to their teammates for a better shot."

In their eight victories, Miramonte has had 64 steals.

"We have a pressing defense where we are way up in the lane where our opponents may then drive to the goal," Roemer said, "We have to trust someone down the line to pick them up and rotate off, getting into the passing lanes and doing our best not to foul the ball."

Hassett is leading the team with 16 steals followed by Stryker (10), Audrina Kang (9), Marta Maninetti (7), and Hearey (6). "As our center defender, Tali allows us to press as she can front the center and is smart enough to know when to get behind," Roemer said. "She will call out our defense depending on who is where to take out their best players on their offense."

Junior Eliana Bottene, in her first year as the starting goalie, has only given up 23 goals with 51 saves. "Eliana played club this off season and has really improved from last year," Roemer said. "She is doing a great job in blocking at five meters. She has gotten quicker and plays big and her mental attitude is much more serious."

Roemer's ultimate goal for his players this season? "I want them to understand what we do in various situations without me telling them. I want their IQs to go up and be able to improve physically, mentally, and ultimately to be able to go on and play in college."

### Acalanes

After making it to the second round of the CIF championship last year, Acalanes has not missed a beat starting off this year winning 12 of their first 14 games. The Dons have a strong veteran core with seven seniors and three juniors, and youth with one sophomore and two freshmen on the roster.

Once again, the offense is being led by first team all-league players, sophomore Ella Del Rosario (44 goals, 12 assists, 20 steals) and senior Brooklyn Plomp (17 goals, 7 assists and 7 steals).

"Ella is just an awesome, dynamic talent that gets everything out of every square inch of her frame," head coach Misha Buchel said. "Her counterattack and anticipation set her up for getting out on the breaks. In half-court, she can shoot from the outside. She's great inside posting up so we run a lot of things through her. Brooklyn is primarily an attacker but does a little bit of everything. We use her as kind of a facilitator at the top of our offense and she often leads our counterattack because of her court vision and passing ability. Together, she and Ella have drawn 26 ejections against their opponents."

There is very good depth on the offense with sophomore Addison Dankworth (10 goals), SR-Liv Hoppe (7 goals), SR-Sophie Hendrickson (3 goals, 9 assists), JR - Levand Koopah (9 goals, 5 assists) and freshman Finley Graff (10 goals, 1 assist). (Statistics not included in last two games.)

"Addison has shown a lot of improvement from her freshman year," Buchel said. "She's just a sniper from the perimeter with good height mechanics and long arms with an incredible whip on her shots. Liz was on a team at the Junior Olympics this summer where she was everywhere defensively. Sophie was also at the Junior Olympics and as a left-hander for us, she has become a primary distributor from the right side of the pool. We really feel her presence in the pool though she is currently out with a broken finger but should be back soon. Levand is a utility player that is more of an attacker and Finley is a big strong kid that is going through the transition of playing 14 and under club to playing against high school seniors. She is not bashful about mixing it up and she has the size and strength to be successful at this level."

The defense is led by the last in a long line of Hefelfinger's, Wendy Hefelfinger. "Wendy's primary position is center defender and matches up against our opponent's best center player," Buchel said. "On offense she is usually at the top and almost all of her goals are from the perimeter. Finley also has the size and strength to play in the center position. Brooklyn is also a very good defender that matches up against our opponent's top non-center player. Senior Kyra Weiss has really shined and made some really important defensive plays. She is a battler that gets into good position which gives our goalie a

chance to make the save."

Replacing last year's league's outstanding goalie Audrey Cox (Indiana University) is freshman Adelyn Horciza. "Adelyn just jumped into the position and we're over the moon with her performances so far," Buchel said. "She is just finding her voice but her shot blocking and passing is really advanced for her age. She is a big presence and very agile in the net. She has remarkable arm strength, and she can cover the whole pool putting right into their hands and it a real weapon when you don't have to go station to station when we counterattack."

There is a triumvirate of senior leaders on the team with Hefelfinger, Plomp and Hendrickson. "They are great leaders, but all of our seniors have taken on various responsibilities of demonstrating to our underclassmen what it means to play here," Buchel said. "We try and give them all the opportunity to try and take some elements of leadership because it's good for them later in their lives as well as to keep that balance and have someone at various times to be a voice for everyone."

### Campolindo

With only three seniors and four juniors along with seven sophomores and one freshman, there is a lot of youth on the Campolindo team. "It's really nice that they all really get along and that there's no drama," said Kim Everest, Campolindo's head coach. "Everybody's really happy to be here. The underclassmen are super close, and they connect really well with the juniors and seniors who have really embraced all of them. That part's been great and when it really translates to the pool, it'll be even better."

The connection between the players seems to have already begun with the team starting the season by winning six of their first eight games, with their only losses coming against Miramonte.

The offense is led by seniors Ana Pieper (23 goals, 5 assists), London Menard (11 goals, 1 assist), juniors Nikki Frazier (15 goals, 3 assists), Sammy Frazier (11 goals, 7 assists), and freshman Lily Holloway (9 goals, 3 assists).

"Ana is an attacker and she's been a big scorer for us her whole career," Everist said. "She is quick, super-fast, a really good outside shooter and will be playing for UCLA next year. Sammy is a quick attacker and a strong outside shooter who gets down the pool very quickly and is a super smart player. Freshman Lily Holloway is an attacker and has been starting and is definitely up and coming. She is lights out fast and quick, which can allow Ana to conserve some energy for other areas of the game. She also has a good outside shot. When she gets more aggressive, she's going to be great. Nikki Frazier is an attacker who is quick and very smart. Eva Anderson (3 goals) is a left-handed attacker who is on varsity for the first time and is going to have a big impact on the team this year. They all have great futures ahead of them."

On defense London Menard is the team's starting center and senior captain and is backed up by Ainsley Hogan (4 goals) who is also a quick defender, along with two younger players that will post up quite a bit this year. "Ainsley is a phenomenal defensive player and is really aware of the ball."

After splitting time in the goal last season and still being named second team all-league, sophomore Sydney Kring is established as the team's starter and is ably backed up by Addie Wen. "I'm super stoked about Sydney," Everist said. "She had a big year as a freshman and though she did not play this summer due to an injury, she's completely recovered, and teams are having a hard time scoring against her. She is an incredible passer and has a goal, air mailing the ball into the corner of the net."

Everist is not reluctant to share the optimism she has for the season: "I'm really excited about the team. We just need a little bit of time to come together as a group. Other teams are already in their systems and we're still sorting through things and trying to figure out our lineups and how we fit. The more we play, we'll start getting really dialed in on the details. Once this team comes together in the pool as they have on the deck, they're going to make some really, big things happen this season."

## Lamorinda boys' water polo – showing talent and potential

By Jon Kingdon

The Lamorinda boys' water polo teams have shown both success and potential. Miramonte and Campolindo have had a number of victories and Acalanes is taking the long-term perspective, anticipating similar success by the end of the season.

### Miramonte

Coming into the season, Miramonte head coaches John Nash and Lincoln Haley wanted to learn early where their team stood and made it a point to compete in the South Coast Tournament in San Juan Capistrano against the best 32 teams in the state. "It allowed us to challenge ourselves and create the best competition in a good early test," Nash said.

The Matadors returned with a two and two record, with both losses by only one goal and have an overall

record of 6-3 at this point.

"We have a mature group with 12 seniors that is really competitive and resilient and most of them are playing big minutes," Nash said. "They've all done a nice job of leading by example. We want to stay off the roller coaster emotionally and just keep an even keel. We did that after trailing De La Salle by three goals and came back to win 13-11. This is a really fun team to coach."

Miramonte lost the league's outstanding goalie Harrison LaBrosse and league MVP Charlie Enggs, both of whom are now playing for Santa Clara, along with three out all-league players to graduation and Nash has not looked back. "We got an influx of young guys who have really developed last year as freshmen and a good group that's returned for this year, like first team all team play-

ers Henry Enggs, Grant Kurtz, and Oliver Sherwood and second teamer Griff Tunney, a left-handed attacker. We have a very balanced team in that we're getting goals from everyone. Oliver Sherwood and Grant Kurtz have been scoring a lot at the attacking positions and Tristan Tucker has been scoring as well at center."

Sophomores Brock Bliss, Jackson Cherry and Tristan Tucker all saw significant playing time last year and have stepped up their games so far this year. "Brock on offense and Jackson on defense played off the bench last year and are playing a lot and doing a great job. Tristan is now our starting center and he's taken a really big jump after playing on a national team trip this summer and it's really propelled him forward. ... continued on Page C2

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# Lamorinda boys' water polo – showing talent and potential

By Jon Kingdon



Photo Shirley DeFrancisci@defstop

**Campolindo Goalie Joey Cecchin. #4 Dante Vattuone, #21 Hayden O'Hare, #16 Cade O'Hare; Miramonte #22 Griff Tunney**

... continued from Page C1

Though it's hard for a sophomore to play center, he's done a really nice job for us at that spot."

Miramonte's starting goalie is sophomore Zach Liu who was on the traveling squad last year. "Zach has good size and he's really aware, making explosive moves to the ball," Nash said "He's excellent at coming out of the cage and helping the center defender, at times being the seventh defender. He's continuing to improve every day and is really embracing that role. He is becoming way more comfortable, learning a lot on the fly and we're really happy with where he's at."

The defense has done a solid job in protecting Liu. "We really rely on team defense and playing collectively as a unit," Nash said. "We've been able to do that because our center defense has been strong with Patrick Stice and Ben Lucas. Patrick is a big, long, and lengthy center defender that has done a good job in controlling the center for us. Ben has really taken a step that has elevated his game over the course of the last six months as a defender but is also an attacker that we can plug into a bunch of different spots."

It's Miramonte's defense that Nash sees as the key to the ultimate success of the team: "We're always trying to be the best defensive team we possibly can be which translates to the postseason because even if we have a poor shooting day, if our defense is top of the line, we're going to be in every game. One of the things we preach all the time is that we want to be the best field blocking team in the country and that's something that we've been trying to really improve on and so far, they've done a nice job and that's what we're going to continue to focus on."

## Campolindo

Last season, Campolindo made it to the second round of the CIF North Coast Championship and they have carried over that late season success to this year, having won six of their first nine games, which included four of five win in the South Coast Tournament and the difference in their three losses were only by a composite of five goals.

"We are a fast and smart team," head coach Darren Schroeder said. "We're a really good team that is young (three sophomores and four freshmen) which is great in that it's a very coachable team with guys that are eager and super talented."

Even after losing 15 seniors to graduation the last two years, the team still has six seniors and nine juniors. "We're getting contributions from the juniors and seniors that are at the top of our roster, providing the leadership for the team but we have a lot of fill-ins from our young players so there's a lot of teaching and coaching that's going into this team."

The numbers back up what Schroeder has been saying. The goals scored per game has jumped from 9.3 to 12.0 and the goals against has dropped from 10.6 to 9.6 this season. The team's three co-captains are seniors Dante Vattuone, Callen Bronson, and Will Vranesh.

Schroeder and co-head coach Yurii Hanley have made it a point to use the junior varsity team to keep refreshing the varsity roster. "We have a lot of great young talent in the pipeline which is a good way to put it," Schroeder said. "We rely on our upperclassmen and then we have the underclassmen to keep replenishing the roster. Hayden O'Hare, Dylan King, and Garrett Chivers were sophomores last year and are all playing much better this season."

Sophomores Sam Storrs and Jack Elder are all getting time along with freshmen Grayson Bloes, Cade O'Hare, Tim Culleton, and Will Maguy. "They're making us stronger in practice and in all areas," Schroeder said.

Leading the offense has been O'Hare, Will Vranish, and Garrett Chivers. Culleton, in his first year, has been really standing out offensively.

O'Hare and Dylan King have been very solid on defense in front of goalie Joey Cecchin.

"Joey Cecchin is a fantastic goalie who had a great club season in offseason and he's doing very, very well for us," Schroeder said. "He's very good at blocking balls and is also a very good outlet passer."

There has been an improvement in the team as a whole on both offense and defense. "With many of our better players upperclassmen, there's still this young energy to the team and that makes it fun for them and rewarding for us," Schroeder said. "Their confidence is going nowhere but up."

## Acalanes

Despite the team's slow start, head coach Nick Jordan is positive as to where the team is going. "We've been developing and growing as a team every game," Jordan said. "Our players have bought in and are trying really hard every day in practice and in the games. They're trying to better themselves and the team every day. We've been prepared for every game and the team has been putting forth their best effort on what we've been practicing and we're just trying to go forward with that, and the score will take of itself after that."

There is a varied range of experience among the players. "There's a good mix of players that are brand new to water polo along with some that have been playing for a few years and others that have been playing for a long time," Jordan said.

Leading the offense has been sophomore Thomas Parrott, freshman Isaac Topp, and seniors Sam Whipple and Tyler Gerhardt. "Thomas is extremely dynamic as a driver, attacker and in post ups," Jordan said. "Isaac has been dynamic in the counterattack and is really active when we get down to the front court. Sam and Tyler both play the center position and have been doing very well. We have a number of players that have been very integral in our offense, in that we have a lot of different looks and we're just trying to find the best one every time we come down the pool."

Jordan's offensive philosophy is simple: "It's to find the best option and taking advantage of what the defense is giving us. We want to get the best matchups, keeping up the movement and finding the opportunities to attack quickly."

The key player on defense for the Dons has been Justin Rosenblatt. "Justin plays center defense and has done a great job locking down players and being a rock on our defensive end," Jordan said.

Senior Ryder Bradford-Urban has been very solid in the net. "Ryder has been doing very well and we're happy to have him in the goal," Jordan said. "Ryder does a good job in making the blocks and even covering for the other players when they have been beaten by the attacker. He does a good job coming up and making the blocks which has been extremely helpful."

Jordan is anticipating a much-improved team by the end of the season. "From where we started from, I've been very pleased with the development of all of the players," Jordan said. "It just goes back to them coming every day and working hard with a good positive attitude which goes a long way in the development of the team. As long as we're improving every day, wherever we are at the end of the season, that will be great because we'll have gone just so far from the beginning of the season."

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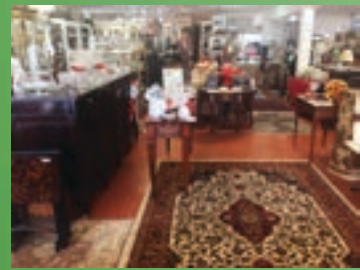
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Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page D2

## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Fall flying

By Cynthia Brian



Keep bird feeders full to nourish migrating birds. Photos Cynthia Brian

*This is what you shall do: Love the earth and sun and animals.* ~ Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

This past year I downloaded a phenomenal app designed by Cornell Lab of Ornithology called Merlin. It is a sound identification app whereby I record the bird-song, the app analyzes it and indicates what species is singing. The sounds can be saved, photos can be taken, and my knowledge of the avian world increases. Birds have always fascinated me.

My grandmother was a birder and an animal handler. In addition to her dogs, horses, and barn-

yard critters, she had aviaries where she bred canaries, cockatiels, and raised parrots. As a child, I spent copious amounts of time with her taking care of her feathered and furred friends. When my husband and I purchased our first home, my grandfather built me an aviary and gifted me a pair of cockatiels. That aviary has traveled with me to three different homes and the male cockatiel is still the senior resident. Throughout the years, I've adopted a plethora of injured birds or those in need of a new home including pheasants, ca-



Birds splash in the gurgling fountain

naries, doves, finches, quail, pigeons, and parakeets. I love my birds.

Wild birds are my garden helpers and I enjoy watching their aerial antics, listening to their chatter, and observing their feeding frenzies. My landscape is a haven for orioles, finches, waxwings, bluebirds, warblers, sparrows, mockingbirds, bluejays, doves, hummingbirds, and a host of other species that I am just learning. Owls hoot from the trees at night, and the sky boasts hawks gliding on the currents. I plant my garden so that it provides food,

shelter, water, and refreshing baths for the birds.

Fall is the flying season. Millions of birds are migrating. It's perilous. Many make thousand-mile journeys twice a year: spring and autumn. They migrate because of the change in weather, availability of food, and breeding cycles. In North America, many birds migrate south to find a warmer climate, flying to Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. Warblers, orioles, and hummingbirds may migrate as far as South America.

... continued on Page D8





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## Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	11	\$582,000	\$1,900,000
MORAGA	7	\$600,000	\$3,000,000
ORINDA	5	\$1,150,000	\$1,925,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

### LAFAYETTE

- 868 Acampo Drive, \$1,430,000, 3 Bdrms, 1486 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 08-18-23
- 3299 Ameno Drive, \$1,475,000, 4 Bdrms, 1707 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 08-18-23,  
Previous Sale: \$800,000, 02-27-06
- 916 Dewing Avenue #B, \$899,000, 2 Bdrms, 1016 SqFt, 1992 YrBlt, 08-16-23,  
Previous Sale: \$900,000, 06-22-20
- 918 Dewing Avenue #B, \$941,000, 2 Bdrms, 1245 SqFt, 1992 YrBlt, 08-25-23,  
Previous Sale: \$650,000, 06-09-05
- 210 Lafayette Circle #103, \$582,000, 2 Bdrms, 928 SqFt, 2021 YrBlt, 08-18-23
- 1987 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,900,000, 3 Bdrms, 2529 SqFt,  
1956 YrBlt, 08-24-23
- 3340 Springhill Road, \$1,600,500, 3 Bdrms, 1508 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 08-22-23
- 3399 Springhill Road, \$1,900,000, 3 Bdrms, 1991 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 08-16-23
- 3279 Sweet Drive, \$1,480,000, 3 Bdrms, 1786 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 08-21-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,180,000, 05-27-16
- 788 Upper Pond Court, \$1,550,000, 5 Bdrms, 2709 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 08-23-23,  
Previous Sale: \$879,000, 04-22-03
- 14 Vista Viax, \$1,600,000, 4 Bdrms, 1944 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 08-17-23

### MORAGA

- 120 Ascot Court #B, \$640,000, 2 Bdrms, 1233 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 08-21-23,  
Previous Sale: \$339,000, 02-27-04
- 143 Brookfield Drive, \$2,105,000, 4 Bdrms, 2181 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 08-23-23,  
Previous Sale: \$419,000, 04-01-91
- 1357 Camino Peral #B, \$600,000, 2 Bdrms, 1279 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 08-14-23
- 435 Donald Drive, \$3,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 3021 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 08-22-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,080,000, 09-01-16
- 82 Shuey Drive, \$1,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 1878 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 08-24-23
- 426 Springfield Place, \$1,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 2090 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 08-22-23,  
Previous Sale: \$905,000, 07-23-03
- 60 Vista Encinos, \$2,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 2793 SqFt, 2020 YrBlt, 08-14-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,995,000, 05-27-21

### ORINDA

- 204 Hall Drive, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2725 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 08-14-23,  
Previous Sale: \$192,000, 05-01-79
- 724 Ironbark Court, \$1,925,000, 5 Bdrms, 2993 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 08-23-23
- 55 Muth Drive, \$1,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 2001 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 08-21-23
- 24 Orchard Road, \$3,500,000, 5 Bdrms, 4119 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 08-16-23,  
Previous Sale: \$3,636,000, 05-20-21
- 93 Tarry Lane, \$1,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 2231 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 08-25-23,  
Previous Sale: \$1,422,000, 08-14-07



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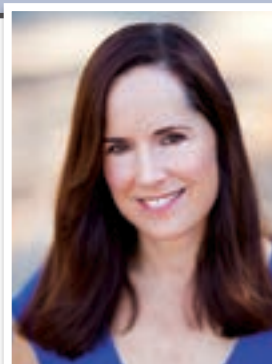
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## Con Fire offers tips to be battery-smart and fire-safe

Submitted by  
**Supervisor Diane Burgis**

Over the last two years, the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District investigators have noted a trend of increasing risks of lithium-ion batteries causing fires across the county.

Lithium-ion batteries supply power to many devices including phones, laptops, electric scooters, smoke alarms, and even cars. With the rapid rise in popularity of these electric power supplies over recent years, many residents are only just learning of their dangers, and how to use and dispose of them.

With a significant amount of power being held in such a confined compartment, they can overheat, catch fire and explode. In the month of June, in the Con Fire district alone, there were three reported fires caused by lithium-ion batteries. Two of these resulted in extensive damage to the homes where they were located.

Con Fire advises residents to

learn proper and safe usage of lithium-ion batteries.

Tips include: Follow manufacturer's instructions exactly; Only use batteries designed for the device being used; Put batteries in the right way; Only use the charging cord and charger that came with the device; Do not charge any device under a pillow, on your bed, or on a couch, or in any other confined space; Do not continue charging once the device is fully charged; Keep batteries at room temperature; Store batteries away from anything that can catch fire; Do not put lithium-ion batteries in the trash; take them to proper recycling locations; Charge batteries in a flat, dry area away from children, and direct sunlight; Stop using any device immediately upon noticing problems with the battery

Whenever possible, store lithium-ion batteries in the garage, in an outdoor shed or other location outside your home.

For more details about lithium-ion battery safety and e-bike battery safety, visit:  
[www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/79825/Lithium-Ion-Battery-Safety](http://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/79825/Lithium-Ion-Battery-Safety)  
[www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/79824/E-bike-E-scooter-safety](http://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/79824/E-bike-E-scooter-safety)  
This article was originally published in the July 20 District 3 Newsletter.

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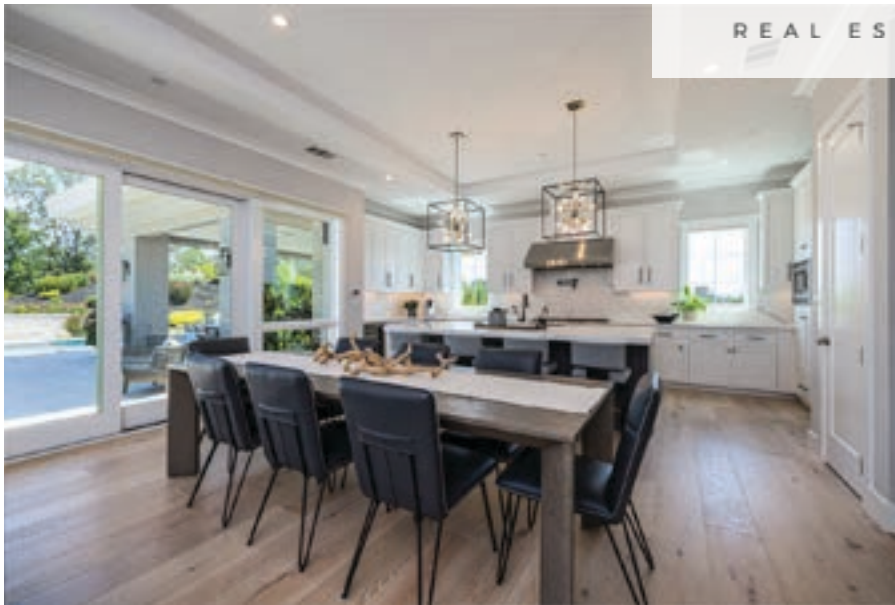
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## Moraga Council Member David Shapiro's pottery hobby keeps the shelves full at home



Council Member David Shapiro in his garage/pottery studio

Some of David Shapiro's many vases on display at his home

Photos Vera Kochan

### By Vera Kochan

Moraga's Town Council oozes with creativity as yet another member admits to an artistic bent. Vice Mayor Teresa Onoda paints, Council Member Steve Woehleke crafts furniture, and now, Council Member David Shapiro's talents come to the forefront as a serious pottery enthusiast.

Shapiro first got the calling at the age of 12, but it wasn't until his senior year at Binghamton University in New York that he was able to really "get his hands on" the craft. "You could take ceramics as a senior," he explained. "I loved it. We were allowed to go in the off hours to use the studio. That's when I started making pottery. I loved it, but when I went into law school, I didn't have much time for it."

Fast forward to 1995, when Shapiro and his wife, Tina, moved to Moraga. She saw an ad for a ceramics art class held in Walnut Creek and decided to enroll him as a Father's Day gift. Their private joke was that he'd "do it once and be done with it," but the joke backfired, and according to Shapiro, "Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon, you could always find me there."

Approximately eight years ago, Shapiro bought a pottery wheel and has turned his garage into a studio complete with all of the supplies necessary to keep him busy at home, including an electric kiln. This has allowed him to improve his skills immensely. He pre-plans what he's going to make. "I create first on the wheel and go from there," he stated. "It's all about making forms. I'm more advanced on making the forms and less on design. I go through phases. It's great to create for fun, so there's no pressure."

And, much like a snowflake, no piece is ever identical. "You never know what you're going to get," Shapiro said, especially when it comes to decorative design, which is pretty much left to the fates. He explained that he's worked with two kinds of kilns. His electric kiln takes one day to fire several shelves of pottery pieces, while Raku firings take only 45 minutes, because they use gas which heats faster.

"There's a whole chemistry aspect to it," said Shapiro, when referring to the chemicals used in glazing, something that he studied during the COVID lockdown a couple of years ago.

Every now and then, Shapiro drives to Truc-

kee Roundhouse, a public studio which is every kind of crafter's version of Disneyland complete with any and all types of equipment, but when working from home he frequents Clay People in Richmond for all of his hobby needs.

Shapiro's home is brimming with creations as further evidence that Tina's Father's Day gift has come back to haunt her. Vases, teapots, bowls, wind chimes, and an army of coffee mugs are just some of the items on display or in cabinets throughout the house. "Some of my nicest things are not here anymore, because I've sold them," he said. Unfortunately, he can never truly replicate those pieces due to the nature of the craft, and he has donated several pieces to auctions for worthy causes. The latest recipient of one of Shapiro's coffee mugs was a "Welcome to Moraga" gift for new Town Manager Scott Mitnick.



A handmade urn



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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Fall flying



Calibrachoa called Seaside petunia is a colorful fall addition.



Butterfly stone crop is easy to grow and looks great in a pot.



Save the seeds of sunflowers to plant and to feed the birds.

Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page D1

Some birds migrate short distances, traveling from forests to wetlands, or the coast to your backyard! Whether flying long or short distances, birds need to stop, rest and eat. And this is where gardeners can help keep them healthy and safe in their migration journey.

**Food:** Migratory birds rely on flowering plants, shrubs, and trees

that produce seeds, berries, nectar and insects. Birds pecking at your lawn are not eating it. They are dining on insects that could be harmful to your lawn. The birds are your friends indicating that your lawn has an invader. Does your garden provide this nutrition?

**Water:** Ponds, bird baths, fountains, and other water features offer a cool thirst-quencher and refreshing bath for migrating birds.

Does your garden entice birds to stop by for a drink?

**Shelter:** Trees and bushes offer protection from predators and a place to rest. Does your garden provide a safe environment for avian visitors?

To attract and support our flying friends this fall, walk around your garden to ascertain if you are providing the elements they need. Plant native vegetation, keep your bird feeders full, and allow seed-

heads to develop on some perennials. Provide a clean and accessible water source such as a gurgling fountain or a pond with a circulating water feature.

By creating a bird-friendly landscape, you'll not only be contributing to bird conservation, but you will enjoy their efforts to help your garden grow and glow. Love the earth, the sun, and the animals.



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**For More Information Contact Shannon Conner**

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DRE# 01498053 | DRE# 01885058 | DRE# 01855959 All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.





## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for October

**APPLY** snail bait around plants susceptible to snail and slug damage.

**TREAT** for aphids as needed.

**MAKE** homemade fungal spray to ward off powdery mildew which weakens and can kill plants. Mix four teaspoons of baking soda with one teaspoon of dishwashing liquid per gallon of water. Spray the entire plant, not just the leaves. Crape myrtles and viburnum are susceptible. This spray works well for black spot which afflicts roses.

**COLLECT** seeds from sunflowers to feed the birds as well as save to plant next season.

**MAINTAIN** your bird feeders as an invitation to refuel in your backyard. Hang feeders in trees, away from the house to deter rodents from establishing residence in your home.

**MONITOR** the water needs of your plants as you wave goodbye to the summer sun.

**FERTILIZE** trees, shrubs, and ground covers as the weather cools.

**PICK** your remaining peppers, tomatoes, tomatillos, and eggplant as needed. According to the USDA, there are over 25,000 varieties of tomatoes.

**CONSIDER** adding clover to your lawn. Clover is a legume that takes nitrogen from the air and transfers it to the soil, improving the soil quality. Clover maintains its green color and attracts beneficial insects while requiring less water and mowing.

**STAND** under a tree canopy to listen to the birdsong.

**REPLACE** your lawn with a gorgeous succulent sanctuary.

**BEAUTIFY** your porch with pots of Calibrachoa, known as seaside petunia, or Butterfly Stonecrop, in full bloom now.

**REFRIGERATE** tulips, hyacinths, and crocus for four weeks before planting. Select your bulbs now.

**DETER** skunks, rats, and other rodents from your property. As the weather turns inclement, they will be looking for shelter.

**MAKE** applesauce or apple butter with the apples that fall from your trees. This year boasts a big crop of apples. You don't need to peel the apples. Wash, slice away any brown spots, cut into chunks, and add to a pot filled with a small amount of boiling water. Squeeze fresh lemon juice on the apples. Sprinkle cinnamon and nutmeg for a delicious, healthy treat.

**PREPARE** for fires and emergency evacuations. Have a Go-Bag ready.

**MARK** your calendars for the Sept. 30 Pear and Wine Festival in Moraga. Stop by the Be the Star You Are! booth to plant seeds, buy books, and enjoy other giveaways. Visit <https://www.bethestaryouare.org/events-1/2023-pear-and-wine-festival> for more information.

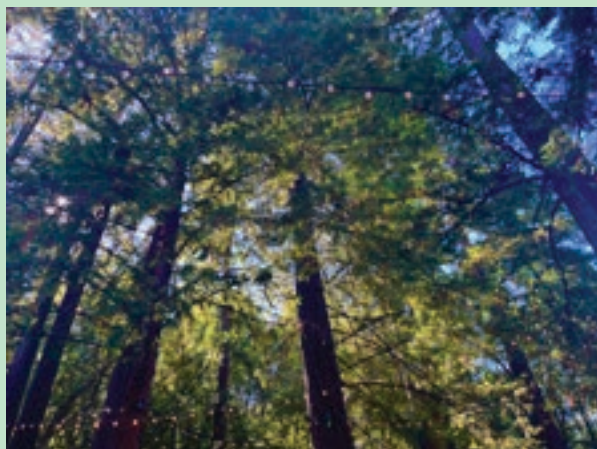
Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Fall Flying!



Trees are filled with apples this year. Make pies, crumbles, sauces, salads, or munch straight off the branch.



A birdhouse provides a warm stop-over place.



Stand under a redwood canopy and look up.

Photos Cynthia Brian





## TREE SCULPTURE

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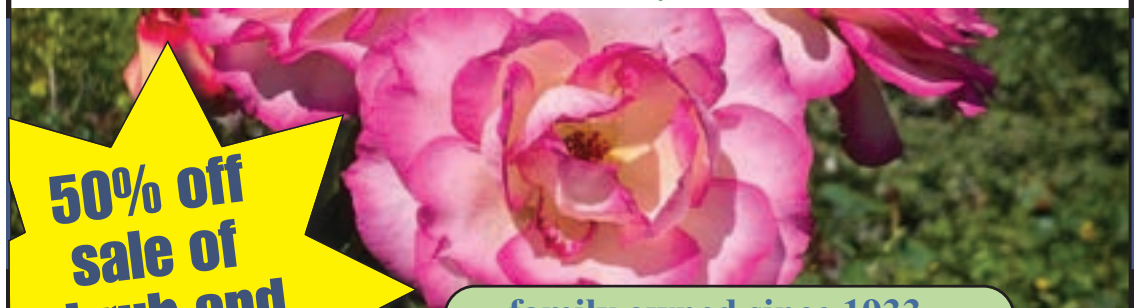
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**Cynthia Brian**

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Her newest children's picture book, Family Forever, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) <http://www.GoddessGardener.com>

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### 41 La Noria

Top quality 5 bd/ 4 ba home around the corner from OCC w/ an incredible layout & magical spaces indoor & out!

\$3,995,000

## ORINDA



### 37 & 20 La Madronal

A private sanctuary in the Orinda Hills which features two detached residences & 11 separate parcels totaling approximately 4 acres!

\$2,995,000

## ORINDA



### 4 Oakview Terrace

This Tuscan style 4 bd/ 3.5 ba home astounds w/ open floorplan, soaring ceilings & sweeping vista views!

\$2,225,000

## ORINDA



### 24 Altamount Drive

Charming 4 bd/ 3 ba single story ranch home nestled on a private, nature-filled .32 acre gated lot!

\$1,695,000

## ORINDA



### 13 Valley View Road

One of a kind light-filled Mediterranean home + ADU w/ old world charm & sweeping views on a prime street near OCC!

Call for price!

## LAFAYETTE



### 3445 Shangri-La Road

Desirable Reliez Valley neighborhood offers amazing privacy, stunning views, beautiful architecture on an almost 1 acre lot!

\$1,999,000

## LAFAYETTE



### 1736 Reliez Valley Road

Delightful one story 3 bd/ 2.5 ba retreat w/ updated kitchen, ample gardening areas & beautiful large pool!

\$1,798,000

## MORAGA

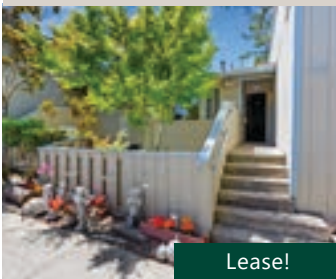


### 163 Corliss Drive

Single-level, Ranch style home features 4 bd/ 2.5 ba in approx. 2228 sqft on a .27-acre level lot!

\$1,699,000

## MORAGA



### 1944 Ascot Drive

Amazing 2 bd/ 1.5 ba 1234 sqft Moraga townhome w/ views of the hills from the upper & lower decks!

\$3,300/mo.

## PLEASANT HILL

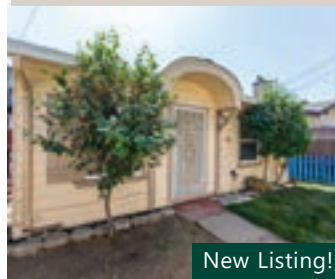


### 550 Odin Drive

Single level 4 bd/ 2 ba rancher has a great floor plan w/ wonderful indoor/outdoor flow!

\$975,000

## OAKLAND



### 2014 13th Avenue

This single family home features 5 bd/ 3 ba, laminate floors & plenty of room to entertain family & friends!

\$595,000

## EL SOBRANTE



### 990 N Rancho Road

Beautiful 4 bd/ 3 ba property offers the perfect blend of classic charm & modern luxury, making it an ideal place to call home!

\$1,075,000

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