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Jack Miller scoring a touchdown



Quarterback Sully Bailey

Photos Olivia DeBoy

# Acalanes heads to state playoffs; Mats come up short

By Jon Kingdon

Playing in the North Coast Championship game is nothing new for Acalanes head coach Floyd Burnsed, having won five North Coast Championships when he was coaching at Miramonte. However, with Friday's win over Escalon 49-14 it will be the first state championship game for Acalanes and Burnsed since state championship games weren't played back then. The Dons will be playing Birmingham High School (Lake Balboa) at 11:30 a.m. Dec. 9 at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo.

Time of possession in a football game can be a very telling or deceptive statistic. In Friday's game, go with deception. Escalon had the ball for 41 minutes

and 17 seconds and Acalanes had it for 6:43. The Don averaged 13.3 yards for each of their 27 plays. Escalon ran 75 plays and averaged 5.12 yards. There were no punts in the game.

Acalanes quarterback Sully Bailey had a complete game. He was 9 for 14 for 204 yards with one touchdown pass to Paul Kuhner, caught a 37-yard pass from Jake Boselli and ran five times for 31 yards and three touchdowns. Jack Miller had 8 carries for 87 yards, running for one score.

"Their defense had holes in it and we just had to find it and we knew our athletes could outrun them and we would have those big plays and that was the

key to this game," Bailey said. "I'm grateful to my coaches because they trust me with the ball, and they allow me to do what I can to show my athleticism."

Escalon ran for 262 yards and threw for 118 yards but missed converting on four fourth down plays and threw two interceptions for touchdowns, one each by Trevor Rogers and Deonte Littlejohn. After an early long, time-consuming drive, Rogers, who along with Kuhner is on the Don's 4x100 relay team, made his interception and blew by the Escalon tacklers for 86 yards and the game's first score, putting Acalanes up 7-0.

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# SMC holds Winter Fest to kick off the holidays

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

**SMC students try their hand at ice skating during the Dec. 1 Winter Fest.**

Saint Mary's College held their first, and hopefully annual, Winter Fest on the campus's Chapel Lawn. Sponsored by the board of trustees, the Dec. 1 event allowed students the chance to experience some holi-

day fun before finals.

SMC Assistant Director of Residential Experience Fiona Corner and her committee planned a multi-faceted evening that had something for everybody. The long line at the Coffee Cart was proof enough that the chill in the air needed thawing; T-shirts with the Winter Fest logo were given away to the first 90 takers; and craft tables were set up for students to either decorate stockings, make do-it-yourself snow globes, or ornaments.

CILSA (Catholic Institute for Lasallian Social Action) sponsored the Giving Tree booth for anyone wishing to make donations, and the Petting Zoo offered students the chance to climb into an enclosed area and cuddle with goats, rabbits, pigs, chickens and a llama.

Besides food trucks and popcorn, there were booths that spoke to the sweet tooth that no holiday celebration should be without. Cookie decorating offered immediate gratification, while The Candy Bar (where one could scoop chocolate and other treats into a small-sized popcorn container) was perfect for those who like their candy to-go.

A professional photo booth gave students the op-

portunity to pose alone, or with friends, for a picture while wearing an assortment of winter-themed props in front of a backdrop of seasonal images.

The Areté Singers Network, dressed in Victorian garb, sang holiday songs in the midst of two Christmas trees that lit up in gold promptly at 5 p.m. to exclamations of delight from the crowd.

But, the "piece de resistance" (say it with a French accent) at Winter Fest was the ice skating rink set up directly in front of the Chapel. Ice skates were provided, and nearly half of the students who laced them on couldn't skate, but gave it the old college try. Many hugged the perimeter fence as friends who could skate acted as coaches with encouraging words and steadying hands to catch their buddies should they lose balance. A few couldn't slow down and crashed into the barriers, and there were those whose bottoms hit the ice after failed attempts to stay upright.

SMC's Winter Fest did so much more than give the students a break from their studies. It allowed them to be kids again, even if in their case it wasn't all that long ago.

**Civic News**

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Handyman tips on how to patch holes in walls — Page OH4





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## Council hears update about 'Slow Down Lafayette' campaign

By Lou Fancher



Image provided

The city council, with Council Member Wei-Tai Kwok participating virtually, received a Nov. 27 update on the city's "Slow Down Lafayette Campaign-Safe Streets for All" from Code Enforcement Officer Andy Comly. Transportation and Circulation Program Manager Patrick Golier and Communications Analyst Suzanne Iarla participated in the presentation.

The program launched in August 2023 and "has been going strongly for the last couple of months," Comly said. As part of Lafayette's Vision Zero initiative, the common

goal of all the programs is to reduce fatal collisions and traffic accidents resulting in serious injuries. The primary tools utilized by the Safe Streets program are technology and education.

Identifying "hot spots" or high-risk areas in town to understand areas that historically and currently have more accidents is made possible by ongoing monitoring of speeds, traffic density, as well as the number of recorded accidents. Areas identified as high-risk in which surges in incidents occur results in immediate mitigation efforts to slow

speeds and outreach to inform the public. "We can't do this on our own," Comly said. "We need community support so we're working with local folks and will be doing more in terms of public education."

According to Comly, reducing speeds is the most critical factor. "It's not (the actual) speeds; it's the energy that gets transferred into a person at the time you have a crash. If you remember high school physics, the energy goes up as the square of the speed. If you double the speed, you end up with a four-fold increase in the energy." Small reductions – even 5 or 10 miles per hour – can make a big difference.

E-bikes travel at far faster rates than conventional bicycles and it is a good thing to be mindful of and to remind young people about, according to Comly.

As one example, he referenced Acalanos Road from Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Hidden Valley Road. The road is zoned as a 25-mph road,

but residents in the neighborhood have voiced concerns about driver speed. Low-profile devices that capture speed and number of cars, but not personal license plate information, were installed on both the north- and south-bound sides of the road to gather a baseline. A display sign was placed on the north-bound side to show a driver's speed, flash if going up to 10-mph over the speed limit, or not flash a number but instead tell a driver to slow down.

The metrics gathered have shown a 13-15% reduction of drivers exceeding the speed limit by 10 or 15+ mph. Law enforcement officers stationed during peak hours and easily visible had most impact on speeders traveling at more than 15 mph over the speed limit. The signs and the enforcement worked when combined to about 25% reduction in speeding.

An accident on Highway 24 or increased density due to other factors not under the city's

control can easily impact the results, he cautioned. The Safe Streets program has covered eight major streets thus far, and areas in which the measurements showed were not of greatest concern caused them to move on to other locations. Cooperation and communication with local residents and with law enforcement have been ongoing and will continue.

The engineering department has contributed data close to Acalanos High School has been added to their knowledge base and understanding of traffic safety in the city. Self-correction is essential and to that point, Comly said interacting and informing the community is vital. Clear and consistent law enforcement marked vehicles, parking officers serving as crossing guards, and visible presence have a positive impact, especially at the start of each school year or semester.

Comly and the rest of the traffic safety team will keep the focus in coming months on high-risk areas where

changes occur and addressing them promptly, including reports from residents about "hot spots" and concerns about specific areas. Approximately 100 signs urging drivers to "Slow Down Lafayette" have been placed on lawns by parent-teacher association members, HOA and neighborhood groups, school principals and others, with another 50 signs available for display.

Social media education, a strong presence at community events, and continuation of public education efforts will make more people aware of the urgency and tools available for mitigating excessive speeds. "If we can have 28,000 people helping us out, we'll get a lot further along," said Comly.

Council accepted the update and thanked the team for work that has made significant initial strides to reduce speeding and improve the safety of residents, business owners, visitors and the general public in the city's downtown.

## 'Downtown Pathways and Schools Safety Project' community meeting, Dec. 7

The community is invited to an Open House from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 7 in the Lafayette Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room to share their input on a project to improve walking and bik-

ing connections between the Lafayette-Moraga Trail and downtown Lafayette.

The city is kicking off its Connecting Lafayette: Downtown Pathways and Schools Safety project, which

will expand the city's "low-stress" network for walking and biking, fill in a key gap in the pedestrian and bicycle network between the Lafayette-Moraga Trail and the First Street pathway, and address

school-related congestion by designing an alternate, formal pick-up and drop-off zone for Stanley Middle School on St. Mary's Road. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear about the goals of the project

and initial design alternatives; talk with Staff about the project; and provide valuable feedback to help shape the direction of this exciting project.

For more information about this work-

shop, visit [www.lovelafayette.org/connectinglafayette](http://www.lovelafayette.org/connectinglafayette) – Submitted by Suzanne Iarla

# Happy Holidays!



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## A play not to miss: Town Hall Theatre's 'A Christmas Story'

By Sharon K. Sobotta



Photo provided

Like the character Randy from "A Christmas Story," 11-year-old Sofia Garcia, who plays him in the Town Hall Theatre's green cast, is the youngest child. And Sofia and her character Randy have similar feelings about oatmeal. "I like oatmeal and he likes oatmeal, but not that much," Sofia playfully explains.

Like the classic television movie that plays non-stop for 24 hours on TBS and TNT on the hours that bridge Christmas Eve to Christmas Day, the play that is now at the Town Hall Theatre opens up with a highly stressed mother loudly calling Ralphie to the table to join Randy who uses his oatmeal as playdough until he's challenged to pretend he's a piggy eating from a trough. Sofia Garcia says she's had fun rising to the challenge of being a messy little brother in the Town Hall Theatre's production of "A Christmas Story," while working with people from all ages. "Everyone is nice. They give me advice," Sofia says. "It's fun."

Sofia moved to Lafayette with her family from Mexico nearly six years ago without any English under her belt. Her mother, Paulina Lares, is in complete awe of how far her daughter Sofia (and her older sister) have come since then.

"Seeing her doing challenging things in a language that's not her first, that she couldn't speak six years ago is amazing and it makes me feel so proud," Lares says.

As the mother of two daughters, Lares is passionate about empowering girls and uses jewelry as the vehicle to spread affirming messages. While Lares's daughter isn't able to wear the jewelry on stage while playing the part of a 6-year-old boy, she hopes that the messages that are usually around her daughter's wrist have penetrated within.

"She's got bracelets that

say to be confident, be strong, be kind and to remind her that God loves her. The idea of it is that when things get difficult, you can look at your wrist and say 'hey, everything's going to be OK,'" Lares says. "Being here at THT has been great for Sofia's confidence. She's loved acting with adults and she's committed."

Alejandro Garcia, Sofia's father, remembers being hopeful, but nervous when she was invited to audition after appearing in the Lafayette Elementary School's collaborative production of Xanadu last spring. "It turned out well. She made it and she was so happy about getting the part, which makes me very happy," Garcia says. "I can tell she's invested because even though the rehearsals are long and sometimes hard for her, she does it happily. That's how we can tell she's committed."

Sofia Garcia is but one member of the talented cast(s) of the show which include David Boyll, Gretchen Lee Salter, David Ghilardi, Janelle Aguirre and understudies Mark Foster and Carla Birkhofer and two rotating casts of children.

Those willing to trade in or add to the at-home couch viewing of the Christmas classic by attending the Town Hall Theatre live production, directed by Heather Cousins with assistance from Lisa Morrison, will likely have a hard time returning to their television sets.

The signature scenes and props – the tacky leg prize lamp, the soap in the mouth, the tongue on the pole, the leg of the apathetic Santa kicking Ralphie down the slide for wanting a present that could shoot his eye out as the narrator, telling the story through Ralphie's lens are performed with such precision, animation, care and color that they arguably outshine the television-version.

... continued on Page 8



**Lafayette Public Meetings**

**City Council**  
 Regular Meeting  
 Monday, Dec. 11, 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

**Planning Commission Meeting**  
 Monday, Dec. 18, 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

**Design Review**  
 Monday, Dec. 11, 7 p.m.  
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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## MORAGA

See public meetings schedule on these pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

**Town of Moraga:**

www.moraga.ca.us  
Phone: (925) 888-7022

**Chamber of Commerce:**

www.moragachamber.org

**Moraga Citizens' Network:**

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

**Town Council**

Wednesday, Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m.

**Special Town Council**

Wed., Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m.

**Planning Commission:**

Tuesday, Dec 19, 6:30 p.m.

**Special Planning Commission:**

Tues, Dec. 12, 6 p.m.

**Park and Recreation**

Commission:

Tuesday, Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m.



# ONODA OPEN STUDIO

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## Once Upon a Time ... Moraga almost had a castle

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

**Architect's rendering for Donald Rheem's "Castle"**

A very few number of town-folk are aware of the fact that in 1940 Donald L. Rheem (of Hacienda de las Flores fame) was in the process of building something akin to a rock-like castle within a stone's throw distance of today's Hacienda.

This story would never have been written if Moraga resident Martha Rubin hadn't sent a copy of a 1970 Moraga Sun article along with black and white photo copies of the "castle" ruins to Council Member Kerry Hillis. Hillis, in turn, forwarded the information to Town Manager Scott Mitnick who forwarded it to this reporter, who happens to also be on the board of directors of the

Moraga Historical Society. The Moraga Sun article's author, Juanita Maloney, wrote: "Moraga almost had its own San Simeon, the foundation of which stands today [1970], and on which will be built a 3,000 square foot home. Nestled on the hillside above Devin Drive on what was once part of the vast original Rheem estate, is the foundation of the 'castle.' It wasn't until Harold Smith acquired some of the adjoining property and recently began constructing homesites, that residents were really aware of the 'castle' site."

This reporter, accompanied by Moraga Historical Society President Susan Sperry,

began a Nancy Drew-like quest to find the "castle" location and dig for any pertinent information within the History Center's files. Driving to the end of Devin Drive's cul de sac we spotted a very steep driveway, bordered by low rock walls gently winding up to a modern house on 2.5 acres originally built around 1970, by a Richmond manufacturer named Richard P. Segners. According to "Notes on Donald L. Rheem" compiled by Dr. Lee Nelson, Segners used the 'castle' exterior stone walls but his own foundation.

Rheem's structure had many nicknames besides 'castle.' It was also referred to as 'Chalet' and even 'Rock House.' If completed, the three-story house would have been like nothing ever seen in the area. The first floor would have covered 2,265 square feet to include a dining room, living room, reception, and kitchen. The second floor was planned at 2,025 square feet containing 4 bathrooms, 3 bedrooms, and a den. The third floor's dimensions aren't listed, but at least 1 bedroom was part of the plans. Connecting all three floors would have been a grand circular staircase.

Unfortunately for Rheem, World War II and the scarcity of materials put a hold on construction that had so far cost him between \$30,000 and

\$40,000. Glazed window frames were about to be inserted when building was terminated, and the windows remained behind the foundation for 30 years until juveniles broke the glass. Nelson also explained that the "original chalet had walls partially built so that it would not be taxed as a 'completed' home during WWII." The structure was also deemed unsafe by the county in the event of an earthquake thanks to the stone mason's unfamiliarity with local laws.

With regards to Segners endeavor to take over the property decades after Rheem, Maloney's article states, "After soil engineering tests which showed the existing foundation of sandstone still sound, they acquired the services of an architect who has drawn plans for their new home."

Maloney added, "The architect, as it turned out, was one of the young men who worked with the mason who constructed the original stone foundation and retaining walls surrounding the building."

Included in the photo copies Rubin sent to Hillis were c.1960s pictures from former Moraga resident Daniel Ferguson as a child dressed in a Robin Hood costume. Apparently, the moniker of 'castle' helped boost neighborhood kids' imaginations to the extreme.

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## Moraga's Holiday Tree Lighting event draws hundreds to Commons Park

By Vera Kochan

There was a ton of holiday cheer in evidence Nov. 30 during the town of Moraga's annual Holiday Tree Lighting. If tickets were sold, this could have been considered a sell-out with folks of all ages bundled up and ready for the countdown that would turn the massive tree in Commons Park into Moraga's holiday tradition, thanks to the folks in the Parks and Recreation Department.

Crowds started showing up at 6:30 p.m. to partake of hot cocoa and cookies served by elves from the Moraga Youth Involvement Committee, and holiday music was

provided by Campolindo Music for the Soul. The man of the hour, Santa Claus, arrived just in time to see the all-white lights glowing in the night at the stroke of 7. Apparently, no one was naughty this year, because the line to see him was extraordinarily lengthy.

Also of note, the North Pole Mailbox, located near the Holiday Tree, will be accepting letters to Santa until Dec. 15. Your child will receive a reply from Santa, if you remember to include a name and return address on the envelope.

Don't be a Scrooge! Participate in the Buy-a-Bulb Fundraiser, and help light the Holiday Tree by donating online at: moragarec.com or send a check to: Town of Mor-



Photo Vera Kochan

**Moraga's holiday tree lights up Commons Park.**

aga, Attn: Buy-a-Bulb, 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga, CA 94556.

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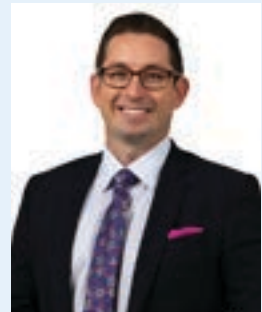
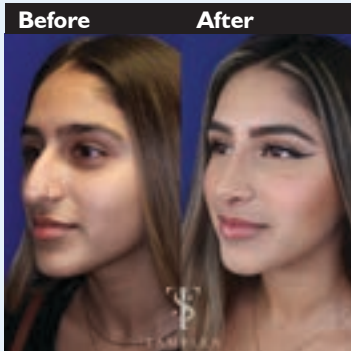
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# Folks toss seed-filled mud balls for potential springtime bloom at West Commons

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

Volunteers toss mud balls into hoops, for the good of the environment, as "The Fisherman" looks on.

On a soggy Nov. 18, considered optimum weather for the task at hand, approximately 15 individuals answered Vice Mayor Teresa Onoda's call to toss some "mud balls" in West Commons Park in the hopes that predicted rains would dissolve them, and the seeds within would eventually grow into flowers.

"The original idea of West Commons in 2013, was a passive native plant park," explained Onoda. "I believe in that concept even more today as I learn about the critical role butterflies and pollinators play in our ecosystem. I think we were on the right path in 2013, and looking forward we have an obligation to always remember our responsibility. Working together we can grow habitats, not just gardens." Onoda first heard about

the concept of mud balls years ago from Moraga Garden Center's owner Kenny Murakami who "planted the seed" in her head about throwing them around town. Dennis Rein, with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, told Onoda where she could get native California seeds when she first decided to transform her side yard. The results turned her barren plot of land into a native wildflower meadow.

With regards to last month's West Commons venture, Onoda stated, "I made most of the 400 mud balls with the help of Suzanne Jones of Preserve Lamorinda Open Space. The seeds are all native California seeds: white yarrow, mountain garland, California poppies, globe gilia, blue flax, golden lupine, baby blue-eyes, California bluebells,

and lacy-leaved phacelia. I have had conversations with the environmental groups in town, and it seems that they will make some as well."

Included in the mud ball toss were members of the Boy Scouts, Campolindo High School Environmental Group, Preserve Lamorinda Open Space, Moraga Garden Club, Moraga Town Manager Scott Mitnick and Onoda's husband, John.

Artist Buddy Brodwin participated and watched as everyone tossed the mud balls into strategically placed Hula Hoops that were in the vicinity of his three works: "Double Helix," "LOL," and "Meter Maidens." Artist Tony Zorich's "The Fisherman" had the most Hula Hoop targets in that his piece takes up more space. Prizes were given out to the kids who had the most meat ball-sized clods thrown into a hoop.

When asked if Onoda was worried that the seeds might be consumed by the town's feathered friends, she replied, "No, I don't worry about birds eating the seeds, because they are in a mud ball of compost, clay, and seeds. The birds might get some of the seeds, and I am happy to share."

Onoda has no plans to repeat the process in other locations, but is more than happy to give out the "recipe" to anyone interested in creating a welcoming environment for pollinators and butterflies. Email her at: tonoda@moraga.ca.us.

# Moraga Country Club burglary suspect charged by DA's office

By Vera Kochan



Photo courtesy Moraga Police Department

Some of the stolen golf clubs that were recovered by MPD.

In early November, the Moraga Police Department received numerous calls regarding burglaries from homes in the Moraga Country Club involving stolen golf clubs and golf equipment. Following an investigation, MPD was able to identify the suspect and his vehicle in the vicinity of one of the burglaries thanks to video evidence.

Trevor Hudson, 25, a resident of Danville, was arrested on Nov. 18 while in possession of stolen property connected to some of the burglaries, 10 of which occurred in Moraga and an additional two in Danville. Much of the stolen property has been located, and MPD is working to return it to the victims.

"These crimes were solved due to the efforts and tenacity of our officers," said Moraga Police Chief Jon King

in a statement. "It was definitely a team effort ... the different officers who took the reports, connected them together, scoured the area for video evidence, arrested the suspect and recovered the property. I appreciate the hard work of our Moraga Police team who worked to solve these cases, arrest the suspect and recover the property stolen in these crimes."

King revealed that thanks to a neighbor's home surveillance system, along with the town's video system, crucial evidence was obtained in order to make an arrest. He added that "most of these crimes occurred when people either left their garages open or unlocked. Although we live in a safe community, by ensuring that our garages, homes and vehicles are locked and secure, we can

prevent most of these crimes."

As of Nov. 30, according to MPD Det. Craig Walker, the District Attorney has charged Hudson with 12 felony counts of residential burglary and one felony count of possession of stolen property (which involves the property he had when police arrested him). Hudson is currently in custody, and bail has been set at \$590,000.

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See public meetings schedule on these pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements  
**City of Orinda:**  
[www.cityoforinda.org](http://www.cityoforinda.org)  
 Phone (925) 253-4200  
**Chamber of Commerce:**  
[www.orindachamber.org](http://www.orindachamber.org)  
**The Orinda Association:**  
[www.orindaassociation.org](http://www.orindaassociation.org)

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## Orinda kicks off the festive season with crafts, lights, music and gingerbread winners

By Sora O'Doherty



Photos Sora O'Doherty

**Ben Zarrin welcomes visitors to the Orinda Village Holiday Market.**

It was a packed day in Orinda Village on Dec. 2. The usual farmers' market filled Orinda Way, and starting at 11 a.m. in the old Bank of America building – now under development as a venue for three restaurants downstairs and offices above – Ben Zarrin of Paymun Real Estate Design & Development hosted a holiday market, with music provided by DJ Erik Rumors.

Inside the building, which is currently one large undivided hall, featured dozens of vendors of crafts and gifts. Most of the vendors were local, or were local representatives of larger companies. Offerings ranged from cosmetics and jewelry, home décor, rugs, woodwork, clothing and accessories to photography and house plants. The

event attracted a large crowd of attendees, but everything

went smoothly.

At 4:30 p.m., in the parking lot, the annual Hospice Tree of Lights was lit in remembrance of friends and loved ones who have died. For 37 years, Hospice of the East Bay has held Tree of Lights ceremonies. There are trees in Orinda, Lafayette and Moraga, locally. Donations to Hospice directly support end-of-life patient care.

At 6 p.m. the community gathered for Winterfest, presented by the city of Orinda Parks and Rec Department and sponsored by the Orinda Community Foundation and the Orinda Parks and Recreation Foundation. The event included the second annual lighting of the Orinda tree in Community Park. Inside the Community Center, the winners of the second annual Gingerbread House contest, hosted by the Orinda Tabor Sister City Foundation were announced.

... continued on next Page



The second annual lighting of the tree in Orinda Community Park on Dec. 2.

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### City Council Regular Meeting:

Tues., Dec. 19, 7 p.m. Orinda Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda

### Planning Comm.:

Tues., Dec. 12, 7 p.m. Orinda Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda

### Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission

Wed. Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m. Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way



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## Orinda Historical Society hosts open house

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

From left: Kay Norman (Board Member), Teresa Long (Archivist), Cheryl Cechvala (Vice President), Wendy Harnett (Membership Secretary), Vivian Ricci (Recording Secretary) Reg Barrett (Board Member) Mayor Inga Miller, Alison Burns (President), and Kathy Barrett (Board Member). Behind, former mayor Amy Worth.

The Orinda Historical Society hosted their first annual open house on Nov. 30. In addition to an array of home-baked cookies and cakes and drinks, guests were treated to a musical performance by Patrick and Luke Burns, husband and son of Historical Society President Alison Burns.

Visitors were welcomed into the museum, newly refurbished in the past year. The walls and display cases are now full of Orinda memorabilia. In an adjoining room, hundreds of old photographs

were spread on a table, and guests were invited to try to identify the people and places depicted.

Included among the guests were board members of the Historical Society, Mayor Inga Miller and Orinda City Council Member and OHS liaison Janet Riley, City Manager David Biggs, City Clerk Sheri Smith, Former Mayor Amy Worth, Bobbie Landers, former chair of the Orinda Historical Landmark Committee, and many other members of the community.

## Orinda kicks off the festive season



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Children enjoyed the large bouncy house and the fun slide at the Orinda Village Holiday Market on Dec. 2.

... continued from Page 6

Winning the 6- to 10-year-old category, brother and sister Anderson and Coraline Compton recreated Orinda's historic Joaquin Moraga Adobe in gingerbread, creating everything from scratch by hand.

There were also refreshments, a concert by the choir

of Orinda Intermediate School led by Choir Director Christina Holling, the Orinda PD "Stuff a Cruiser" Toy Drive, a craft for children led by the Orinda Teen Advisory Council, as well as a seasonal-themed photo opportunity for families who brought their own camera/phone.

### 2023 Gingerbread House Contest winners:



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Brother and sister Coraline Compton (10) and Anderson Compton (6) worked together to create a gingerbread model of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe, including representations of crops raised on the rancho.

**Age 3 years old:**  
Jackson Pollah – 1st place  
Emory Geron – 2nd place

**Age 4-5 years old:**  
Bennett Gagon – 1st place  
Nico Pollah – 2nd place  
Sophia Rogers – 3rd place

**Ages 6-10 years old:**  
Anderson (6) & Coraline (10) Compton family – 1st place  
Timmy Rogers (8) – 2nd place  
Aria Soltani (6) & Aurora (6) – tied for 3rd place

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# In Memory

## Lilian Elizabeth Hawkins

Nov. 19, 1934 - Oct. 1, 2023



The Hawkins family mourns the passing of Lilian Hawkins (née Farmer), who died peacefully at Aegis of Corte Madera on Oct. 1 of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. In her 88 years, Lilian built many strong connections, always leading with curiosity and openness. Her intelligence, caring nature, and sense of humor won her the respect of many admirers and made her highly effective in dispensing constructive advice.

Lilian was born Nov. 19, 1934 and grew up in Edinburgh, Scotland, in the port of Leith.

She was the fifth child of seven children born to Margaret (Mackie) Farmer and John Farmer. Lilian grew up with a tremendous sense of love and security from her parents and siblings, with their Catholic faith and Leith community playing a prominent role.

Upon finishing school, Lilian began her secretarial career in Edinburgh before making the pivotal decision in 1959 to travel to Montreal and later San Francisco for work, ostensibly leaving Scotland only temporarily. In San Francisco, Lilian accepted a dance invitation from the tall, charming Stan Hawkins, a mechanical engineer born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya to British parents, and thus commenced their love story. A wedding in Edinburgh, a honeymoon in Mallorca and Rome and then back to live in San Francisco in Stan's bachelor apartment in North Beach next to Coit Tower.

A year and a half later, with one child and a second on the way, they made the auspicious decision to purchase a home in Orinda on Francisco Court. This home was surrounded by the best kind of neighbors who became lifelong friends and served as a hospitable gathering place over the next 50 years.

Lilian and Stan found great joy in cultivating friendships. They were prolific entertainers and had a wonderful way of making everyone feel accepted. Neighborhood children, numerous sets of friends, and countless overseas family and guests were all made to feel welcome.

Lilian delighted in the beauty of simple daily routines: volunteering at Del Rey Elementary School, coffee mornings with Francisco Court neighbors, driving the backroads of Lamorinda, community service with the Orinda Women's Club, weekly mass at St. Monica Catholic Church, movie nights at the Orinda Theater, weekly walks with friends (over 25 years!) on the Lafayette trails, many trips into the city on BART, always with a newspaper to keep up with current events, and never failing to admire the views of the surrounding golden hills.

In 1976 Lilian returned to work as an administrative assistant at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory where she worked for 25 years. Scotland and being Scottish were a major part of Lilian's identity, both to herself and to those who knew her. Everyone simply loved her lilting voice. And she had the most amazing laugh that lit up a room. Lilian instilled her love of travel and learning in her children and grandchildren. In addition to annual trips to Scotland, she visited six continents and circumnavigated the globe numerous times.

Lilian is survived by her children, Pamela Casaudoumecq, Gordon Hawkins, and Audrey Yeo; their spouses, John Casaudoumecq and Christopher Yeo; her grandchildren, Laurel, Emma, Annabel and Stanley, and great-granddaughter, Kezzie; her brother Sir Tom Farmer of Edinburgh; and her many nieces and nephews around the globe. Requiem Mass will be held on Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024 at 10 a.m., St Mary's, Star of the Sea, Leith. Followed by interment of ashes along with those of her beloved husband, Stanley Edward Hawkins, in Mount Vernon Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland.

# Orinda and MOFD conduct a contraflow activation exercise

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

**During a test of the contraflow lanes on Miner Rd. on Dec. 2, all right turns onto east-bound Miner Rd. were prohibited by signs that explained the a reverse lane was in effect.**

Very early on Saturday morning, Dec. 2, the City of Orinda and the Moraga-Orinda Fire District conducted an activation exercise for the Miner Road contraflow lanes. The purpose of the exercise was to test the time needed to set up and activate the contraflow system.

The contraflow system is designed to increase the number of

cars that can evacuate in the event of an emergency by turning both lanes in the same direction. In the case of Miner Road, both lanes would head west towards Highway 24. In order to assure that there is no traffic flowing in the other direction, signs were set up at each intersection, explaining that the reverse lane change was in

effect. The actual one-way contraflow change of Miner Road lasted approximately 45 minutes and ended at about 8:30 a.m. During the exercise Miner Road was available for only one-way traffic from Lombardy Lane to Camino Pablo.

Notifications of the exercise went out to affected residents via the Community Warning System (CWS), Nixle, and Social Media Channels on Saturday morning. Residents were asked to use alternate routes and/or adjust their travel plans to factor in the contraflow exercise.

Residents of the area became familiar with alternative routes when Miner Road was closed for several months in 2017 because a culvert under a bridge collapsed following very heavy winter storms.

# Letters to the editor

## Orinda BART parking lot smash and grab

My daughter and her husband drove up from Los Angeles to spend Thanksgiving with me in Moraga. For our Black Friday outing to San Francisco we decided to take BART from Orinda to avoid a smash and grab incident in San Francisco. When we returned to the Orinda BART station parking lot their car had a smashed window and had been

broken into, in broad daylight. The BART police came and thought perhaps they were trying to steal the car, because there was nothing inside the car before the break-in. This model of Hyundai cannot be hot-wired.

The cars in the Orinda BART parking lot are sitting ducks for this crime because no cameras are installed in the lot, probably the parking lots as well.

Our holiday ended

with a bitter taste for all, especially when my daughter said they don't want to come back for Christmas. The irony is that we tried to avoid the disappointment and cost of a smashed window by taking BART.

If BART wants to increase ridership they will have to make the parking lots safer with security cameras and increased patrolling.

Ellen McEldowney  
Moraga

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

**Correction :** On Nov. 22 the Lamorinda Weekly reported that Glorietta Elementary School had been placed on lockdown owing to a suspect at large in a home invasion robbery. The incident in question was actually a residential burglary, not a home invasion, as there was no one at home at the time.

**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 [story-desk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:story-desk@lamorindaweekly.com), and include "Celebrations or Remembrances" in the subject line.

# Town Hall Theatre's 'A Christmas Story'

... continued from Page 3

Add on to that carefully crafted props and costumes mimicking the kitchens, classrooms, appliances, and clothing from the era of time, along

with actors that make each of the characters come fully to life and you've got a play that promises to keep you on the edge of your seat.

The play itself is around two hours, and longer when

you factor in intermission, but it is worth every minute of it. If you find yourself wondering whether or not it's appropriate for the whole family or whether young children can sit through it, the answer is

unequivocally "Yes." (This reporter tested it out by bringing my two children, who easily complain of tiredness or boredom. Both of them loved the play so much, they wanted to wait to meet the cast and are

actively trying to plan another viewing of the play.) The remaining shows are on Dec. 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16 and 17. For tickets, visit [www.townhalltheatre.com/christmas-story](http://www.townhalltheatre.com/christmas-story)

## Public Safety

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**Lafayette Police Department:**  
3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925-283-3680  
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt  
925-299-3221  
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



**Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Nov. 12 - Nov. 25**

Alarms	39
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	10
Traffic	139
Suspicious Circumstances	9
Suspicious Subject	14
Suspicious Vehicle	11
Service to Citizen	22
Patrol Req./Security Check	18
Public/School Assembly Check	6
Supplemental Report	13
Vacation House Check	26
Welfare Check	11
Ordinance Violation	0

**Vehicle violations**

Auto Burglary  
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.  
Orchard Rd./Oakhill  
Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
El Nido Ranch Rd./Acalanes Rd.  
Somewhere In Laf / Unk  
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3100 Block Lucas Cir.

Police Department  
Reckless Driving  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Oak Hill Rd.  
St Marys Rd./S Lucille Ln.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Stanley Blvd.  
Deer Hill Rd./Happy Valley Rd.  
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Wb Sr 24  
Stolen Vehicle Recovery  
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Tc - Property Damage  
Wb Sr 24 At Acalanes Rd.  
St Marys Rd./Cattle Chute Rd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Springhill Rd.  
Vehicle Theft  
1000 Block Carol Ln.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3100 Block Lucas Cir.  
**Other criminal activity**  
Bomb Threat  
1000 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.  
900 Block Leland Dr.  
Grand Theft  
El Nido Ranch Rd./Upper Happy Valley Rd.  
Grand Theft Bicycle  
3500 Block Brook St.  
Misc Burglary  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Panhandling  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)  
Petty Theft  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
900 Block Janet Ln.  
3600 Block Deerhill Rd.  
Residential Burglary  
20 Block Sanford Ln.  
Shoplift  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Terrorist Threats  
3300 Block Deer Hill Rd.  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Disturbance-domestic  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3400 Block Orchard Hill Ct.  
Disturbing The Peace  
El Curtola Blvd./Camino Diablo Mt. Diablo Blvd./1St St.  
3400 Block Orchard Hill Ct.  
Acalanes Rd./Hidden Valley Rd.  
Loud Music  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
20 Block Toledo Ct.  
3600 Block Block Happy Valley Rd.

Loud Party  
Lucas Dr./Lucas Ranch Rd.  
Happy Valley Rd./Franklin Ln.  
Public Nuisance  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Vandalism  
2900 Block Windtree Ct.  
3200 Block Stanley Blvd.  
**Other**  
Attempt Shoplift  
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Indecent Exposure  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
K9 Outside Assist Request  
3200 Block Old Tunnel Rd.  
Threats  
30 Block Olympic Oaks Dr.  
Trespass  
100 Block Lafayette Cir.  
Unwanted Guest  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Violation Custody Order  
Police Department  
3300 Block Springhill Rd.  
Violation Restraining Ord  
1000 Block Miller Dr.

**Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report Nov. 21 - Nov. 27**

Alarms	8
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	4
Traffic	23
Suspicious Circumstances	1
Suspicious Subject	1
Suspicious Vehicle	1
Service to Citizen	25
Patrol Req./Security Check	24
Public/School Assembly Check	7
Supplemental Report	3
Vacation House Check	1
Welfare Check	1
Ordinance Violation	0

**Vehicle violations**

Accident Property  
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.  
100 Block Moraga Rd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Springhill Rd., Laf  
Dui Misd  
Moraga Rd./Campolindo Dr.  
Excessive Speed  
Moraga Way/School St.  
Moraga Rd./Moraga Way

Moraga Rd./Draeger Dr.  
St Marys Staging Area  
Reckless Driving  
100 Block Brookline  
St Marys College  
Tc - Property Damage  
300 Block Rheem Blvd.  
Throw Moving Vehicle  
Country Club Dr/St Andrews  
**Dr. Other criminal activity**  
Petty Theft  
Not Available  
Residential Burglary  
Police Department  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Drunk In Public  
900 Block Augusta Dr.  
Vandalism  
10 Block Woodford Dr.  
**Other**  
Mentally Ill Commit  
10 Block Inverleith Terrace

**ORINDA POLICE**

**Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report Nov. 12 - Nov. 25**

Alarms	41
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	6
Traffic	110
Suspicious Circumstances	2
Suspicious Subject	6
Suspicious Vehicle	2
Service to Citizen	37
Patrol Req./Security Check	22
Public/School Assembly Check	2
Supplemental Report	12
Vacation House Check	0
Welfare Check	5
Ordinance Violation	1

**Vehicle violations**

Accident Fatal  
Tres Mesas/Lomas Cantadas  
Accident Injury  
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.  
Orinda Way/Camino Pablo  
Accident Property  
Moraga Way  
Wilder Rd./Wb Sr 24  
Orinda Way (2)  
Claremont Ave./Stanton Ave.

Auto Burglary  
80 Block Via Floreado  
50 Block Brookside Rd.  
Dui Misd  
10 Block Camino Sobrante  
Hit And Run Misdemeanor  
200 Block Sundown Terrace  
Camino Pablo/Eb Sr 24  
Reckless Driving  
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.  
Eb Sr 24 At Camino Pablo  
Rheem Blvd./Glorietta Blvd.  
Tc - Property Damage  
Manzanita Dr./Camino Pablo  
**Other criminal activity**  
Fraud False Pretenses  
Camino Sobrante  
Identity Theft  
20 Block Tappan Ln.  
Petty Theft  
100 Block Alice Ln. (2)  
60 Block Singingwood Ln.  
Petty Theft From Veh  
100 Block Canon Dr.  
Terrorist Threats  
Moraga Way  
Warrant Arrest  
Camino Pablo/Miner Rd.  
Orinda Way  
Bryant Way/Moraga Way  
**Nuisance to the Community**  
Loud Music  
Douglas Ct./Robert Rd.  
Robert Rd./Glorietta Blvd.  
Vandalism  
20 Block Orchard Rd.  
10 Block Estates Dr.  
10 Block Orchard Rd.  
50 Block Brookside Rd.  
40 Block Brookside Rd.  
20 Block Acacia Dr. (2)  
50 Block Moraga Way  
Moraga Way  
**Other**  
Checks Non Suff Funds  
60 Block Barbara Rd.  
Dependent Adult Abuse  
Altarinda Rd.  
H&S Violation  
Moraga Way  
Revocation Of Probation  
North Ln./Rose Ln.  
Orinda Way  
Simple Assault  
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# Creamy Bolognese perfectly tops homemade pappardelle pasta

By Susie Iventosch



Homemade Pappardelle Pasta with Bison Bolognese Sauce



Photos Susie Iventosch

Bolognese or Ragu sauce? What is the difference? They both have meat, onions, tomatoes, herbs and wine. They both adorn pasta, and taste great with a sprinkling of Parmesan cheese, so they seem very similar. But, several years ago I learned that Bolognese is made with carrots, celery, and milk, while ragu does not normally use these ingredients. Also, Bolognese is normally made with white wine, where ragu is made with red wine. To me, the biggest difference is the use of milk in the Bolognese sauce. My mom never, ever put milk in her spaghetti sauce, so to me that was very strange.

Anyway, I started making Bolognese with all of these special ingredients, including a cup of milk, and my family and friends loved it. Great! But just when I thought I had Bolognese sauce dialed in, we went on a trip to Italy. If you can believe it, not a single restaurant we dined in told me they use milk in their Bolognese sauce. In fact, they all said they'd never heard of such a thing! So, now I am a bit confused. When you Google what makes Bolognese, milk is always in the ingredi-

ents, but not in Italy! Anyway ... we love it with the addition of milk, which makes the sauce a bit creamier and a little bit lighter.

In order to make homemade pasta, you need to have some way of drying the pasta. Some people, like me before I purchased a pasta drying rack, dry it over anything they can find, like bar stools, etc. You can also roll the pasta out with a rolling pin, but it is tough work. So, to make that easier, we use an Atlas Marconi Pasta Machine, which rolls the pasta dough out nice and thin. They also make a pappardelle attachment, but I think it's too wide — almost as wide as lasagna noodles, so I prefer to cut my own pappardelle once the dough is rolled out.

I sometimes make my pasta with a combination of semolina flour and Italian Type 00 flour, which is softer, slightly sweeter, and lower in protein or gluten than American flour. Other times I use only the Italian flour, which makes the dough a bit easier to work with. The semolina flour gives the pasta a little more bite, where the Italian soft flour is a bit more tender.

## Bison Bolognese Sauce

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds ground bison (or a combination of bison, turkey, venison, or elk)
- 1 large yellow onion, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2 stalks celery, thickly sliced (I add these last)
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 large shallot, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 fresh basil leaves, minced
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 3 tbsp. tomato paste
- 4 plum tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 cup white wine (red would also be just fine)
- 1 cup chicken or beef broth
- 1 28-oz. can diced tomatoes or puréed tomatoes
- 1 14-oz. can tomato sauce
- 1 cup milk

### DIRECTIONS

Heat oil in a large frying pan or Dutch oven. Cook onions, shallots and carrots over medium-low heat until onions are translucent and carrots are beginning to soften. Add herbs and fresh basil and continue to cook for several more minutes until aromatic.

Add ground bison and cook over medium heat until cooked all the way through, using a fork, or a meat chopper utensil, to break up the meat as you cook it and to keep it from clumping. Once the meat is cooked through, add the tomato paste, plum tomatoes and white wine, and mix well. Add remaining ingredients and simmer over low heat for at least one hour, (even better if you can simmer it longer) to let the flavors meld.

Serve very hot over cooked pasta and garnish with freshly grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano cheese.

## Homemade Pappardelle Pasta

### INGREDIENTS

- 10 oz. extra-fine pasta flour (Italian Soft Wheat Type 00 Flour)
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 large eggs + 1 egg white (This can change depending upon the size of the eggs, which vary quite a bit. If the dough seems too dry, add a little bit more egg, and if it seems too wet, add a little bit more flour until you arrive at a dough that is workable — not too sticky, but not too dry. It's not an exact science, but more done by feel.)

### DIRECTIONS

Mix salt with flours and place on a large cutting board or in a large bowl. Make a well in the center of the flour using the bottom of a small bowl or a large spoon. Start mixing the 3 whole eggs into the flour with a fork, bringing more and more flour into the mixture as you go. If you need extra liquid, add the extra egg white. Mix until you arrive at a workable dough — not too dry or too sticky. When your dough feels workable, gather it into a ball. The dough will be fairly stiff at this point. Knead dough for 4-5 minutes, dusting with flour as needed, until the dough is smooth.

Divide the dough in half and form each half into a disc. Wrap the dough discs in plastic wrap and refrigerate until you are ready to roll and cut the pasta. When this time comes, take dough from the refrigerator and let it sit on the counter for about 10 minutes before rolling it out. Now, working in batches, use your pasta machine to roll the dough to your desired thickness. Lay the dough out on a cutting board and using a chef's knife, cut the rolled dough (lengthwise) into wide (3/4-inch) noodles. String the pasta up on the pasta rack and allow to dry for several hours before cooking it.

### Atlas Marconi Pasta Maker:

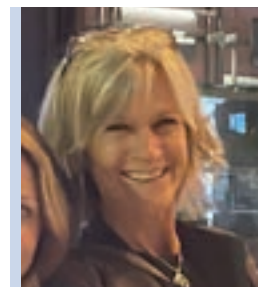
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### Pasta drying racks:

<https://www.foodandwine.com/best-pasta-drying-racks-8385832>

### Italian pasta flour:

<https://caputoflour.com/products/caputo-00-chefs-flour>



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>

# Oops! I did it again

By Alison Burns

Yes, I completely overlooked the significance of the fourth Wednesday in November when around 65 million Americans make their way back to their childhood homes like spawning salmon. Unfortunately, not being a U.S. native, I have no instinctive grasp of the importance of Thanksgiving. It's like trying to explain Boxing Day to an American.

Some years ago I made the mistake of booking a late-November flight to Detroit, totally unaware of the nightmare awaiting me on my return journey the following Wednesday. I'd been proud of paying \$300 for direct flights but my husband — who loves to dive into our million air-miles — promised he could get it cheaper. And he did. Just \$11 to fly half way across the country and back.

What he didn't mention though, was that this would involve an incredibly long and noisy layover in Salt Lake City, perched on a hard plastic chair for hours, not daring to get up to use the bathroom or buy a coffee for fear I'd sacrifice my hard-won seat to the vultures hovering precipitously close by.

I texted my misery to my husband: "I could have walked it quicker than this."

My cheese-parer husband

texted back one phrase: "\$11."

Watching the frazzled moms juggling unbelievable quantities of boxes, bags and babies, while the dads lingered several paces behind carrying nothing heavier than an iPhone, I swore I'd never again fly just before Thanksgiving. But somehow, last month, I found I'd done it again.

Too late to reschedule my flight back from London, I envisaged myself trapped in the middle seat for 12 hours, a fretful toddler in front of me and a happy drunk behind. To my left would be an excessively talkative passenger, with the aisle seat occupied by someone so deeply asleep it would be impossible for me to escape and stretch my legs when I felt the throbbing of an incipient DVT in my calves.

Airplanes are not healthy places: the things that have been discovered in seat-backs are beyond mention in a family newspaper. Remember never to eat directly off your tray table: some people confuse them with footrests. Don't walk around barefoot: every bodily fluid has landed on that floor. And never drink directly from the faucets: a 2004 EPA study that tested 158 aircraft ultimately identified 20 planes with either E.coli or coliform bacteria in their water supply.

But even though the number of airborne passengers this Thanksgiving reached their highest since 2005, some folks still needed a nudge.

It's late November when an elderly man phones his son to say that he and his wife are getting divorced. "We're sick of one another," he snarls. "Tell your sister." Ten minutes later, his furious daughter calls: "No way are we letting you break up our happy home. We're coming home to discuss this. Don't argue. We've already booked our flights."

The old man turns to his wife and says, "Okay, they'll both be here for Thanksgiving. Now what shall we do about Christmas?"



Alison Burns is a regular contributor to Lamorinda Weekly and lives in Orinda.

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# LAMORINDA SPORTS

Submit sports stories and story ideas to  
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## Hope springs eternal for Lamorinda basketball

By Jon Kingdon



Chris Kaufhold



Koleton Fenton

Photos Ann Murphy

With all five starters having graduated, Acalanes head coach Bill Powers is looking to move on from last season. "We're trying to build an identity of just being relentless in how we rebound and run and we're trying to play at a pace that's a little faster than we played the last couple of years," Powers said. "We're a team that cares for one another."

With the addition of legendary Bay Area coach Don Libbi (922 wins), this year's Dons will be running more. "This is an emphasis in practice," Powers said. "Don has had a big influence in that area. It was just a stroke of luck that he found his way to Acalanes and we're so grateful. We're also trying to get the best shot we can, an 'Acalanes shot' and we're teaching them what a good shot is. We're still taking some bad shots but that's what happens in November."

Powers is also look-

ing be equally aggressive on defense. "We can really match up in our ability to put five guys on the floor where our smallest guy would be 6'3"," Powers said. "We're excited about being a team that presses, zones and then gets out and runs."

Acalanes has a lot of depth and Powers is taking advantage of it. "To coin a Golden State Warriors phrase, there is strength in numbers," Powers said. "I want us to be a team that keeps coming at you with a number of players that will be getting significant playing time."

There is a lot of size in the front court led by Joe Reidenbach, brothers Maddox and Ryder Malm, Jake Elerts, Cooper Edelman, and Trevor Carrillo, though Matt Bacon is currently out with a knee injury. "We are bigger in the sense that we can put a lot of players on the floor that are between 6'2" and 6'5"," Powers

said. "Ryder is a sophomore who is a big kid who we think highly of, and he has made great strides over the summer and fall."

Along with Quinn in the backcourt, Ian Salmon, Liam Krackeler, and Jordan Brown bring experience and the ability to score. Sophomores Gavin Dodge, Ryder Malm, Cameron Hood, and Preston Hilsabeck will all be seeing time and Powers is particularly optimistic about Dodge: "Gavin is a good player and you'll be writing about him for the next three years."

Powers is also stressing the mental aspect of the game to his players: "They have to believe in themselves and their ability to win games. We'll have a game plan for every game but it's also getting the players to realize they're good players and not doubt themselves. That's what we need for us to be successful."

**Miramonte**

After only winning five games last year, head coach Chris Lavdiotis addressed the issue head on. "We just weren't good enough to win for a variety of reasons," Lavdiotis said. "We determined what we need to do to get better and then put it in the rearview mirror."

Every exit interview from his players had a common theme – they didn't work hard enough in the offseason. "So, we committed to that this offseason and our efforts in the spring, summer and fall have set the groundwork for the team," Lavdiotis said. "Our goal this summer was to play harder than our opponents. I think we did. We went to four tournaments and went 19 and 5. It was important for us to play well and win together and have that experience of building a team."

Lavdiotis has relied on his team captains, seniors Chase Miller, Koleton Fenton, and Chris Kaufhold: "They've demanded accountability while being respectful of everybody. Their hard play and their presence on the court is obvious to everybody that they're there to help everyone get better."

Miramonte did not lose any players to graduation though they were missing Thomas Zwahlen, Jack Quinnild, and Preston Rguem who were still playing football with the team deep into the playoffs.

With so many returning players, it has facilitated the installation of the team's offense. "That's true," Lavdiotis said. "We're basically a 4-out offense, motion base with guidelines and we're getting

better and better at spacing the floor and opening up the driving lanes and shooting the threes. They understand playing, spacing, and making plays out of structure and we could have a different high scorer each game."

Lavdiotis has relied on Stefan Maksimovic and Matt Delartini designing the defense. "Stefan and Matt put in a new press and it's really helped our attitude adjustment to be aggressive," Lavdiotis said.

Miller and Marcus Robinson will be starting in the backcourt and freshman Adam Housami, Kaufhold and Fenton will be the front court starters. "Marcus played for the 18 and under Great Britain this summer. He is shooting well, and his defense and leadership has gotten better," Lavdiotis said. "Adam has grown physically and is a great defender. He understands the game and what we're trying to do. He's got a lot to bring and is not at all intimidated."

There is a lot more size and strength on the team this year. "Our whole team is noticeably bigger because they really committed to the weight room in the off-season," Lavdiotis said. "The big difference for this team is that they have another year of maturity and a determination that we really need to have a successful season. We have to be the hungriest, most aggressive team we can be, and we'll get there."

**Campolindo**

This may prove to be one of head coach Steven Dyer's more challenging seasons. This will be the first team since 2016 that

is not returning a single player that was a double-digit scorer. "It's the most inexperienced team I've had since I've been coaching at Campo," Dyer said. "It's hard to know how we're going to do this year, but these guys are definitely working hard, and we have a chance to be pretty good, but we just have to make progress every week."

It was anticipated that there would be two returning starters from last season, co-captains guard Dylan Mansour and point guard Tyler Bergren, but Bergren is currently out with a knee injury. Sophomore Peyton Beld has stepped in as the team's point guard and there are a number of players that will be looked upon to step us as scorers.

"I think there's a lot of different candidates," Dyer said. "Andy Moon should be a starter for us. He plays really hard and is one of our better defense players. He can hit the open shots and we're counting on him to be an impactful player for us. In an ideal world, Peyton would not have to start right now but the world's not ideal. He's gotten a chunk of minutes and has shown a lot of potential. Gavin Rendle can be a double-digit scorer and Ren Marchetti has also been playing well and we can have as many as eight guys score from 5 to 10 points a game."

In the frontcourt, Tim Smith will be starting at center with Luke Devine, Max Robeson and Will Marusich vying for playing time.

... continued on Page 11

## Miramonte Tennis comes up just short in NCS Tournament

By Jon Kingdon



Maddie Silveira

Photo Dale Kang

Finishing the regular season with an 18-3 record and 10-0 in league play, Miramonte entered the NCS team tournament with real optimism as the No. 2 seed. Miramonte easily

won their first two matches against Tamalpais (7-0) and American (6-1).

In the semifinal match, Miramonte faced third seeded Redwood High School with whom

they had split matches during the regular season but came up short, losing 3-4 and then saw Redwood defeat the No. 1 seed, Monte Vista 5-2, to win the championship. "It was heart-breaking to lose to Redwood, but they were really good," head coach Rikki Sorenson said. "We had knocked them out of the NCS the last two years, and they had enough of getting beaten by Miramonte and they played really well."

Despite the loss, Sorenson exuded great pride in the team. "They exceeded all of my expectations this year," she said. "Caitlin Chan at line one led the way in singles along with Nicole Hui and Nicole Guo lifting the team. We had very good chemistry and

a really strong work ethic that was better than I've had in years and that just raised everybody's level," Sorenson said. "Hui, a senior who played line three singles, was the person that drove that more than anybody. She's incredibly committed and hardworking and a lot of people just fed off of that and followed it. It was really amazing to see the team's growth in the course of the season."

Miramonte's doubles teams were a real strength all year. At the Diablo Athletic League tournament, Caitlin Chan and Maddie Silveira, Alison Rhee and Audrey Kosla, and Emily Suh and Madeline Essner finished in first, second and third respec-

tively. "I don't know if that has ever been done," Sorenson said. "Our doubles teams were just amazing finishing the season with a 29-1 record," Sorenson said.

At the NCS tournament, Miramonte pointed to the doubles championship, entering two teams, Rhee and Kosla and sophomores Chan and Silveira, normally singles players who opted to play doubles.

Rhee and Kosla lost to Redwood's doubles team and Chan and Silveira defeated Deer Valley and then Redwood 7-6, 3-6, 6-2. They went on to defeat Amador Valley 6-4, 6-1 but lost in the finals to the Amador Valley 4-6, 1-6.

Despite a semifinal

finish in the team tournament and a second place in the doubles tournament, it was not what Sorenson was hoping for. For Sorenson, a successful season is when they win the NCS tournament which is her goal every year: "I'm always trying to see if we can make that happen which is a really difficult thing to do. So, it was disappointing to not get what we wanted but like I said, all season long, the work effort led to some really great victories over Northgate and Campolindo. We had some really good matches, but we just couldn't quite get it across the finish line. And so, I'd say it was a great season, but with a disappointing finish."

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# Start to plan a meaningful summer now!

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

On both the Common Application and the University of California application there is a section to list and describe your accomplishments, including summer activities. If it is on the application, it is safe to assume that it is important in the admissions process.

Younger students still forming their interests should have the most leverage to explore rather than select something that 'looks good' on a college application. For example, a student may want to volunteer for an animal rescue foundation over the summer but may show little or no interest in becoming a veterinarian. Knowing what you don't want to do is as important as knowing what you do want to do. As a student develops a deeper interest in a particular area of knowledge, career, or research they should focus on depth rather than breadth and aim to immerse themselves in several substantive activities related to that interest, both in and outside the school environment. For example, if a student believes she wants to become a doctor, she should take advanced placement science courses as well as demonstrate an active interest in clinical medicine by volunteering in a healthcare environment or doing research.

It is important that a student's interests not be judged as good or bad depending on whether it fits an adult's idea of meaningful or career focused. That's a surefire way to kill passion before it has a chance to take root. Also, I recommend students be encouraged to pursue their interests rather than prestige; when they do so they often enjoy far better admission results.

You do not have to travel or spend a ton of money for your summer to have an impact. Here is a list of possibilities:  
**Online courses:** I had one student who was on a tight budget. She enrolled in an inexpensive online design course and was guided through the creation of a 3-dimensional model of a bedroom (complete with furnishings, complementary fabrics, window treatments, rugs, the works). Her summer project became part of her college portfolio, and she was successfully offered admission to several excellent architectural programs.

**Employment:** This is an often underrated experience that is highly valued by admission offices. Students usually get a job in the summer and learn many vital life lessons and sometimes gain valuable leadership experience – if they can

continue the job into the high school year on a part-time basis, all the better. I had one student who held down a part-time hostess job in the summer and then received a promotion to lead hostess for upcoming school months. Her new position required that she train new employees, often individuals older than herself. This is impressive to colleges, and she was admitted to several strong schools of business.

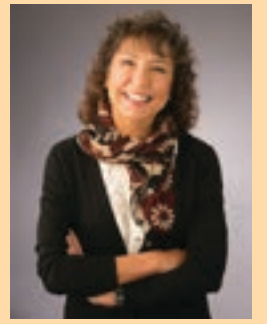
**Internships/Programs:** Internships and programs are tremendous opportunities for students to build specific skill sets and gain valuable experience in a field they want to explore more fully. There are many language immersion, service, humanities, math, science, computer science and engineering programs to choose from and costs vary greatly. It is best to get an early start researching these opportunities as many of the more competitive internships and programs have December and January deadlines. Another bonus of applying to more selective internships is that the application is similar to the college application (many selective programs require one to two letters of recommendation, school transcript, test scores and one or more essays). A 10th or 11th grader who com-

pletes this type of application process often has a head start on the college application process. High school students who get a later start on summer plans should not despair; each week I hear about another great opportunity a student finds by exercising due diligence with a deadline still in the future.

**Community Service:** Time is more plentiful during the summer and students who are drawn to volunteerism can expand this interest over the break. That said, it is best if the project is planned well in advance and executed over the summer. It is also best if something lasting can be achieved for the nonprofit organization where the student volunteers. The impact on the community should be both positive and lasting.

**Teen Tours and Travel:** Frankly, most of these programs are exorbitantly expensive. They can be a terrific investment if you keep in mind that the experience needs to be transforming in some way (like language and cultural immersion for a student who wants to major in international affairs) or has an otherwise special feature (like a strong community service component).

**College Research and Visits:** Early summer is a perfect



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time to develop a balanced list of good fit colleges and explore each college fully. You can research colleges carefully at home and, if possible, plan to visit a few in order to develop an appreciation of the differences among institutions.

## Acalanes heads to state playoffs; Mats come up short

... continued from Page 1

"Our coaches were saying that usually in that defense, we follow the crosser, but they knew something was going to come back to the other side, so I just waited and once I saw that ball in the air, I made the interception," Rogers said

Littlejohn also had two sacks. "Deonte has been a great player and just a year ago, he was playing freshman football," assistant coach David Ortega said.

Coming into the game, the key was to slow down Escalon's running attack. "We knew it was going to be hard to stop their offense the way they overload and run the wing T," Burnsed said. "They run that way, and they do a great job, and it took us a while to get it going. The time of possession was crazy, but we scored almost every time we got the ball."

The Dons have relied on team defense all year having had 18 different players with at least one tackle for loss, led by

Andrew Davenport and Deonte Littlejohn, each with 15 tackles for loss. The team also had 29 sacks led by Drew McKenzie (5) and Collin Malmquist (5)."

Early in the game, Acalanes stopped Escalon on two key fourth down plays deep in Acalanes territory and that set a precedent for the rest of the game. "We knew we had to play a full game and our kids understood that," Ortega said. "We lack a little bit in size but we're fast and we like to get into people. I'm really proud of them because we've come a long way. From the start, this has been a team with a goal, and they've been achieving their goals and believed the whole time that they could get there."

Though already planning for the logistics for the championship, Burnsed took a moment to share his personal feelings: "This is really special, especially with a great group of kids, Acalanes and the community here. I think it's awesome."

### Miramonte

It's been a year of streaks for Miramonte – winning their first six games, losing their next three and then coming into their North Coast Regional Championship game against Pleasant Valley High School with a three-game winning streak, all of them North Coast Sectional games.

Pleasant Valley, a much higher ranked team, was bigger in size and numbers and that proved to be the difference in the game. Still, Miramonte was only trailing 17-12, behind two Carson Blair to Jack Quinnild touchdown passes, entering the fourth quarter before losing by a final score of 31-12.

Miramonte head coach Jack Schram knew it was going to be a difficult challenge to take on the much higher ranked Pleasant Valley team. "They're very dynamic in everything they do," Schram said. "They spread it and go unbalanced and do a lot of different things. In the end we needed to play a better game than we did but we had our

moments. We took our first drive and went 80 yards for the touchdown. We then had a couple of good, sustained drives but we had a couple of interceptions when we had opportunities to really seize the momentum."

Senior linebacker, Gabe Roman, felt the team left it all out on the field. "We knew it was going to be a hard fight. We started off well and even when we struggled a little bit later in the game, we responded back well," Roman said. "With their larger roster, they were able to keep more guys fresh whereas we had a lot of guys going both ways. Unfortunately, it got away from us at the end. "Even though we lost the game, it was a good representation of how our season went in that we never gave up. Obviously winning the NCS title game and just coming up short of going to the state championship game was upsetting but I was happy with the success we had this year."

The size difference took away Miramonte's ability to

run as effectively as they had done during the season. "We couldn't run the ball effectively against them, and then they made some adjustments in the second half when they went down to a five min box instead of seven," Schram said. "When we saw that in the past, we had been able to run against this type of defense but tonight we weren't able to, and once we fell behind by more than one score behind it really put the pressure on us and we gave up more sacks than we had all season."

Schram made it a point to salute the team's seniors: "I told them how proud we were to win the North Coast Sectional championship, and this was the first time Miramonte's been invited to the regional championship, so it was all on their leadership. Coming off of last year's disappointing NCS championship loss, we came one step farther and now the challenge for this year's juniors is to win another NCS championship and win the regional game next year."

## Troop 243 in Lafayette honors newest Eagle Scout

Submitted by Paul Mason



Photo provided

Renton, who was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout at a Court of Honor on Nov. 14, after earning 21 merit badges, completing a community service project, and holding several leadership positions.

Having just turned 15, Finn is one of the youngest Eagle Scouts in the country. Finn's community service project took place at Campolindo High School and included constructing a canopy to protect students from the elements, fixing the goat pen, and mulching the vegetable garden.

Finn was also a recipient of the Lafayette Green Award for his environmental work in getting gas-powered leaf blowers banned in Lafayette. Finn's favorite merit badge was scuba diving, which he earned while living in Lima, Peru. He believes that cooking, financial management, and leadership are the most valuable skills he has learned during his Scouting journey.

Boy Scout Troop 243 in Lafayette recently honored its newest Eagle Scout, Finn

**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.

## Hope springs eternal for Lamorinda basketball

... continued from Page 10

"Tim is good defensively and we're looking for him to make more of an impact offensively," Dyer said. "Luke had some good minutes in our scrimmages so we're looking for him to continue to improve on that. Will, a volleyball player, has good size and has been making progress."

Defense remains at the forefront of Dyer's priorities: "It's team defense. Even

though it's an inexperienced group, these guys have won a lot on the lower level and have used the same system we use on varsity, so it's just a matter of translating how to do it at the varsity level playing against better guys, and it just takes a lot of work to be good defensively."

The team is going to have to find its success through character and determination. "We might not necessarily have the talent that we had

the last five years, but we have a really good group in terms of chemistry and connectivity," Dyer said. "They've all got to be able to chip in, scoring-wise, because we're not going to have a dominant scorer so it's finding out who's going to get the 6 to 10 points a game consistently throughout the year to be an everyday guy. We have to be really well connected as a team and that's where we're going to try to continue to do better."



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## Not to be missed

### Art

**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 to Jan. 7, 2024. [www.famsf.org/exhibitions/de-young-open-2023](http://www.famsf.org/exhibitions/de-young-open-2023).

**Valley Art Gallery announces** their 58th annual Holiday Collection for Artful Giving from Nov. 18 - Dec. 30. Special holiday gift Trunk Shows on Dec. 7, 8, and 9 featuring glass and silver Jewelry and on Dec. 15, 16, and 17 featuring mixed fiber art. 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek, [www.valleyart-gallery.org](http://www.valleyart-gallery.org); (925) 935-4311

**Fine Art meets fine beer in Moraga.** Thursday, Dec. 14 from 6 - 8 p.m.; the public is invited to the first annual "Shopping and Craft Beer Night" at the Moraga Art Gallery at 432 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center. Co-sponsored by Moraga's Canyon Club Brewery, the event will treat patrons visually with a vast array of art by more than a score of member- and guest-artists, and gustatorily by a variety of brews including Kolsches, Porters, IPAs, and a Moraga original--"Roads of Pearpetual Construction"--along with interesting non-alcoholic beers, snacks, and music. Until Christmas, the gallery will be open daily from noon to 5

p.m.; afterwards, the same hours, but closed Monday and Tuesday. For more information, visit [moragaart-gallery.com](http://moragaart-gallery.com) or call (925) 367-5407.

**Orinda Books Artist** of the Month for December is Paul Kratter. His popular plein air paintings embody the light, atmosphere, and emotion that only an accomplished artist can convey. Paul's illustration background instills strong drawing and design skills and a robust belief in graphic shapes and storytelling, and he finishes paintings on location to keep a fresh, spontaneous feel. For a preview, visit <https://www.orindabooks.com>

### Music

**California Academy of Performing Arts (CAPA)** in Moraga presents the Nutcracker Ballet & Concerto at Campolindo HS Performing Arts Center from Dec. 7 - 11. A fun and traditional outing for many Bay Area families, and just in time for the Holidays! The Nutcracker is a narrated ballet in two acts, and several shows will also have a Holiday Concerto right after the Nutcracker. Tickets on sale now. Visit [www.capadance.net/nutcracker](http://www.capadance.net/nutcracker) for show schedule & link to purchase tickets.

**Berkeley Chamber Performances** is excited to present the Black Oak Ensemble on Saturday, Jan. 27 at 7:30 p.m. at the Lafayette Library. Praised for its "insightful, committed and masterful performances" (Classics Today 10/10) and

"fierce eloquence" (London Times), the Black Oak Ensemble is one of the most innovative and exciting chamber ensembles on the international stage. This concert will feature works from Black Oak's record "Silenced Voices" (Cedille Records), dedicated to Jewish composers, most of whom lost their lives during the Holocaust. Tickets at: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/berkeleychamberperformances/992925>

**Solstice Celebration** on Thursday, Dec. 21 at 4:30 and 6 p.m. at Creekside Commons of Lafayette, 1035 Carol Lane. Live fire arts performer, winter hors d'oeuvres, spike your cider bar for adults, hot cocoa for all ages, poetry, candlelight labyrinth walk, and original sonic rhythms provided by The House of Willow. It's a moment for the whole family to pause and honor the longest night of the year. The celebration is followed by a meditative "Sonic Solstice" that immerses you in the sounds of the Handpan, Didgeridoo, Hand Drums, Native American Flutes, and more. Start your winter with a solstice moment that invites you into the nurturing stillness of the season. Tickets sold online or at the door. Visit [Creeksidecommons.org](http://Creeksidecommons.org) for more info.

### Literature

**Stories Live On Forever:** How to be the hero in your own story and inspire others for generations to come. A storytelling & writing workshop with Sharon K. Sobotta

Dec. 9, 10 a.m. - noon at Reasonable Books, 3645 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Stories are the part of us that can live on for generations to come. In this storytelling and writing workshop, Sharon will guide us through a series of fun exercises to engage us in the age-old tradition of storytelling.

### Other

**The Acalanes Chapter** of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and VFW Post 8063 will host a ceremony at the historic Lafayette Cemetery on Saturday, Dec. 16 at noon. Following the ceremony, wreaths will be placed at the graves of nearly 300 veterans who lie at rest in the historic Lafayette Cemetery. The public is invited to attend the ceremony and assist Scout Troop 284 place the wreaths as they say each veteran's name out loud. Learn more about the event at [www.wreathscrossamerica.org/CA0565](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/CA0565).

**All are cordially invited** to attend St. Mary's College Guild's Christmas Luncheon held at SMC's Soda Center, Moraga, on Dec. 12, featuring pianist Sharon Lee Kim and the Award Winning St. Mary's College Choir. Social Hour is at 11 a.m. There will be a Holiday Bake Sale and a Raffle for a Money Tree. All proceeds benefit SMC Scholarship Fund for needy students of St. Mary's College. Cost \$50 per person. Menu: Salmon Picatta or Chicken a la King. Send your order with your check, (payable to: St. Mary's College

Guilt) and reservations to: Marybeth Dyer - 6410 Valley Oak Plaza, Martinez, CA. 94553. For Questions Call: Marybeth Dyer: (925) 387-5283 Please RSVP by Wednesday, Dec. 6.

**Winter Workshop for Kids** will be held at the Lafayette Plaza on Saturday, Dec. 16, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Children can craft a gift for someone special. All materials and assistance will be provided, and parents/guardians can help with assembly too. Plus, there will be loads of outdoor games. Bring the whole family, from the very young to the young at heart! Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary hosts this event in partnership with Lafayette Parks and Recreation. More information: <https://lamorindasunrise.org/>

**All are invited to see the** Christmas story come to life at the 18th annual viewing of the Live Nativity at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church (MVPC). Come by anytime from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9, when the MVPC Courtyard will be transformed into a Bethlehem village. This heartwarming community event recreates the story of the birth of Jesus with live actors and animals. Visitors will be transported back in time 2000 years to Bethlehem as Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, the Three Wise Men, angels, shepherds, and animals bring the Christmas story to life. This event will be held entirely outdoors, but protected from the elements, and there is no cost to attend. Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church is located in Moraga at 10 Moraga Valley Lane. <https://www.lamorindanativity.com/> or call (925) 376-4800.

## Lamorinda's Religious Services

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## Lamorinda Weekly

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**Contact us:**  
Letters to the editor (max 350 words): [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com)  
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**Publishers/Owners:** Andy and Wendy Scheck; [andy@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:andy@lamorindaweekly.com), [wendy@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:wendy@lamorindaweekly.com)  
**Editor:** Jennifer Wake; [jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com)  
**Associate Editor:** Jaya Griggs; [jaya@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:jaya@lamorindaweekly.com)  
**Sports Editor:** [sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com)  
**Advertising:** 925-377-0977, Wendy Scheck; [wendy@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:wendy@lamorindaweekly.com)  
**Staff Writers:** Vera Kochan; [vera@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:vera@lamorindaweekly.com), Sora O'Doherty; [sora@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sora@lamorindaweekly.com), Jon Kingdon; [sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com), Digging Deep: Cynthia Brian; [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com), Food: Susie Iventosch; [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com)  
**Contributing Writers:** Conrad Bassett, Sophie Braccini, Diane Claytor, Jenn Freedman, Moya Stone, Alison Burns, Linda Fodrini-Johnson, Elizabeth LaScala, Lou Fancher, Sharon K. Sobotta, Ashley Dong, Jim Hurley, Casey Scheiner, Toris Jaeger  
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**Mailing address:** Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C #202, Moraga, CA 94556  
Phone: 925-377-0977; email: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)  
**website:** [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com)



# Another fun-filled holiday celebration in downtown Lafayette



Photos Jeff Heyman

Downtown Lafayette once again was filled with holiday cheer as Santa arrived at Plaza Park to greet hundreds of local residents during the annual

"It's a Wonderful Life in Lafayette" celebration on Dec. 3, presented by the Lafayette Chamber, and sponsored by local Lafayette Realtor the Dana

Green Team and Branagh Development, who together along with the City of Lafayette are also sponsoring the twinkle lights downtown.

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# Cultivating community & growing gratitude across generations

By Sharon K. Sobotta

The Lafayette Community Garden is a place that grows far more than seasonal produce. It's a space that with the help of Janet Thomas and a team of volunteers, also cultivates intergenerational learning, community, connection and gratitude where folks from all ages and stages of life have gathered this year to gaze up and wish upon stars or (for local third-graders) to get into the dirt and try their hand at the traditions of the Miwok people, the original inhabitants of the land Lamorindans now occupy.

When Monica Dikova, a senior at Acalanes High School, began exploring what she could do to earn her Girl Scout gold award and help the community she lived in, she turned toward the elders at the community garden. "My mom and I approached the women working the garden to see what projects we might be able to help with. We noticed that

the Miwok dwelling (model) was getting pretty beat up (from the elements), so we offered to build a little village."

With the help of her mother, Dikova began constructing the dwelling out of willow branches in 2021, making them pliable and bending them into the cone-shaped structure, and bringing it to full fruition in 2023.

She was onsite working alongside elders, helping third-graders from Lafayette Elementary School learn about some of the Miwok ways of life earlier this fall as she described her project. "I did this same thing (by visiting this place) when I was in elementary school. I knew it was really important. I had lots of conversations with the elders while I was working on this and learned a lot along the way," Dikova said. "One of the most important things I learned is to appreciate and make sure that you're offering



Family members enjoy stargazing at the Lafayette Community Garden



Photos Sharon K. Sobotta

Monica Dikova, who updated the Miwok exhibit at the community garden with her mom, Desi

blessings and gratitude for whatever nature offers you."

Desi Dikova, Monica's mother and Girl Scout troop leader, beamed with pride as she described the process of working alongside her daughter and the mostly retired volunteer garden tenders.

"We learned that back in the day people counted on nature to help them no matter how difficult their lives were or what challenges they faced. We learned to be grateful. When we were building an authentic new dwelling here at the garden exhibit, we kept thanking the trees for giving us branches, the land for giving us trees, the sun for giving us light," Desi Dikova explained. "There was a time when there was a deer circling the dwelling and a snake guarding it from mice. All these things really stuck together in a way that was beyond a practical level. It made me appreciate this place not only as a site for learning and gardening, but as a spiritual place."

"Teenagers can sometimes get very disconnected from other generations," Desi Dikova added. "I love that this project brought people from different ages together. Most of the gardeners are elders. If the younger generation doesn't

step up to help, how will the traditions be carried forward to future generations?"

Astronomer Isabel Hawkins stood in the middle of about three dozen Lamorindans at the garden on a dark night lit only by the glimmers of stars and the glow of the moon in anticipation of the solar eclipse earlier this fall. After pointing out multiple constellations, Hawkins reminded folks to simultaneously stay connected with the earth while remembering to also look up, gaze, admire and wish upon stars. "The best way to protect the Earth is to touch it. That's why the community garden is the best place in Lafayette," Hawkins said. "I'm so proud to be invited here to remind us that we're not just looking down but we're looking up to be good citizens of the planet. The fact that we have this garden for children to learn where their food comes from is a gift."

Seven-year-old aspiring astrophysicist Evelyn attended the event with her grandma and was starstruck by her experience. "It's amazing," Evelyn says as she tilted her head

back to study the sky. "I learned that consolations may be different things to different people because we can use our imagination."

Evelyn's grandmother, Mary, was pleasantly surprised by how engaged Evelyn was with the late stargazing event. "It is great to be here at night and to have these experts come in and teach us about the universe. Now that we know about the solar eclipse, Evelyn and I will have a grandma/granddaughter watch date," Mary said ahead of the lunar eclipse.

The curator of these events and experiences is the Garden Director Janet Thomas. "I just think now more than ever in our culture, in our time in history, we need grounding to get us back to values that are important to nourish our souls, to nourish our planet, to remind us of the natural rhythms that are important," Thomas said in a previous interview. "I think one has a better respect and enthusiasm about helping the environment if they've had exposure and that's part of our mission. The sense of community that is fostered here is really important."

For information about the Lafayette Community Garden, visit <https://lafayettecommunitygarden.org/>

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# Lamorinda

# OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 17 Issue 21 Wednesday, December 6, 2023



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page D2

*Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian*

## Rolling in the leaves

By Cynthia Brian



Golden leaves of a male Chinese pistache.

Photos Cynthia Brian

*“Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away; Lengthen night and shorten day! Every leaf speaks bliss to me, Fluttering from the autumn tree...” ~Emily Brontë*

There is something so comforting and beautiful about watching the falling leaves of autumn. Winter is just three weeks away and the nights are colder, yet I'm not willing to abandon rolling in the leaves just yet. The sensory, aesthetic, and cultural factors of fall are reasons that I appreciate this season.

The vibrant colors on my deciduous trees range from golden yellow to rustic sienna to persimmon orange to deep crimson, creating a visually stunning and warm landscape. The changing foliage transforms the environment from natural to decorated as we enter the holidays. Within the next few days, the trees will have shed their autumn cloaks and I'll begin hanging boisterous balls of Christmas cheer on their naked branches.

But for now, the rustling sound of leaves underfoot, the scent of decaying foliage, and the crispness of the air evoke a pleasure that only this time of year can provide. Watching the leaves flutter to the ground re-

minds me of butterflies in search of nectar. Like many young people everywhere, raking leaves into a big pile and jumping into it, rolling around with carefree joy, is a fond memory of childhood. As an adult, I am filled with nostalgia for those simple traditions. Never too old to be silly, I make angel wings on a bed of fallen leaves. The power of nature unearths the awe, amazement, and wonder in such an enjoyable endeavor.

Our gardens are winding down for their long winter nap. Landscapes look lonely and lacking color, except for a few favorites. If you've been deadheading your roses, your bushes will continue to bloom and delight through January when it will be time for the heavy pruning. Persimmon and pomegranate fruit are delicious ornaments hanging on trees as they quickly ripen to embellish the forthcoming holiday table. Ripe Hachiya persimmon pulp can be used to make a delectable barbecue sauce that can be frozen for summer gatherings. Pomegranate seeds are high in vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. Add the seeds to salads. They are worth the effort involved.

In preparation for Christmas décor, I am drawn to adding pots of poinsettias to a variety of plantings. Poinsettias look festive anywhere and are readily available in stores. Try tucking samples into your succulent garden or combine them with cyclamen and impatiens.

Before winter arrives, savor the fluttering fall finale, allowing the leaves to speak bliss.



Cyclamen and impatiens planted with pots of poinsettia.



Red-vein Chinese lantern flowers look like holiday ornaments.



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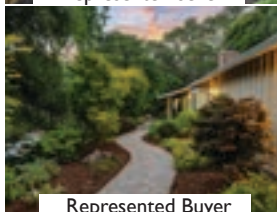
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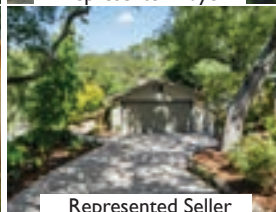
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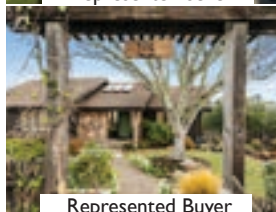
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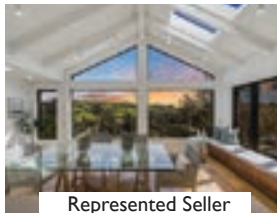
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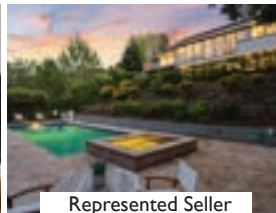
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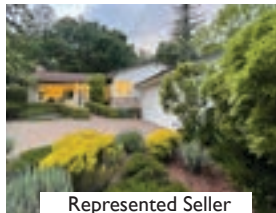
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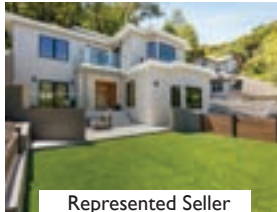
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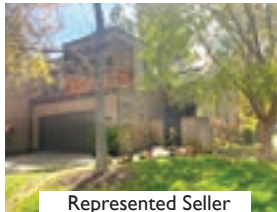
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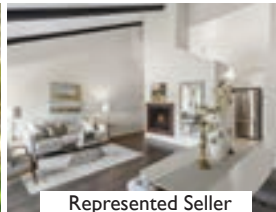
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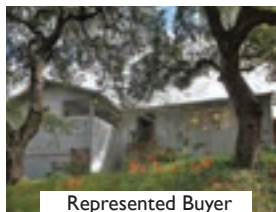
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## Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	16	\$1,180,000	\$3,500,000
MORAGA	5	\$944,000	\$2,700,000
ORINDA	8	\$1,128,000	\$3,100,000

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

- 1 West Arbor Way, \$1,625,000, 3 Bdrms, 1513 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 10-30-23, Previous Sale: \$950,000, 09-15-14
- 900 Brown Avenue, \$1,630,000, 2 Bdrms, 1765 SqFt, 2022 YrBlt, 10-23-23
- 3227 Burton Court, \$3,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2708 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 10-25-23, Previous Sale: \$1,085,000, 04-12-04
- 630 Francis Drive, \$1,180,000, 3 Bdrms, 2180 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 11-02-23, Previous Sale: \$510,000, 03-02-11
- 2265 Hidden Pond Lane, \$1,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 3188 SqFt, 1993 YrBlt, 11-01-23, Previous Sale: \$1,400,000, 07-19-23
- 7 Hidden Valley Road, \$2,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 1803 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 10-24-23
- 22 Hidden Valley Road, \$2,898,000, 3 Bdrms, 3336 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 10-26-23, Previous Sale: \$600,000, 11-11-98
- 10 Julie Highlands Court, \$2,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 3813 SqFt, 1997 YrBlt, 10-25-23, Previous Sale: \$1,675,000, 08-26-20
- 1849 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 2173 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 10-27-23, Previous Sale: \$1,205,000, 07-20-17
- 21 Ruth Court, \$1,825,000, 3 Bdrms, 2060 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$1,175,000, 07-28-15
- 79 Silverwood Drive, \$2,415,000, 3 Bdrms, 2344 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 10-27-23, Previous Sale: \$1,290,000, 12-18-13
- 3079 Sweetbrier Circle, \$1,650,000, 4 Bdrms, 1874 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-31-23
- 3134 Sweetbrier Circle, \$1,460,000, 4 Bdrms, 2273 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 11-01-23
- 3381 West Terrace, \$1,675,000, 3 Bdrms, 1485 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$579,000, 07-07-03
- 1203 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$3,500,000, 6 Bdrms, 5250 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 11-03-23
- 1008 Woodbury Road #202, \$2,675,000, 3 Bdrms, 2468 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 10-31-23, Previous Sale: \$2,260,000, 03-01-21

### MORAGA

- 6 Benedita Place, \$1,110,000, 2 Bdrms, 1845 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 10-30-23, Previous Sale: \$1,180,000, 03-30-22
- 20 Buckingham Drive, \$1,375,000, 3 Bdrms, 1654 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$1,083,000, 07-19-18
- 1501 Camino Peral, \$944,000, 3 Bdrms, 1440 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 11-03-23, Previous Sale: \$800,000, 12-04-20
- 378 Redfield Place, \$1,750,000, 5 Bdrms, 2452 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 11-02-23
- 200 Willowbrook Lane, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 3174 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$2,312,500, 05-15-18

### Orinda

- 24 Altamount Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1877 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 10-30-23, Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 07-11-14
- 56 Davis Road, \$2,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 2262 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 10-24-23, Previous Sale: \$1,471,500, 08-05-16
- 10 Fleetwood Court, \$2,450,000, 4 Bdrms, 2509 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 10-24-23, Previous Sale: \$277,500, 08-01-85
- 192 Hall Drive, \$2,175,000, 3 Bdrms, 2256 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 11-03-23
- 62 Martha Road, \$3,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 3022 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$239,500, 02-01-79
- 27 Oakwood Road, \$2,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 3078 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 10-30-23, Previous Sale: \$2,100,000, 07-23-21
- 249 Overhill Road, \$1,758,000, 4 Bdrms, 2048 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 10-23-23, Previous Sale: \$937,500, 07-10-08
- 9 Wildwood Road, \$1,128,000, 4 Bdrms, 2246 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 11-02-23, Previous Sale: \$825,000, 11-09-05



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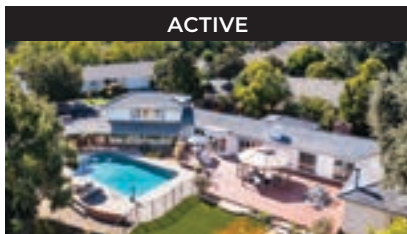
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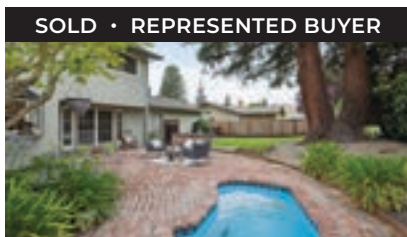
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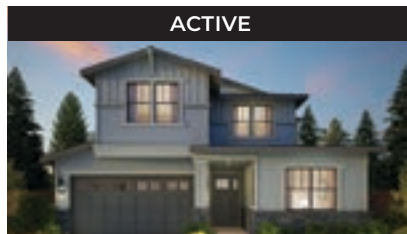


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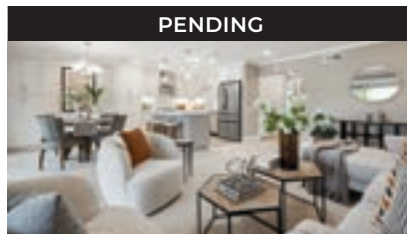
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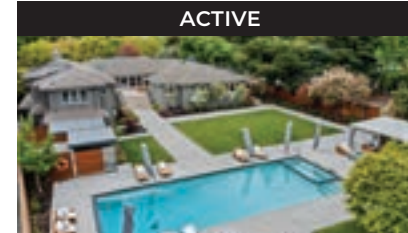


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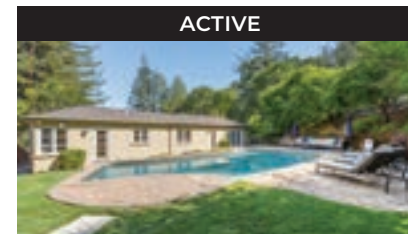


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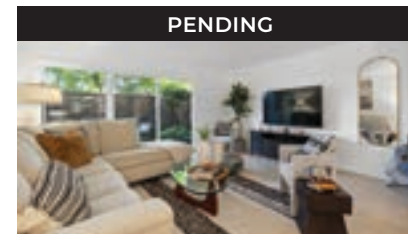
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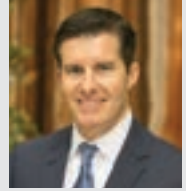
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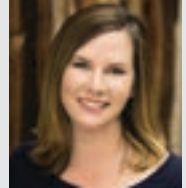
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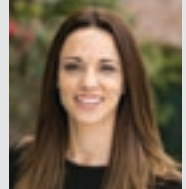
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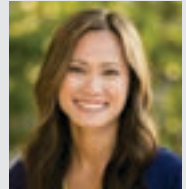
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# Patching holes made easy

By Jim Hurley



Photo Jim Hurley

Do you have a hole from a nail or screw in the wall? You can spackle it or just leave it alone. Did the doorknob bang the wall and make a dent? You could fill the dent or ignore it. Did the doorknob punch through the wall leaving a hole the size of your fist or larger? That requires a patch. The question is: Who will patch it and how?

Patching holes in walls is a very easy DIY if you don't care what that wall looks like after it is patched. Out in your garage, behind the refrigerator or bookcase, inside a closet, the finished surface or texture on the surface really does not matter because no one will ever see it. However, finishing a patch to match the texture of the wall where you will see it, well, that takes time and technique.

The hardware store does have wall patching kits. I don't recommend them. The kit includes a sticky fiberglass mesh that adheres over the hole and is then covered with joint compound, AKA "mud." What the easy-to-follow instructions don't tell you is that you will see that raised 1/16-inch bump on the wall. To get rid of that bump, professionals do what is called "feathering," spreading more texture over a wider radius from the lump until it looks flat. Being generous with the mud is a good thing.

Instead of a patching kit, I square off the hole by cutting out the surrounding sheetrock and nail in a replacement piece. Then I tape the seams, (with paper joint tape, not masking tape) and texture the area to make it match the rest of the wall. This involves a little more time than the fiberglass patch but gives better-looking results. The key to doing this yourself will be understanding how to match that texture.

What is the texture you are going to match? First off, let me say that "Smooth" is a texture. I recently did a shed-to-home-office con-

version with new sheetrock on the walls. I asked the client what texture they wanted, and they said, "no texture." I had to explain that smooth is a texture. Smooth walls are one of the more time-consuming finishes to achieve. Why is that? It takes several passes over the area alternating light sanding with applying mud, (joint compound) and allowing time in between for the mud to dry.

Other textures consist of thinned mud sprayed from a hopper by an air compressor and lightly troweled for a decorative, lumpy surface. The lumpy styles of textures, commonly called "Knock Down" and "Orange Peel," are very good for hiding slight bumps and irregularities in the surface of the wall. The third most common texture, after Orange Peel and Knock Down, is Skip Drag. Skip drag texturing is easy to learn, and is common in homes from the '60s and '70s. With skip drag, you thin the mud with water, put the mixture in your mud-pan, coat your blade with a thin line of mud on the long edge and gently drag it across the wall allowing the blade to randomly skip and leave blotches of mud and gaps.

If you are attempting to match a Knock Down or Orange Peel style, you can buy cans of spray-on texture in the paint department at the big box store. My experience with this stuff has not been positive. The cans cost plenty and frequently clog before they are empty. I called customer service for the manufacturer about the clogged cans. They recommend warming the can in hot water before use to loosen the contents for mixing. Humph, I recommend not spending money on products that don't work. You can match that texture with a sponge. Mix your mud with water to thin it and dab it on the wall with a big sponge or a sponge roller. Let it dry about 15 to 20 minutes and knock it down gently with your trowel. Extend the new texturing over the patched area and beyond, to blend the patch in with the rest of the surface.

The good news about using mud is that it cleans up with water. Let splotches that hit the floor dry and then pop them off with a putty knife. It's all washable. Just remember that once the wall is finished, the bare mud must be primed and painted to seal the mud to the wall. See my article about touch-up paint for this next step.

Patching larger holes in your wall or ceiling is very involved, requiring tools and techniques to accomplish. Watching several YouTube How-To videos might help you get the result you want. Or, you might save time and frustration by hiring a painter or a handyman to take care of the problem for you.

Jim Hurley is an independent handyman with over 25 years of experience in residential repairs. Hopefully this free advice is helpful to someone attempting Do-It-Yourself home repairs. The information presented is intended for informational purposes and for use by persons having appropriate technical skill, at their own discretion and risk.







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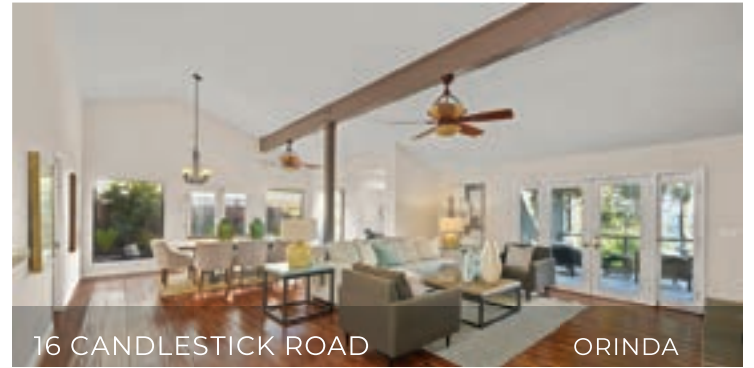
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**Happy Holidays  
to You and Yours...**

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# 'The Real Estate Team Playbook' co-authored by Dana Green

Submitted by Jennifer Ries

Lafayette real estate expert, Dana Green, has joined forces with acclaimed co-authors Steve Shull and Jonathan Lack to introduce "The Real Estate Team Playbook." This collaborative effort represents years of dedication and fulfills Dana's longstanding dream to give back to the industry she holds dear.

Dana Green's impact on the real estate landscape has been profound, marked by her commitment to excellence and a passion for sharing knowledge. "The Real Estate Team Playbook" is a testament to this commitment. Unlike any other resource available, this book is tailor-made for real

estate teams, providing a step-by-step guide to building and leading high-performance teams.

"The Real Estate Team Playbook" fills a crucial gap by offering practical insights and strategies specifically designed for building and leading high-performance real estate teams. The collaboration with Steve Shull, a renowned real estate coach, and Jonathan Lack, a seasoned strategy and operations guru, brings a unique blend of expertise to the playbook.



Photo provided

**Third from left: Real Estate Team Leader, Dana Green with her co-authors, Steve Shull and Jonathan Lack, and Compass' CEO Robert Refkin**

## A naturalist's reflections on November and December

By Toris Jaeger



**The invasive French Broom**

bigstock images

Traditionally, November is the month of being thankful for all of life's gifts. We are thankful

for life, freedom, health, family and friends. We are thankful for a career that sustains financially and makes us happy. We are also thankful for the gifts of Mother Nature!

Clean air, water, land and the contributions of the flora and fauna in the ecosystems of chaparral, grasslands, Oak woodland, wetlands, riparian, mountains and desert and ocean.

Each ecosystem has an animal and plant that needs it.

Let's hope that in the near future we can be thankful for a world with no war and guns killing people and wildlife.

December is the month of giving: We give gifts to our families and friends, and kindness and patience are our great gifts. We can also give back to Mother Nature by planting trees and plants that attract the pollinators, bees,

birds and butterflies. We can pick up litter that will eventually find its way into our creeks to flow into the ocean.

We can also help by removing non-native invasive plants.

At the top of the list, French Broom, Vinca, Star Thistle, Spurge, Orem, Horse weed, Hemlock, and Chinese Parsley. These invasive plants should be pulled up by the roots before they put on seed, and should be placed in your green waste bin.

Some great Natives you may want to plant are: Ceanothus, the Salvias, Manzanita, Toyon, Twin Berry, the Honey suckles Yarrow, and the other Ribes. The Native Milkweeds, Nar-rowleaf and Showy.

Let's do what we can to work with Mother Nature to heal the Earth.



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## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for December

**CHANGE** out your current houseplants with colorful seasonal plants including cyclamen, paperwhites, and poinsettia.

**ADD** color spots of primroses to your front yard.

**BUY** deciduous trees that boast autumn hues now before they are barren. This is the best time of year to determine what showcase trees you want in your yard.

**RAKE** the fallen leaves on your lawn to add to your compost pile.

**PRUNE** roses for the final burst of December blooms before the January pruning begins.

**BE** eco-friendly and wrap gifts in used newspaper with twine. You'll save money while saving the earth.

**COVER** frost-tender plants with burlap or cloth to protect them from freeze and wind damage.

**REPURPOSE** Christmas cards into gift tags.

**PLANT** cover crops to enrich the soil over winter. Good choices include fava beans, alfalfa, clover, and mustard.

**PURCHASE** a living tree for your Hannukah Bush or Christmas tree.

**DECORATE** an indoor plant for the holidays.

**ALLOW** winter's coat of bright berries, rosehips, moss, and boughs to be the inspiration for your decorating.

**CARE** for the birds by keeping feeders clean and filled. Make sure to provide a water source and shelter.

**ROLL** in the leaves. Tap into your inner child. Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



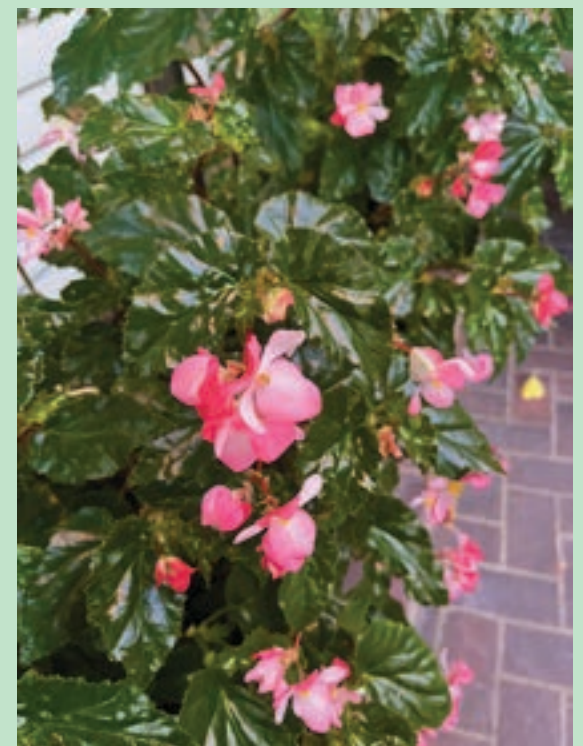
Crimson cestrum shines for December.



Primroses add needed color to the garden after the drizzle.



Aeonium succulent flanked by poinsettia.



Begonias blooming in a bed.

Photos Cynthia Brian





A beautiful mixture of succulents with poinsettias. Photo Cynthia Brian



**Cynthia Brian channels her inner child by rolling in the leaves.**

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) <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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# LAMORINDA'S LEADING INDEPENDENT REAL ESTATE FIRM

## 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



### 2 Stanton Court

This open concept 4 bd/ 3 ba home feels like a brand-new build! Bright & airy w/ 2782 SF, chef's kitchen, wood oak floors & a detached office!

**\$2,250,000**

## ORINDA



### 51 Las Palomas

A light-filled home on a sun-drenched lot features 4 bd/2 ba, a glistening pool & expansive views in the hills of OCC!

**\$1,480,000**

## ORINDA



### 228 El Toyonal

Mid-century 3 bd/ 2 ba gem offers privacy & views of the Briones reservoir. Enjoy being close to downtown Orinda but feel like you are worlds away!

**\$899,000**

## ORINDA



New Listing!

### 8 Hidden Lane

Beautiful 5 bd/3 ba, 4562 sq ft home with wrap-around Sleepy Hollow views and is move-in ready!

**\$1,980,000**

## LAFAYETTE



Pending!

### 3445 Shangri-La Road

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

**\$1,750,000**

## MORAGA



New Price!

### 1379 Camino Peral, Unit B

Spacious 3 bd/ 2.5 ba townhouse features updated kitchen, private patio & convenient access to shopping, restaurants & more!

**\$849,000**

## MORAGA



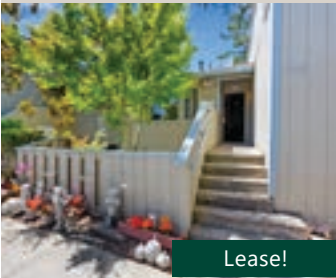
New Listing!

### 211 Corliss Drive

Fabulous family home nestled on prime private .42 acre in sought after Rheem Valley Orchards neighborhood!

**\$1,729,000**

## MORAGA



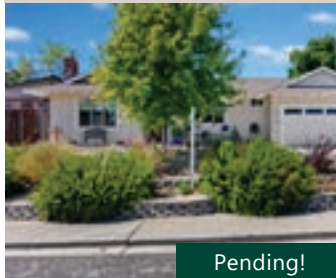
Lease!

### 1944 Ascot Drive

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

**\$3,100/mo.**

## PLEASANT HILL



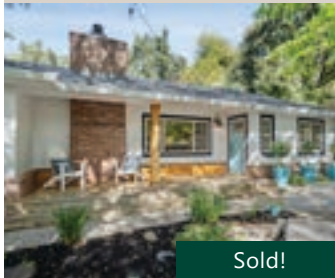
Pending!

### 550 Odin Drive

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

**\$955,000**

## WALNUT CREEK



Sold!

### 1160 Lindell Drive

Located on a mostly flat .35 acre lot, this 3 bd/2 ba Walnut Heights rancher is the home you've been looking for!

**\$1,560,000**

## DANVILLE



### 300 Camaritas Way

Beautiful Shadow Hills 5 bd/ 2.5 ba remodel includes 2,6660 sqft, a chef's kitchen and an Entertainer's dream backyard!

**\$2,095,000**

## The Village Associates:

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