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St. Mary's Championship Rugby Team

Photo Christine Hutchins

Gaels Rugby victorious over Navy in National Championship

By Jon Kingdon

In what would prove to be a tale of two halves, St. Mary's upended the first seeded Midshipmen by a score of 26-22, with Head Coach Tim O'Brien's winning his fifth national championship in seven final matches, in a game on May 4 that was not decided until the final seconds.

With the wind at their back in the first half, St. Mary's jumped out to a 21-0 lead with tries by Schultz nominees Dominic Besag and Erich Storti (who was named Player of the Game) along with a try by John Battle Wilson before Navy, using their maul offense, was able to score late in the first half making the score at halftime 21-5.

Playing in the Houston heat and humidity led to some sloppy ball handling on both sides. At the end

of the first half, Coach O'Brien addressed the obvious: "We need to be more efficient with the ball in our hands" and at the end of the game, O'Brien told the Goff Rugby Report: "I would like to come back here and really play the way we can but, in the end, we did win against a really exceptional Navy team."

St. Mary's scored quickly at the start of the second half with a try by Sosaia Pongi off a great pass by Besag to make the score 26-5, but that would be the end of St. Mary's scoring. Navy would go on to score two tries and a drop goal to end the scoring.

After that, both teams had several opportunities to score, but turnovers and a strong defense by both sides kept the game scoreless the rest of the way.



Kaipono Kayoshi running through Navy Photo Rebecca Harper

With Navy close to the try zone past the 80-minute mark, a big hit jarred the ball into the hands of Besag and he kicked it dead to clinch the victory.

The Gaels line play was led by Battle Wilson and lock Lleyton Delzell. O'Brien's quote after the BYU game about all of his linemen was equally valid against Navy: "They guard those fringes with their lives. Even though they lack size, they dominate in the contact area."

For graduate students, Erich Storti and Kaipono Kayoshi, playing in their last game for St. Mary's, the championship game was a great capstone to their careers at St. Mary's.

... continued on Page 11

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Transitional kindergarten is open to all Lafayette families

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Teacher Katie Norris, Happy Valley Elementary School in Lafayette, gets her Transitional Kindergarten class started in the morning with carpet time.

There is huge growth in transitional kindergarten (TK) enrollment in Lafayette, according to Betsy Balmat, Lafayette School District Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. For the coming school year, 2024/25, Lafayette will have eight TK

classrooms across all four Lafayette elementary schools.

Balmat emphasized that TK is a resource for families to make sure that their children are provided with the pre-school learning foundation the district wants children to have. ... continued on Page 3

Lamorinda — honk if you love trucks, trucks, and more trucks

By Vera Kochan

Seeing trucks up close and personal has recently become a national craze. Places like Las Vegas, Nevada; Jackson, Mississippi; Lafayette, Louisiana; North Haven, Connecticut; and the state of Hawaii have all boasted truck-touching events in recent months.

Closer to home, Los Angeles, Long Beach, San Jose, and Oakland are some of the California cities that have jumped on the bandwagon. And, not to be outdone, Lamorinda has given its residents the opportunity to not only "Touch a Truck", as the event is more commonly known, but permission to sit inside some of the behemoths and honk their horns loud enough to blast the clouds out of the sky.

Orinda was the first in our tri-city area to host such an event on April 13. The Rotary Club of Lafayette held "Keep on Truckin'" April 27, with admission sales that benefited Shelter, Inc., a local nonprofit



Photo Vera Kochan

Lafayette residents enjoy a bevy of big trucks.

dedicated to helping homeless and hungry families.

"The event was a tremendous success with an estimated 1,000 attendees, mostly families with young children ages 3-8," stated Rotary Co-Chairman Buddy Brodwin. "Everyone was so nice, ex-

cited, and grateful for perfect weather and a truly fun event. I suspect Rotary will make this a yearly event. We think Shelter, Inc. will be more than pleased at our donation to them, as well! For our first time out, I'd say we hit a home run!"

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Civic News	Life in Lamorinda	Summer Camps	Sports	Our Homes OH1-OH12
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**Lafayette Public Meetings
 City Council**

Regular Meeting: Monday, May 13, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Planning Commission Meeting
 Monday, May 20, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Design Review
 Monday, May 13, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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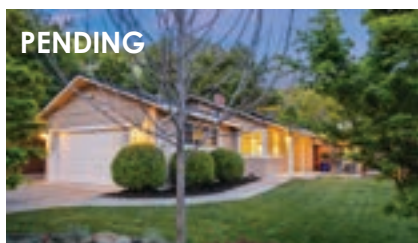


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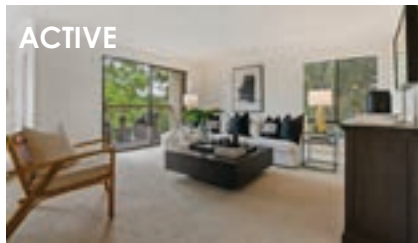
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Revisions for Housing Element approved by city council

By Lou Fancher

In a Housing Element update brought before city council April 22 by Planning and Building Director Greg Wolff and Housing Consultant Diana Elrod, Wolff said five meetings with the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) had brought a handful of remaining issues to be resolved. He expressed hope that after direction from council, the city might soon receive from HCD a letter indicating Lafayette's Housing Element (HE) is in compliance with State law.

The four issues highlighted by HCD and actions needing direction from the council to staff at the conclusion of the meeting were:

1. Including 949 Moraga Rd. in the opportunity sites inventory.
2. Changing income distribution levels for vacant sites.
3. Modifying the map to a 1/2 mile buffer from Mt. Diablo Boulevard instead of the Downtown Specific Plan Boundary.
4. Affirming the Revised Housing Element redline edits as directed by Council.

Elrod introduced the first topic for discussion: whether or not to keep the 35,000-square-ft. city-owned site at 949 Moraga Rd. on the inventory list. "We would project 23 below market rate units on this site. Keeping it in the inventory would require significant staff time and cost based on timing, etc., as outlined by HCD. Essentially, they want us to commit to making it happen within the eight-year period. Leaving it out would give the City more flexibility to implement other programs in the Housing Element and would not materially impact the inventory," Elrod emphasized the significant community interest and input indicates high support for the site being developed for housing. "Even though it's a heavy lift, it's of significant import and therefore we should keep it on the inventory," she said. Keeping the site on the list would help the city to better meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) income distribution thresholds for vacant sites.

HCD has raised concerns about overloading sites with too many lower income divisions, in addition to not meeting RHNA's requirements for distributing lower income units throughout the city. With a 30-30-20-20 distribution equation very low income (VLI); low income (LI); moderate income (MOD) and above moderate income (AMOD) on all sites except Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), which were included in part in the final tallies, Elrod said the city would meet RHNA and HCD guidelines and requirements.

Wolff discussed the applicable geographical extent of the downtown area included in the HE for Supporting Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Action 2.5. HCD recommended expanding the original map by 1/2 mile, which would create an area that was "quite extensive." An alternative map with less increase was presented and received questions from HCD about its substantiality. Ultimately, HCD approved the alternative map that found a "middle balance," according to Wolff. A side-by-side graphic illustrated the difference in coverage area.

The remaining issue related to FBOs, and which organizations had stated interest or disinterest in participating, or had failed to reply. The program is entirely optional for FBOs; the city is only required by the State to provide information about developments on FBO properties. Nine sites in Lafayette suitable for potential housing development, Wolff said, had been contacted on multiple occasions. Two expressed interest, five did not respond, and two were disinterested.

Additionally, Elrod said staff sought approval to make redline edits to the HE before submitting it to HCD for the hoped-for final review before certification.

In discussions, Wolff said the 30-30-20-20 allocation for vacant sites (instead of the 40-40-10-10 distribution used by some cities upon HCD standards) resulted in less risk of Lafayette failing to meet density requirements and other aspects necessary for compliance. The map of the area included for rezoning also received considerable attention, with council especially asking for details clarifying legal matters and calling for information provided to the public be clear, and outreach well-managed.

Public comments centered on various allocation suggestions and models, the use or non-use of "builder's remedy" by developers (the city has received no applications for the option at this time), and request to council to consider economic spreadsheets and other submitted response from members of the community. Returning the conversation to the council, the members quickly approved retaining the 949 Moraga Rd. site on the

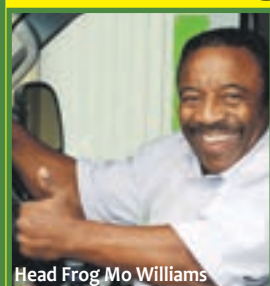
inventory list. The council was more divided about the 30-30-20-20 allocation matrix; council member Susan Candell suggested that avoiding upzoning the downtown area would provide time to observe what is happening to jurisdictions further forward in the process. Elrod said HCD makes no distinctions between very low income and low income designations and aggregates those figures in its designations. The city has erred on the side of caution, and has made the two categories explicit in the HE in an effort to provide complete transparency. Wolff pointed out that annually, the city must use the more detailed allocations in year-end reports and Housing Element summaries.

Going back and re-engineering the inventory list, the lower income allocations, the FBOs included to meet distributions to meet the AFFH requirements, and FBOs used for mobility actions, changing density numbers for vacant or non-vacant sites, and other factors would be complex, costly, require considerable staff time, and impact the timing for receiving certification from HCD.

Ultimately, the council decided the FBOs be included on the inventory list; except the properties not interested and the organizations that have not responded. Mayor Gina Dawson requested staff communications with all FBOs are specific, emphasize the optionality of the program, and be widespread enough to ensure all the entities have full information and are well-served.

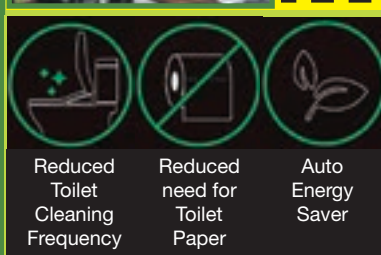
Dawson led a final discussion, taking a "straw vote" and any additional comments from the council. Council member Karl Anduri made a motion for the final vote to direct the staff to make revisions and submit the HE to HCD for review. "I move that we direct staff to include 949 Moraga Rd., use 30-30-20-20 for the vacant sites, use the 1/2 mile for Mt. Diablo Boulevard, and make final minor edits based on those changes and submit to HCD for reviewing following a seven-day public comment period." The staff's recommendations were adopted and the measure passed by a 4-1 vote, with Candell the sole "nay" vote.

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Council decides on updated tree ordinance

By Lou Fancher

Senior Planner Arly Cassidy brought a staff report updating the city's Tree Protection Ordinance to the meeting on April 22. In a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, staff requested the council and commissioners discuss and provide direction on several key elements relevant to the city's declared priority of addressing wildfire safety.

The key issues outlined in the update included adding language clarifying which trees are protected by the ordinance, streamlining the permit and improvement process for removing trees, measures for balancing environmental and aesthetic benefits of trees when assessing fire risks and fuel management, delineating distinctions between trees in the downtown and trees in residential neighborhoods, resolving existing and future conflicts between trees and utilities/infrastructure, particularly in the downtown, mitigating planting requirements and enforcement, creating recommended tree lists with approved species and planting seasons, and other technical matters.

Staff has been working with planning consultant Healthier Coleman to update the ordinance. She asked for feedback on specific issues and for overarching amendments necessary to proceed with the proposed work plan.

The ordinance was adopted in 2003 and amended in 2010 and 2014. During the subsequent decades since it was adopted, the council has gained experience and received feedback from the public about ways the ordinance can be improved, according to Coleman. In 2023, the city updated its Safety Element (SE) and established policies related to

defensible space. One specific part of the SE includes references to the fire risks created by dead, dying, and non-native trees. Among the priorities for the FY2024-25 is wildfire safety - giving reason for the project to proceed immediately to address the key issues. As part of the staff request to move forward promptly, the report emphasized having adequate time to receive public comments and to research and analyze the alternatives as the ordinance develops and a final draft is prepared for council approval.

Coleman said meetings with stakeholders are ongoing and will include the fire department, community groups, the public, and elected officials directly involved in the issues. She said city meetings open to the public are a major component of the outreach, and including the announcements in the city's "Weekly Roundup" will invite more feedback from the community.

Questions from the planning commission began with a request for staff to provide greater clarity on specific language in the ordinance and the ordering of priorities identified as key issues. Council members asked about additions, word definitions, narratives expanded to include new elements, and greater clarity related to CalFires' "protected space" terminology and the SE's "defensible space" references. Economic issues related to fire insurance and impact on zoning were also introduced as topics council said should be addressed.

Public comments highlighted the importance and value of receiving input from professional arborists and master gardeners when

developing the ordinance, consideration of the cost of tree removal for homeowners, and the positive and negative impacts of a tree protection ordinance on fire insurance policies.

Staff plans to consult with nearby cities to learn about their tree protection ordinances. Council member Susan Candell said the list should include cities in high fire risk zones similar to Lafayette's location. Mayor Gina Dawson urged staff to include Orinda and Moraga because their information and input would be highly relevant and directly applicable.

In response to timing questions posed by staff, the commissioners and council supported staff proceeding with the planned ordinance update without delay. Council member Wei-Tai Kwok said, "What we didn't know in 2003, when the ordinance was first done, was that—fast forward to today—that 21 of the last 22 years measured have been the hottest years since we established this. The last ten years have been the hottest on our planet and last year, 2023, was the hottest of all." He encouraged everyone to look at the ordinance as a plan for the next 20 years that is necessary for making the community safe. He emphasized using the two-word phrase, "public safety," as the master approach for organizing thoughts and discussions on the complex decisions and issues as the project moves forward.

The staff's request to proceed was approved by council, with emphasis on suggested amendments and keeping in mind the priority of getting the TPO update done right above completing it swiftly.

Transitional kindergarten is open to all Lafayette families

... continued from Page 1

TK is geared to provide accommodations for a wide range of student needs, and provides a curriculum under the universal pre-school plan for academic growth, which includes learning letters and numbers, as well as a focus on play-based learning first and foremost. In addition, TK supports toilet training, and the district has to make sure that teachers are prepared to navigate the physical, social, and emotional needs of very young children.

Although Lafayette began offering two TK classes in 2019, the program suffered from the effects of the Covid pandemic in 2020/21 school year, but came back in 2022/23 with four classrooms. This year, 2023/24, they still have four classrooms, but there is one at each elementary school in the district, and following renovations to meet the requirements for TK classrooms, Lafayette will have eight TK classrooms in the next school year.

Balmat would like parents to understand

that TK is a part of the public school system to which students in the district have a right. Unlike private pre-schools, there are no deadlines, no waitlists, no lotteries, or other impediments to being enrolled for TK. If a child meets the age and residence requirements, that child will be enrolled in a TK class, if their parents so desire. TK, like kindergarten, is not mandatory, however.

For the 2024/2025 school year, children who will turn five years old between Sept. 2 and June 2 are eligible, and by 2025/26, any child who turns four by Sept. 1 will be eligible. New student registration for TK-5 is open through May 24, and will later resume on July 8.

TK students are either on an "early" or "late" schedule, with those on the early schedule arriving at 8:15 a.m. and finishing at 11:45 a.m., and those on the late schedule arriving at 9:15 a.m. and finishing at 12:45 p.m. Before and after school daycare is offered on site by private providers. Depending on financial need or other needs of the family, Balmat explained that the

state provides financial support for extended nine hour care.

TK students also receive food from the universal breakfast and lunch program, but they don't eat with the other students or in their classrooms; they may consume food at recess or in after school care. TK and Kindergarten students have their own playgrounds, separate from those for older children in the school, but they also participate in school buddy programs, which pair up younger and older students. Additionally, TK students are fully included in school activities. For example, they receive instruction from school art teachers and music teachers.

Balmat emphasized that Lafayette is now fully staffed for TK and for the increased need for the next year. She praised their "amazing educators," who "trained for TK and continue to grow and learn about development needs of these students." She added, "It's a different approach to teaching. Teachers are making this shift possible for our kids to really shine."

To enroll, see www.lafsd.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=3822615&type=d&pREC_ID=2524664

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Moraga Citizens' Network: www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

General Plan Workshop deemed a success

By Vera Kochan

The Town of Moraga invited residents and stakeholders to attend its April 30 Envision Moraga 2040 General Plan Community Workshop. The event was held at Saint Mary's College and drew approximately 60 individuals. Planning Director Afshan Hamid stated, in her opening remarks to the attendees, "The community wanted to provide feedback to the town, and that's what this is all about."

Hamid also mentioned that long-range planning helps the town protect its hillsides and ridgelines; preserves the semi-rural character; achieves attractive infill development; manages transportation and infrastructure; prepares for emergencies; and protects Moraga's quality of life.

Consultant Barry Miller's overview of the workshop's format gave everyone an idea of what was expected from them with regards to each station. After 15 minutes, a "horn" would indicate that it was time for a rotation to another station, thus keeping the groups moving and eventually providing feedback at all four stations. After each station visit, passport cards were marked, and at the end of the event gift cards from various town businesses were awarded for those lucky enough to have their card drawn. Before the station visiting process began, there was a brief Q & A session. Also in attendance to answer any

questions were Mayor Teresa Onoda, Vice Mayor Steve Woehleke, Town Manager Scott Mitnick, Moraga Police Chief Jon King, and Lieutenant Steve Borbely.

The workshop's focus was on four elements of the General Plan: Sustainability, Economic Vitality, Transportation, and Community Design. When residents first checked-in, Administrative Assistant Suzie Mele handed out tote bags and numbered name tags, which would determine the group someone was assigned to for station participation. The interactive stations each involved some form of feedback that would later be evaluated by staff. Economic Vitality was manned by Hamid, Sustainability and Resilience was hosted by Associate Planner Mio Mendez, Community Design was operated by Principal Planner Brian Horn, and Transportation was helmed by Public Works Director/Town Engineer Shawn Knapp.

The Economic Vitality station focused on sustaining existing businesses while attracting new ones, adapting to workplace changes, maintaining fiscal health, and working collaboratively with SMC. Visitors to this station were asked to place post-it notes on an aerial-view map of one of the town's shopping centers with comments specific to improvements they would like to see implemented.

At the Sustainability and Resilience station, it was noted that Moraga's existing Plan was prepared before climate change and sustainability were crucial issues.



Photo courtesy Scott Mitnick

General Plan Workshop attendees listen to a presentation before breaking into interactive stations.

Questions to keep in mind for the attendees were, "How can Moraga be a more sustainable community?"; and "How can we be more resilient to wildfire and other effects of climate change?" Participants were given dot stickers and asked to place them after a variety of questions by ranking them on a scale of low to high in importance.

With regards to Community Design, the new General Plan will provide guidance on the "look and feel" of development in the two commercial areas. This station had four panels of photos exhibiting various types and styles of architecture, featuring 48 images in total. Visitors to this station were given a scorecard and asked to rate each image with respect to the possibility that these styles could be incorporated into Moraga's future building facades.

For Transportation, this element will be updated to address future transportation needs. It would include bicycling, walking, and public transit, in addition to managing vehicular traffic. Also

included would be safety and technology issues. At this station, residents were given five dot stickers and tasked with placing them below only five out of 15 statements listed that ranked as the most important to them. "Ensure the safety of children walking or bicycling to and from school through 'safe routes to school' programs, including improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes near schools", was one example. Another was, "Improve connections between Moraga's two commercial centers and nearby neighborhoods, making it easier to get to these areas without driving."

At each of the stations, attendees were encouraged to ask staff additional questions and/or fill out comment cards. Once the station visits were completed, everyone reconvened to their seats for a final Q & A session before the event ended.

"The town staff was very impressed with the community turn out for this well run Envision Moraga 2040 General Plan Workshop," said

Knapp. "The community was very engaged on the topic of transportation, asking me many questions and recommending where the Town should focus transportation and roadway safety improvements."

"The success of the evening was measured by the interest the community took in visiting the stations, and that most residents stayed for the entire evening," Hamid stated. "The residents were engaged in meaningful conversations with each other and staff throughout the workshop. They were listened to and were part of the process. Also, there was a diversity of demographics at the workshop."

"The feedback provided from this meeting will be added to that received from other meetings (well over a dozen) Afshan has held this year," replied Mitnick. "All of this information will be compiled and shared with Town Council at a future council meeting as part of the General Plan Update process. There are more public outreach meetings to go."

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Town Council adopts resolution awarding \$5M street rehab construction contract

By Vera Kochan

One of the important Town Council Goals has been to improve the condition of Moraga's streets. This project is included in the Adopted Fiscal Year

(FY) 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget. Funding sources will come from the Gas Tax, Measure J, Measure J 28C, Garbage Impact, and Measure K.

In October 2021, the town awarded a design contract to Harris and Associates, Inc. to develop the Pavement Design Report aimed at developing a multi-year rehabilitation of all residential streets with a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of under 50.

The results of the "Worst-First" pavement management approach were presented to the Town Council in March 2022, with a plan to perform the rehabilitation



Photo courtesy Moraga Public Works Department

over three seasons (2022 through 2024), based on available funding and rising construction costs. Included in Harris' reports were the designs for pavement, storm drain, and concrete improvements.

In January 2024, Public Works Director/Town Engineer

Shawn Knapp recommended bidding the 2023 and 2024 street rehab projects as a single project with a start date in 2024, to take advantage of cost savings in both construction and construction management services.

... continued on Page 5


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Town Council Meetings
Wed., May 8, 6:30 p.m.
Wed., May 22, 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission:
Tuesday, May 21, 6:30 p.m.

Park and Recreation Commission: Monday, May 13, 6:30 p.m.

Springbook — a user manual to help family members move forward in a loved one’s absence

By Vera Kochan



Photos courtesy Dustie Robeson

Moraga resident Dustie Robeson developed Springbook to guide families after a loved one's passing

Is your family prepared to handle your estate and all that it entails in the event of your incapacitation or passing? Surprisingly, many are not.

Enter: Springbook. The brainchild of Moraga resident Dustie Robeson, who's had 16

years of experience as a professional home organizer, Springbook is “a comprehensive information collection system that ensures no one is left guessing their way through an already emotional, overwhelming, and difficult time.”

The user manual gives your loved ones all the information they will need to settle your affairs. Filled out correctly it will provide information such as access to your phone, computers, safe, and spare keys. It should include the information on how to locate all your assets, liabilities, insurance policies, and it should provide informed medical advice for your children. The information can help them to contact your employer’s benefits administrator and human resources. Fill the user manual with information on how to close your online accounts and subscriptions, and how to find essential documents like deeds,

military discharge paperwork, Social Security cards, and car titles.

Robeson decided to call her business Springbook after an encounter with a friend’s father who had purchased something similar and gave it the facetious name of “Death Book”. Wanting to make her version more cheerful, “Springbook” was born.

“I wasn’t depressed while I was working on this,” stated Robeson. “It was very comforting, and I like creating order out of chaos. I’m on a mission to bring the conversation to light.” She laughed, “I’m a real hit at parties.”

According to a Gallup poll from 2016, only 44% of Americans reported having a will that indicates how their estate should be distributed after their death. A survey conducted by AARP in 2017, revealed that nearly 60% of American adults do not have a will or other estate planning documents

in place. A 2021 survey conducted by Caring.com found that 67% of American adults do not have a will, and that among adults with children under the age of 18, 78% do not have a will.

Robeson understands that the topic of death can be a difficult one to discuss, “Kids are uncomfortable, because it sounds like they’re being greedy, and parents are uncomfortable, because they’re not ready to disclose everything to their kids. You shouldn’t wait to do this when you’re old. A good time to get organized is when you send your kids to college – this is when you should do estate planning. It’s not something that’s just for older people, and you should embed that in your children. Springbook fills a gap in the legal estate planning process.”

Robeson added, “Unfortunately an estate plan, if you have one, won’t be enough to make the transition easy on



your loved ones. Legal documents are absolutely essential, but they lack the specificity heirs need when they actually walk into their loved one’s home following a death and have to start locating assets and insurance policies, selling cars, contacting online accounts, caring for pets, planning a memorial service, and so much more. Having the

authority to do this is one thing, but being able to do it efficiently and easily is something altogether different, and that is what Springbook provides.”

Springbook comes with a binder kit and Digital Springbook Documents with directions. For more information call: (925) 878-5385 or visit: www.myspringbook.com.

Street rehab construction contract

... continued from Page 4

Project bid documents were advertised through various sources on March 9, with six bids received and opened on April 11. With the town’s Engineer’s Estimate of \$5,354,273, Bay Cities

Paving & Grading, Inc. from Concord, California (a family-owned business since 1946), was the lowest bidder, coming in at \$5,346,177. The total project budget will be \$5,755,983 after staff eliminated some costs from the construction

contract and added a 10% contingency of \$534,617.

According to Knapp’s April 24 staff report, during the street rehab process, repairs are expected for some gutters, curbs, sidewalks, and related “sidewalk

areas”. Residents can also expect the repair of storm drains under several streets to “increase the pavement’s longevity. Existing traffic striping and signage was to be replaced in kind, if damaged or missing. Separately, the town is

working on the designs for multiple safety improvement projects where some work limits are overlapping some portions of the Project.”

The Town Council voted 3-0 (Council Members Kerry Hillis and David Shapiro were ab-

sent) to adopt the resolution awarding the street rehabilitation construction contract to Bay Cities. Staff executed the contract immediately - construction is expected to begin in June.

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 Phone (925) 253-4200
Chamber of Commerce:
 www.orindachamber.org
The Orinda Association:
 www.orindaassociation.org

City Council Regular Meeting:
 Tuesday, May 21, 7 p.m.
 Orinda Library Auditorium
Planning Commission
 Wednesday, May 29, 7 p.m.
 Orinda Library Auditorium
Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission
 Wednesday, May 8, 6:30 p.m.
 Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way

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Orinda Council updated on Miner Road contraflow exercise

By Sora O'Doherty

On April 30, the Orinda City Council received an update on the contraflow traffic system on Miner Road, including an exercise conducted in December of last year. The exercise showed that some people were not deterred by signs from turning against the flow of traffic when the contraflow was in force.

City Manager David Biggs, who is also the Emergency Management Director, concluded that more education is necessary to get people to realize what the contraflow system is and how it works, as well as deploying staff to manage the intersections along Miner Road to prevent anyone from turning in the wrong direction.

The contraflow system was conceived by the Moraga Orinda Fire Department and designed to enable Miner Road to function as a one way street in the event of an emergency evacuation being necessary. The idea for such con-

traflow systems arose from the tragic fate of places like Paradise where many people died trying to get out of the way of a raging wildfire where there was only a single road leading to the place.

Miner Road is an arterial route in Orinda which is also deemed an evacuation route. On Dec. 2, the city conducted an exercise intended to see how quickly the one way system could be set up and how successful it might be. According to the update to the council, the results were mixed. The most successful aspect of the exercise was deploying a trailer that had been stocked with all the necessary signage for the counterflow. As a result, set up was quickly, taking only 15 minutes to place signs at all intersections along Miner Road from Lombardy Lane to Camino Pablo. Once the signage was in place, the exercise lasted for 45 minutes.

Unfortunately, the exercise did not prove to be 100% successful, with some residents turning the wrong way onto Miner Road, despite the signs. Council member Janet Riley wondered if the language on the signs, which read, "Reverse lane in effect when indicated," and "Reverse lane in effect," with a no turn arrow, might not have communicated clearly to drivers. She strongly suggested that more forceful language is required, such as "Danger, Keep Out!" or something like that. The danger is that, in the event of an actual evacuation, if one car turns the wrong way it would most likely lead to an accident that would severely impact the flow of cars using the evacuation route, perhaps affecting thousands of people.

When the signs were placed in the middle of a road, they failed to stop drivers from turning in either direction. City Manager David Biggs

opined that the only effective way to prevent people from turning onto Miner Road in opposition to the one-way flow of evacuation traffic was to have a person, be it a staff member or a member of Orinda Police Department, standing in the intersection to direct traffic.

Biggs confirmed that when called upon to return to Orinda in the event of an emergency, most staff could make it back within a half an hour. In the event of a fire, Biggs stated, the city would call staff back to the city, as well as getting mutual aid from neighboring areas. Council Member Inga Miller, who participated in the December exercise, agreed that only staff can control drivers from turning the wrong way onto Miner Road when contraflow is in effect.

The permanent signs are solar powered and are checked monthly by city staff to make sure that they do work.

Makers' Market held at Theatre Square

By Sora O'Doherty



Makers' Market, Theatre Square, Friday May 3.



James Duff and City Manager David Biggs

Taylor Marlatte of Bay Area Makers Markets joined forces with Orinda's Theatre Square, facilitated by Orinda planner Darin Hughes, to host a Makers' Market on the evening of Friday, May 3. Although Marlatte has put together larger groups of vendors in some locations, she kept Theatre Square numbers low, with under two dozen vendors offering their products. The weather was fine, and, as Marlatte pointed out, Theatre Square restaurants were doing a brisk trade, so there was a sufficient audience browsing the market, perhaps thinking of Mothers' Day, coming up

on May 12. The City of Orinda participated, with a table promoting the upcoming June 1 Wildfire Prevention and Safety Fair, staffed by James Duff, the city's education and outreach coordinator, and David Biggs, City Manager. Other vendors included Lakenda Wallace, purveyor of natural vegan perfumes for the body, home and spirit, and Mood and Mind, featuring hand drawn designs by Kayla. Navya Dandu of Golden Gate Clothing Co. offered colorful apparel and accessories made by women in Bangladesh. Rechic, where Marlatte held her first mak-

ers' market in Orinda, had a table, as did Orinda floral shop Garden Nest and Fastened, Permanent Jewelry. Also present was EM/Powered by WMN, a Bay Area group devoted to highlighting women entrepreneurs.

Marlatte began organizing outdoor events for small businesses in 2021. After Covid, outdoor venues appealed to folks who wanted to get out of the house but preferred fresh air. She currently has up to 150 different vendors upon whom she can call for events and hopes to have several additional markets in Orinda before the end of the year.

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Pouring rain didn't dampen MOFD Station 45 open house

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Orinda resident Kim Chu and her 21-month old son enjoyed exploring the big red fire engine at MOFD Station 45's open house on Saturday, May 4

Moraga Orinda Fire Department (MOFD) Station 45 pulled out all its trucks for an open house

on Saturday May 4. Although rain continued to pour down throughout the event, they had a great turnout, with many families enjoying the free hot dog and hamburger lunch served up by fire fighters, letting their children sit in the driver's seat of a big red fire engine, and browsing information provided by many local safety related agencies.

Some Community groups who had information tables included the Community Emergency Response Team, the American Red Cross, The Lamorinda Area Radio Interest Group, Rescue 1, East Bay Municipal Utility District, and Pacific Gas and Electricity. The City of Orinda was represented by James Duff, Education and Communications Coordinator.

Fire fighters, including Dennis Rein, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, and MOFD Board members Mike Roemer, Steve Danziger, and Craig Jorgens, mingled with the crowd, chatting about the district and fire safety issues.



Orinda teacher of the year is a finalist for county teacher of the year

By Sora O'Doherty

Michelle Goode, an inclusion specialist at Orinda Union School District, was named one of five Orinda teachers of the year and is also one of four finalists from whom two will be selected as Contra Costa County Teachers of the Year. The 52nd annual Contra Costa County Teachers of the Year celebration will be held at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek on Thursday, Sept. 19.

In addition to Goode, who is a multi-site teacher, the teachers of the year for the Orinda elementary schools were named at the OUSD meeting on April 15. The teachers of the year are Kelly Trestrail, Second Grade Teacher, Del Rey Elementary School; Heather Tiraschi, Fourth Grade Teacher, Glorietta Elementary School; Jennifer Plumley, Second Grade Teacher, Sleepy Hollow Elementary School; and Dianna Burns, Kindergarten Teacher, Wagner Ranch Elementary School. In addition, Alison Waterman, Sixth Grade Core Teacher, was named teacher of the year for Orinda Intermediate School.

Goode is based at Del Rey elementary, but also serves students at Sleepy Hollow, Wagner Ranch, and Glorietta elementary schools. She says that she is dedicated to the concept that all students belong in school, including students with disabilities. She collaborates with



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Michelle Goode, Del Rey Elementary School, finalist candidate for Contra Costa County Teacher of the Year.

teachers about the best practices for inclusion. Goode had high praise for OUSD's instructional assistants who work in the classrooms.

After earning an undergraduate degree in journalism at Boston University, she obtained her teaching credential at San Francisco State, where she loved the program. OUSD was her first teaching position, and she is in her eighth year there. She lives in Martinez.

She notes that "A lot of school districts are moving towards more inclusive programs where people who are neurotypical get more experience with people who may be different." She added, "If I weren't a strong advocate for inclusiveness, I wouldn't

be in this job, but I think that everything has to be student centered and individualized; no one size fits all" in education.

Goode explained that everyone wants to feel that they belong, and even when full inclusion won't work, there are ways for those with disabilities to have access to their neurotypical peers. She conducts what she calls "push in" or "pull out" programs that either help a student within the classroom or outside of it. She affirms her belief that the school and the parents are partners, and if parents aren't happy, she is willing to come to the table to discuss options. She also feels strongly that kids should be attending their local schools.

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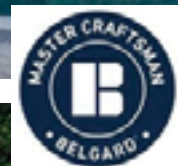
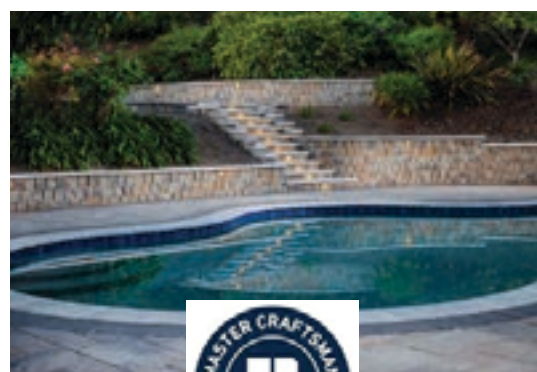


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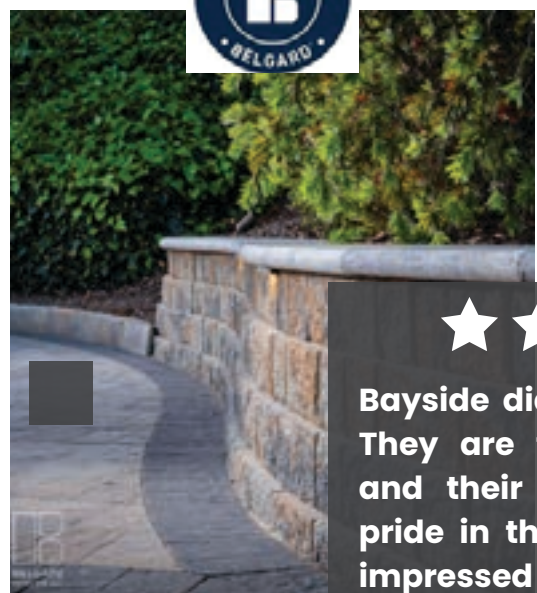
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Letters to the editor

Speed bumps

This is Charlie from Acalanes High School and I live on Happy Valley

Road. I wanted to reach out and express my happiness about the speed bumps placed near Happy Valley Elementary school.

I've always thought people have driven too fast on the road, especially being near a school. Since these have been established, I

have noticed the driving on the road be significantly safer and slower. Continuing to add these speed bumps on unsafe roads will make Lafayette a safer place for pedestrians and bikers, along with other drivers. Thanks!

Charlie Peatross
Lafayette

ful.

It is important to reaffirm that ours is a community comprised of incredibly compassionate individuals. The protests taking place on Moraga Road are not evidence to the contrary. These community members are advocating that minors should not be subject to medical interventions such as puberty blockers, hormones, or surgery, and that kids should instead wait until they reach adulthood before consenting to undergo irreversible procedures.

This is not indicative of animus towards the LGBTQ community, but is consistent with the emerging trend worldwide. Many European nations that are fiercely protective of LGBTQ and were early adopters of the gender affirmation model have reversed course and no longer allow such procedures on minors. The

recent publication of the Cass Review in the British Medical Journal (cass.independent-review.uk) criticized earlier studies, found that evidence supporting early medical interventions for trans-identifying kids was "remarkably weak," and advocated a more holistic assessment and treatment plan. The study admonished those on both sides of this medical debate to consider the developing evidence objectively rather than vilify those with contrary views, which is harmful to those suffering from gender dysphoria and parents seeking the best treatment options for their children.

Our community leaders should heed this advice, maintain a position of neutrality, and accommodate diverse points of view on this topic. Mark Lonergan, Lafayette Sarah Lind, Lafayette Robert Lavoie, Lafayette

Protests along Moraga Road in Lafayette

Conspicuously absent from the April 24 article about the Moraga Road protests is an explanation of what is being protested. The article implies that the LGBTQ community is being targeted and reported that one community member characterized the protestors and their signs as "hateful" at a Lafayette City Council meeting. Yet, the article never explains the messaging on the signs or how that message is hate-

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 for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C #202, Moraga, CA 94556

Lamorinda — honk if you love trucks, trucks, and more trucks



Photo Vera Kochan

Everyone got a chance to get behind the wheel.

... continued from Page 1

Expert Tree Services lifted gigantic tree stumps, Golden Gate Palms hoisted a potted palm tree, and Forge Handcrafted Pizza served up pizzas prepared on-the-spot inside their converted 1971 Winkelman, Arizona fire truck — examples of the large array of vehicles showing

off for appreciative attendees.

Moraga's Parks and Recreation Department hosted their free Touch a Truck's May 4 event, despite the inclement weather, at Commons Park. "It's still something that you could do in the rain," said Recreation Supervisor Jasmine Bateson. "We reached out to com-

munity partners such as the Moraga Police Department, Moraga-Orinda Fire District, Republic Services, and Central San. The private enterprises like Tesla reached out to us."

Despite the rain, Moragans big and small were excited to see the first responder vehicles' lights flashing. Cheers could be heard when Republic Services hoisted imaginary trash cans. Central San brought three vehicles, one of which was a Hydro/Flush Vector sewer cleaner. Tesla's bullet proof Cybertruck was a big hit with adults.

Taking note of the weatherproofed little tikes enjoying the moment, Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda observed, "Kids need to get out at every opportunity."

It could almost be said that if you honk it, they will come.

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Alarms	38
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	15
Traffic	140
Suspicious Circumstances	9
Suspicious Subject	14
Suspicious Vehicle	10
Service to Citizen	22
Patrol Req./Security Check	27
Public/School Assembly Check	16
Supplemental Report	16
Vacation House Check	27
Welfare Check	11
Ordinance Violation	0
Vehicle violations	
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	3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)
	Dewing Av/Mt. Diablo Blvd.
	Mt. Diablo Blvd./Dewing Ave.
	Oak Hill Rd./Wb Sr 24
	3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Reckless Driving	3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
	Olympic Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
	Brook St./Moraga Rd.
	Reliez Valley Rd./Silver Dell Rd.
	Mt. Diablo Blvd./Happy Valley Rd.
	Brook St./Mountain View Dr.
	Andreasen Dr./Reliez Station Rd.
	Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
	Pleasant Hill Rd./Eb Sr 24
	Mt. Diablo Blvd./Risa Rd.
	St Marys Rd./Florence Dr.
	Moraga Rd./St Marys Rd.
Stolen Vehicle Recovery	3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

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900 Block S Thompson Rd.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Vehicle Theft
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3500 Block Oliver Ct.

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3500 Block School St.

Fraud False Pretenses
900 Block Camino Del Rio
4100 Block Los Arabis Dr.
3100 Block Indian Way (2)

Identity Theft
600 Block Jennie Ct.

Petty Theft
900 Block Mountain View Dr.

Shoplift
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (8)

Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
1000 Block Willow Dr.

Disturbing The Peace
Police Department

Loud Music
1200 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.

Loud Noise
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Loud Party
Silver Springs Rd./Moraga Rd.

Public Nuisance
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Oak Hill Rd.

3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
1100 Block Magnolia Ln.
900 Block Moraga Rd.

Vandalism
200 Block Lafayette Cir.

El Curtola Blvd./Eb Sr 24 (2)
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
3100 Block Acalanes Ave.

Other
Terrorist Threats
Silverado Dr./Burton Dr.

Threats
10 Block Del Rey Ct.
3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Trespass
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Unwanted Guest
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Violation Custody Order
Police Department

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary

Report
April 2 - April 15

Alarms 5
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 3

Traffic 60
Suspicious Circumstances 2

Suspicious Subject 3
Suspicious Vehicle 17

Service to Citizen 9
Patrol Req./Security Check 27
Public/School Assembly Check 3

Supplemental Report 6
Vacation House Check 3
Welfare Check 2
Ordinance Violation 1

Vehicle violations
Accident Property
Moraga Rd./Donald Dr.
Seven Eleven

Auto Burglary
100 Block Westchester

Dui Misd
Morage Rd. Twd Laf.

Campolindo High School

Excessive Speed
Moraga Rd./Moraga Way

Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr.
20 Block Sanders Ranch Rd.

100 Block Cypress Point Way
Country Club Dr./Canyon Rd.

Rheem Blvd./St Marys Rd.
Moraga Rd./Corte Santa Clara

Moraga Rd./Woodford Dr.

Hit And Run Misdemeanor
St Marys College (2)
2100 Block Donald Dr.

100 Block S Sandringham

Reckless Driving
Campolindo High School

Canyon Club Brewery
Canyon Rd./Camino Pablo

Moraga Rd./Via Granada
Campolindo High School

St Marys Rd./Bollinger Canyon Rd.

Other criminal activity
Residential Burglary
60 Block Gaywood Pl.

Shoplift
Safeway

Warrant Arrest
Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr.

Nuisance to the Community
Loud Music
Seven Eleven (2)

Canyon Club Brewery

Loud Noise
Safeway

Other
Canyon Club Brewery

Animal Cruelty
Moraga Commons Park

Litter
10 Block Elk Ct.

Mentally Ill Commit
80 Block Miramonte Dr.

Misc Police Incident
Los Perales Elementary School

Revoked License
Moraga Rd./Donald Dr.
Camino Pablo/Canyon Rd

Suicide Attempt
20 Block Hansen Ct.



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report will be back

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Delicious coconut cake with strawberry roses

By Susie Iventosch

This fabulous and delicious coconut cake is easy to make and even easier to eat! We love this moist and flavorful cake with marshmallow buttercream frosting and can't think of a better dessert for Mother's Day this year! With fresh strawberries coming into season, top your cake with beautiful strawberry roses and you'll have a masterpiece to serve to your mom!

This coconut cake project has been a lot of fun and so rewarding. It all started with a delightful email from one of our Lamorinda Weekly readers. Ginny Paulsen (Lafayette) emailed to say how much she enjoyed the "Favorite Chocolate Cake" we published in our Feb. 28 issue. She loved how easy it was to make and wondered if the recipe could trans-

late into a vanilla or coconut version. That was such a great question, and one I'd never pondered. We've been making this chocolate cake as our "go-to" chocolate cake for almost 20 years, but somehow, the thought of making it any other flavor never occurred to me. However, being a huge coconut lover, it sounded like a genius idea to me!

I told Ginny that I'd be happy to give it a shot, and my family is so happy I did! It turned out to be a remarkably simple switch of just a few ingredients and voila, we had a new family favorite. We use canned coconut milk, coconut extract, and coconut flour in the cake batter to give the cake an intense coconut flavor. You can cover the frosting with flaked coconut,



Coconut Cake Photos Susie Iventosch

Ingredients

Coconut Cake

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup coconut flour (Bob's Red Mill packages this)
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 cup cold water
- 1 cup canned coconut milk
- 1 cup canola oil
- 1/2 tsp. cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. coconut extract
- 1 cup bittersweet chocolate chips (optional)

Marshmallow Buttercream Frosting

- 8 oz. unsalted butter (1 cup), softened to room temp
- 7 oz. marshmallow cream (like Kraft's Jet Puffed)
- 3-4 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tsp. coconut extract
- 1 tsp. vanilla powder or vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup milk or coconut milk (you may not use all of this)

Strawberry Roses

- 7-8 fresh strawberries

DIRECTIONS

Coconut Cake

Preheat oven to 350 F. Line two 8-inch cake pans with parchment paper. Spray the paper and the sides of the pan with cooking spray. Place all dries for cake in a large mixing bowl and blend well with a wire whisk. In a large measuring cup, mix oil, water, coconut milk, vanilla, and coconut extract and add to dries, mixing thoroughly with a whisk or wooden spoon. Stir in chocolate chips if you plan to add them. Divide batter evenly among the two cake pans. Bake for about 40 minutes, or until the cake tester comes out clean. Cool completely and remove from the pan.

Place one layer on your cake platter and spread half of the frosting on top. Place the second cake layer on top of the first and spread the remaining frosting to cover the top of the cake. Arrange strawberry roses on top of the cake and add a few leaves here and there. If your strawberry leaves are in decent shape, use those, otherwise you can substitute with basil or mint leaves.

Frosting

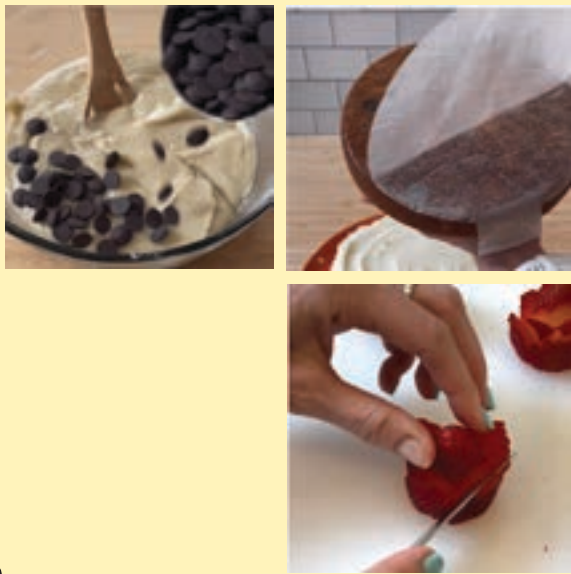
Place softened butter in a large mixing bowl. Beat until creamy with an electric beater. Add marshmallow cream and beat until well integrated, scraping down the sides of the bowl as you go. Add coconut extract and vanilla powder. Beat well.

Add powdered sugar, one cup at a time beating well after each addition until you reach the desired spreading consistency. Add a little bit of milk as needed for consistency. Reserve 1/4 cup powdered sugar for the last addition in case you've added too much milk.

Strawberry Roses

Using a paring knife, cut off the stem of the strawberry. Place the strawberry on its flat surface. Next, make four vertical cuts on the outer edge, leaving about 1/2-inch until the bottom of the berry. Gently push these cut pieces outward from the center of the berry.

Make four more cuts in between and a little bit higher than the original cuts. Continue in this fashion until you reach the top of the berry. Gently push all cut "rose" petals outward to make it look like a rose. See video links in the INFO BOX for a more visual description.



but you really don't have to. Since some people love the flavor of coconut, but cannot stand the texture, this cake is a perfect choice for them.

If you're a coconut and chocolate fan, try adding dark chocolate chips to the cake batter before baking. This will make the chocolate lovers in your life so happy. I love it either way, with or without chocolate chips, but it's always nice to have options and the more chocolate and coconut options in life the better in my book!

We like to frost this

cake naked, (meaning only between layers and on top) so you only need one recipe of the frosting, but if you like to cover the entire cake, consider doubling the frosting recipe. You can also split the layers, to have four cake layers and four frosting layers. If you want to do that, simply cut the layers in half horizontally with a long bread knife and frost in between each half layer and on top. And, according to Ginny, this recipe makes 30 regular sized cupcakes — some for now, and some for later!

INFO BOX – here are a couple of instructional videos for making strawberry roses in two different styles:
<https://youtu.be/iE3gAXC3ZbM?si=mFm8Q3kV8CwIdNF2>
<https://youtu.be/Wopj8GXuTGg?si=V3xLk1KQCTInP9kf>



Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: 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>

'Bon Jour Switzerland': a spring comedy opens in Orinda

By Sophie Braccini



Image provided

Bon Jour Switzerland is a funny, quirky, and gently ironic Swiss comedy that the International Film Showcase (IFS) is bringing to Lamorinda for a welcome moment of light entertainment.

Switzerland has four languages: German, French, Italian, and Romansh (At this time about 60% of Swiss speak German, 22% French, 8% Italian and 1% Romansh). The starting fictional idea of 'Bon Jour Switzerland', is that a charismatic politician is sponsoring a referendum that will make Switzerland a one language country. Each citizen decides to either accept or

reject the idea, and votes for which language will be the one. The results are unexpected and send the country in a state of panic: the Swiss have accepted the principle of a one language country and the language chosen is French. The German speaking Swiss are in crisis - some want to rebel while others try to immigrate to Germany, but reluctantly most start to learn French. The real resistance will come from the Italian speaking part of Switzerland, the Ticino, that threatens to secede from the Federation.

Walter Egli, 56 years old, works for the Federal

police force that has to make sure that the language transition goes smoothly. Even if he does not speak much French himself, he is sent to Ticino undercover with a French speaking colleague to neutralize the Italian rebellion. Of course, nothing will go as anticipated.

Director Peter Luisi's unique idea is the opportunity to paint gently ironic portraits of each of the Swiss communities. The French are arrogant, the German are disciplined and fastidious, the Italians are ready to become revolutionaries. The caricatures are funny and never mean - the film looks at the country quirkiness with an amused and affectionate gaze.

'Bon Schurr Ticino' (the original title) nicely presents the unique plurality of Swiss language - where it is not always easy to communicate, but where people manage to understand each other anyway.

Beat Schlatter as Egli is an endearing actor who creates a slightly clumsy and bear-like character that still manages to have a certain charm. His colleague Jonas is played by Vincent Kucholl, a good looking comedian who visibly had a blast playing this second rate James Bond character. And of course this is Switzerland, so the gorgeous scenery adds to the pleasure of watching the movie on the big screen.

As Efi Lubliner, the co-leader of the IFS notes it, it is difficult to find good comedies. This one is never vulgar and does not take itself seriously. It is definitely a light and family-friendly film to simply have a jolly good time at the movies. 'Bon Shuur Ticino' was released in Switzerland in 2023 and was a big success with all of its communities. It will open in Orinda on May 10 for at least a week. Tickets at Orindamovies.com

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

St. Mary's Aidan Mahaney heads to the University of Connecticut to finish his college career

By Jon Kingdon



Aidan Mahaney

Photo UConn Athletics

After playing two seasons at St. Mary's, a team that was a fifth seed in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament, Aidan Mahaney decided to enter the NCAA portal. Having visited, Creighton, Kentucky, Virginia, and Connecti-

cut, Mahaney made the decision to transfer to the University of Connecticut.

Despite the team's and his personal success at St. Mary's, Mahaney is excited about the opportunity to play for Uconn, which has won the last two national champi-

onships. "It's an unbelievable opportunity that I have to be able to play for a back-to-back national championship team, going for a third one, and my family is really excited and happy for me," Mahaney said.

Having grown up with St. Mary's Coach

Randy Bennett and his two sons, it was not an easy decision for Mahaney. "Since I was a baby with his kids growing up together, I want to emphasize that I love Coach Bennett to death," Mahaney said. "I'm so grateful for him to be a part of my journey and although it's sad that I'm parting ways, right now in my heart I'm forever a Gael and will forever be in debt to the program and Coach Bennett."

Mahaney hopes to ultimately play professionally, and he sees this move as a way to facilitate that goal, particularly with Connecticut having lost both of their starting guards from last season. "After my freshman year at St. Mary's, I was on some draft boards and after my sophomore year, I still got some good buzz," Mahaney said. "I think that in going to Connecticut, I will be getting tougher. I am working on my defense and their offense is so efficient, I think my shooting numbers will go up a lot because of that. Their style of play will be an adjust-

ment for me but I'm coachable, I work hard and am accountable, so I think it'll be a quick adjustment and I'll be hitting the ground running when I get there."

Mahaney's family made it to all of his home games: something he will miss after transferring to Connecticut. "I think the toughest adjustment will be that my older brother Noah will not being able to come to my games, but I'm going to get him some UConn gear and he'll be a Husky fan in no time."

Mahaney also consulted with his Campolindo coach Steven Dyer. "I talked with Coach Dyer prior to entering the portal and we texted afterwards," Mahaney said. "He's really excited for me, and I will try to keep in touch with him. He's a really knowledgeable guy and he looks at everything through a different lens, so I like to get his opinion on things."

Mahaney said he tried to keep his teammates informed about what was transpiring: "It was really tough because

everything happened so fast, so I tried to let everyone know before I entered the portal and before I committed to UConn. I love all my teammates and I feel it's such a brotherhood at St. Mary's and I'm so grateful for all of them. I hope that we can continue to be lifelong friends, which I think we will be."

Mahaney kept in contact with Bennett throughout the process. "Coach Bennett and I have had about four conversations," Mahaney said. "A couple of them were leading up to my announcing that I was entering the portal, and one was the night before I committed to UConn. I have nothing but great things to say and a lot of love for Coach Bennett, the entire staff, and St. Mary's because I wouldn't be in this position without him, the school, and the program. I really tried to thank him for everything that he's done for me. Coach Bennett has been a staple in my basketball career."



Lamorinda volleyball and lacrosse teams competing in NCS playoffs

By Jon Kingdon

This past week, seven of the nine Lamorinda volleyball and lacrosse teams qualified for the North Coast Sectional playoffs. The teams' combined record in the first two rounds was 13-1: the only loss being the Miramonte boys lacrosse team to Campolindo. The third rounds will be played on May 7 and the championship games on May 9.

Volleyball

Campolindo (30-9) with the second seed in

Division 2 defeated Hayward and Las Lomas by 3-0 scores. Acalanes (11-12) with the fourth seed in Division 3 defeated Terre Linda 3-2 and Hercules 3-1. Campolindo will now play at home against De La Salle, while Acalanes will be playing at Bishop O'Dowd.

Girls Lacrosse

Campolindo (12-5) with the second seed in Division 2 defeated Casa Grande 16-6 and Branson 8-6. Miramonte (10-

8) with the third seed in Division 2 defeated Bishop O'Dowd 21-9 and Justin Siena 21-10. Acalanes (13-7) with the fourth seed in Division 2 defeated Petaluma 20-5 and Piedmont 9-7. Campolindo will play at home against Miramonte, and Acalanes will be playing at the first seeded San Marin.

Boys Lacrosse

Campolindo (11-5) with the fifth seed in Division 2 defeated Las Lomas 10-6 and Miramonte 11-6. Miramonte (12-6) with the fourth seed in Division 2 defeated Rancho Cotate 9-5 and lost to Campolindo 6-11. Campolindo will play next at the first seeded Justin Sienna.

Photo Mark Bell

Miramonte sophomore Sawyer Bohlig

Gaels Rugby victorious over Navy in National Championship

... continued from Page 1

"This team and this program are really, really special and it starts with our leadership with Tim O'Brien and (assistant coaches) Andrew Cook and Mark Bass and all the coaches and then it gets passed down team by team," Storti said. "We're just a bunch of misfits, guys

from all over, and it's a testament to our leadership to be able to get sixty guys going in one direction, pursuing our one goal, which was to win the national championship."

Kayoshi shared that same sentiment. "It's sad to say this is my last year but it's really a paradise from the coaching staff and the trainers to the

bottom guy on a team," Kayoshi said "Coach O'Brien gives us the recipe and then we tweak it to the players and it's heaven on earth. The two consistent things with all of my teams has been the will to play for others. We really trust our guys on our left and right and we all have fun here."

O'Brien's formula

for success over the years has been simple: "We take anybody that comes out as long as they can put up with my idiocy. I just think the team's leadership has been good and the way that the kids on the top have embraced the guys on the bottom has been awesome."

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Summer Camps and Classes 2024

Alphabetical listing of all Camps and Classes

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(925) 299-1515 | www.TheArt-Room.com

Bay Area Ballplayers (Moraga)

Hone your baseball skills with enthusiastic college and professional coaches. Afternoon Indoor Multi-Sport Camps at our facility 4-6pm Mon-Thurs. Baseball, Soccer, Lacrosse, Water Polo & other games!
bayareaballplayers.com/camps | (925) 247-5164

Beach Volleyball Camps at SMC (Moraga)

Coaching instruction from coaching staff, current and former players. Work in the fundamental skills of the game along with game strategies, techniques, and communication. Or an intro Kids Camp.
www.smcbeachvolleyballcamps.com

Berkeley Rep (Berkeley)

Create your own play, musical, or film, perform on Berkeley Rep's main stage, and learn from award-winning professional artists. All experience levels welcome.
www.BerkeleyRep.org/Summer.



2024



SCAN ME

MOL Flag Football is for boys and girls in 3rd-8th grade who reside in Lamorinda, with Saturday games in the Fall at JM

Registration Opens May 15th! Scan the code above or go to molfootball.org

California Academy of Performing Arts Summer Program (Moraga)

CAPA offers classes in several genres including ballet, contemporary, jazz, tap, and musical theater led by some of the best professional dance instructors in the Bay Area. Students range from 3-18.
(925) 375-2454 | www.capadance.net

Cal Shakes Summer Conservatory Camp (Orinda)

Students ages 11-18 will develop and improve their performance skills by studying with Bay Area experts in Acting, Voice, Movement, Text Analysis and more, while rehearsing to perform a Shakespeare play.
www.calshakes.org

Camp Awesome Summer Camp (Lafayette)

Awesome games, activities, and phenomenal summer shows. Open all 11 weeks of summer: Early care 8 a.m., Day Camp 9 a.m.-2 p.m., and Afternoon camp 2 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., June 3 through August 8.
www.LafayetteRec.org | (925) 284-2232

Community Center Classes & Summer Camps (Lafayette)

Art, Soccer, Cooking, Dance, Science, Engineering, LEGOs, Pickleball, Archery, Basketball, Carpentry, Singing, Chess and more
www.LafayetteRec.org
(925) 284-2232



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Contra Costa Ballet Center (Walnut Creek)

CCBC offers comprehensive ballet training for beginning-advanced dancers. Ballet Classics Camp is for beginning dances ages 5-9, while advanced dancers ages 8-19 may audition for intensive classes.
www.contracostaballet.org | (925) 935-7984

FireCracker Summer Math Camp (Lafayette)

Extra-curricular math to learn problem-solving and reasoning skills. Summer camps and classes for kids 6 to 16. Morning classes are followed by fun activities in the afternoon.
www.firecrackermath.org

Cougar Youth Football Camp (Moraga)

The Cougar Youth Football Camp directed by Head Coach Kevin Macy for grades 5-8 is held at Campolindo High School July 8-12 & July 15-19 from 1:30 -5:00 p.m. Register at www.cougarcamps.com

DONS Youth Football Academy (Lafayette)

Football academy, run by current Acalanes coaches, will teach fundamentals, develop skills, and help kids with the transition to tackle football in a fun, fast-paced, non-padded and non-contact environment.
www.acalanesdonsfootball.com



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Summer Camps and Classes 2024

Alphabetical listing of all Camps and Classes

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www.eastbayeclipse.com

FastBreak Basketball Camp (Lafayette)

Camp for girls grades 3-8 run by Acalanes Girls Basketball Coach Margaret Gartner. League Champion coaches and players will be instructing and inspiring young girls on how to play the game to the fullest.

(925) 330-7414 | www.fastbreakball.org

Camp Galileo (Lafayette)

Summer day camp at Lafayette Elementary School with STEAM projects and outrageously fun camp traditions for K-10th graders. Dates: June 10 - July 26.

Girl Power (Orinda)

Girl Power is led by Sylvia Colucci, a Girls Life Coach with 20 years' experience. Explore topics like social media, nutrition, communication, and goal setting. Girls 10-16 years.

Visit www.sylviacolucci.com.

Lady Mats Basketball Camps (Orinda)

Held at Miramonte, the Camp will focus on basketball fundamentals as well as team building skills. Run by Miramonte Coaching staff, as well as current and past student athletes. Grades 3 - 8 are welcome.

Please contact vwirthman@gmail.com

LOPC "Scuba" Vacation Bible Camp (Lafayette)

Get ready to "splash" into fun, where kids dive into friendship with God. Days include hands-on science experiments, team-building games, standout songs, and tasty treats! June 10-14, 2 - 5 p.m.

www.lopc.org/vbcamp

Moraga Day Camp Jr. (Moraga)

Step into the world of Hollywood with arts, crafts, games, and field trips inspired by the finest works of Tinseltown. Ages 4 - 11.; weekly sessions June 10 - August 9 at Hacienda de las Flores.

(925) 888-7045 www.moragarec.com

MVPC Vacation Bible Camp (Moraga)

Catch an epic wave of fun at Moraga Valley Presbyterian VBS. Head to the beach. as we dive into a friendship with God! We hope to see you here where it'll be all about the sea, the sand, and the Son!

www.mvpctoday.org

NIKE Youth Football Skills Camp (Orinda)

Professional Instruction for 9-14 years, all athletic levels welcome for non-contact drills and competitions; daily training to develop speed, strength, and agility. Held at Miramonte High School: www.usportscamps.com/football/nike-1/nike-skills-football-camp-miramonte-high-school

Orinda Parks and Rec (Orinda)

Make new friends, learn new subjects, and have fun in a safe, engaging environment. This year's summer camp theme is Curiosity Quest. Orinda summer camps will run from June 3 - Aug. 9

www.cityoforinda.org/188/Camp-Information

Randy Bennett Basketball Camps (Moraga)

Held at Saint Mary's College in University Credit Union Pavilion - a great way for boys and girls grades K-8th to receive top-class instruction on every aspect of the game, led by Coach Bennett and his staff.

www.smcmenbasketballcamps.com/

Sherman Swim School (Lafayette)

Springboard Diving runs year-round (Lessons and Team). Swim Lessons are Monday - Thursday afternoons from end of May to end of October.

www.shermanswim.com.

Sienna Ranch (Lafayette)

Outdoor Summer Camps for nature exploration, visiting our animals, learning survival skills, nature-based crafts and more for pre-k-8th grades.

(925) 283-6311.
www.siennaranch.net/programs/summer-camp/

SMC Creative Camp (Moraga)

A summer of inspiration and artistic growth for elementary, middle, and high school students to explore art, writing, acting, music, and filmmaking -held at Saint Mary's College.

www.SMCCreativeCamp.com

Spanish Immersion Summer Camps (Lafayette)

Learn or improve Spanish language skills at Viva el Español through games, music, arts and crafts, science projects and cooking. Students learn vocabulary related to a specific kid-friendly theme each week.

www.vivaelespanol.org | (925) 962-9177

Spark Cheer Camp (Orinda)

Jump, dance, stunt and tumble your way through summer at Spark Cheer Camp designed for boys and girls ages 5-12 to learn the fundamentals of cheerleading in a fun and positive environment.

www.SparkCheer.org.

Summer@Saklan Language, Culture and Creativity (Moraga)

Weekly summer camps offer hands-on art and science experiences and engaging activities such as cooking, games, and water play for children ages 3 - 8 in a fun and supportive environment. www.saklan.org/summer



MORAGA Day Camp 2024

Weekly June 10 - August 9

Moraga Day Camp Ages 5.5 - 11	Day Camp Jr. ^ Ages 4 - 6
Regular Care 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Lunch and unstructured playtime from 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM. Parents may pickup anytime before 1:00 PM.
Extended Care 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM	

*No Day Camp Jr. the week of 7/1 or 8/5

moragarec.com



Summer 2024

Camps for rising Pre-K through 12th grade

Bloom this Summer at Town Hall Theatre!

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Tuition Assistance Available
New Camps Starting All Summer

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SMC

SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE

CREATIVE CAMPS

SUMMER 2024

• RISING GRADES 1-12 ARE WELCOME!



Daughters of the American Revolution holds ceremony for upcoming anniversary

Submitted by Vanessa Crews

On July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate and celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This occasion provides Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) members, as descendants of the generation that secured American independence, the remarkable opportunity to celebrate the longevity of the democratic experiment for which our ancestors fought, not even knowing if the new nation would survive. Locally, the Acalanes DAR Chapter marked the upcoming anniversary with the dedication of a bronze marker at the Lafayette Memorial Veteran's Center on April 20. The ceremony included the Presentation of Colors by the VFW Post 8063 Color Guard, and remarks by Contra Costa Supervisor Candace Anderson.

The marker celebrates the brave Patriots who founded our nation and is a reminder of their courage and conviction. Members of the Acalanes DAR Chapter are descendants of more than 100 individuals recognized by the DAR as American Patriots. They are among the thousands of ordinary people who supported the cause by supplying the army from their farms, participating in local governance, signing an oath, or military service.

Seldom recognized for their contributions, women were among America's patriots, caring for the wounded, feeding the troops, and taking on the responsibilities of husbands and fathers away on military service. They boycotted British teas and fabrics, instead spinning and weaving their own materials, and concocting herbal teas.

Women were particularly vulnerable to plundering and property destruction by invading troops. Two women, Sarah Scott and Elizabeth Anderson, are among the patriots of the Acalanes Chapter members. They were widows, managing their own farms, who furnished supplies for the army and risked retribution from British troops.

Acalanes Chapter member, Vanessa Crews, encourages local families to explore their own family histories in preparation for the upcoming 250th anniversary, saying, "I was amazed and delighted to learn about the role my ancestors played in founding the nation. More than 60% of Americans have ancestors who lived in America during the Revolutionary War; there could be a Patriot in your family too. The DAR has expert volun-



Photo provided

teers connecting women and their patriot ancestors."

DAR has 190,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters across the country and several foreign countries. DAR members promote historic preservation, education, and patriotism via commemorative events, scholarships and educational initiatives, citizenship programs, service to veterans, meaningful community service, and more. For additional information about DAR visit www.dar.org.

Deep Space Sea Leopards advance to Worlds

Submitted by Dory Coombe



Photo provided

The Lafayette Elementary Odyssey of the Mind Team is thrilled to share that they qualified both for the state and Worlds tournament, after their Deep Space Structure held 365 pounds and they gave a funny and creative performance about space. The team included Kate Lordan, Mackenzie Renno, Adam Brown, Graham Brown, Calder Yang, and Dory Coombe. Their Coaches

were Amy Coombe and Austin Yang.

The Odyssey of the Mind program gives kids the opportunity to use creativity to become problem-solvers as a team. Each team selects a problem that they work together to solve over four to six months. The Lafayette Elementary team selected a problem that was space themed and included a balsa wood structure

that was tested for how much weight it could hold. They learned to think creatively in order to stay within their budget for props, write a funny script, and test which structure design would hold the most weight.

Coach Austin reflects, "It was fantastic to see the team apply their creativity to solving problems. They accomplished so much. Amy

and I are really proud of the hard work they put in this year." Team member Adam Brown shared "I loved testing out different structure designs and also getting to know my teammates better."

Odyssey of the Mind is really fun and challenging; the Deep Space Sea Leopards encourage you to join an Odyssey of the Mind team at your school.

Author Katie Hafner speaking at the May Sweet Thursday Author Series

Submitted by Laurie Miles

Ethan Fawcett gets a letter from a bike touring company, asking him to not sign up for another trip. So begins 'The Boys', Katie Hafner's taut and utterly delightful debut novel. When introverted Ethan Fawcett marries Barb, he has every reason to believe he will be delivered from a lifetime of soli-

tude. One day Barb brings home two brothers, Tommy and Sam, for them to foster, and when the pandemic hits, Ethan becomes obsessed with providing a perfect life for the boys. Instead of bringing Barb and Ethan closer together, though, the boys become a wedge in their relationship, as Ethan is unable

to share with Barb a secret that has been haunting him since childhood. When Ethan takes Tommy and Sam on a biking trip in Italy, and it becomes clear just how unusual Ethan and his children are - what it will take for Ethan to repair his marriage. It is a character study, social commentary on pan-

demic isolation, and an incredible journey back to center.

Katie Hafner was on staff at The New York Times for ten years, where she remains a frequent contributor, writing on healthcare and technology. She is the author of six works of nonfiction covering a diverse range of topics,

including the origins of the Internet, computer hackers, German reunification, and the pianist Glenn Gould. 'The Boys' is her first novel.

Join the Sweet Thursday Author Series on May 16 at 7 p.m. in the DTCH at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center to hear the discussion with the

author, Katie Hafner. Register to attend in person at www.tinyurl.com/sweet-May2024. The doors will open at 6:30 p.m. for coffee and sweets. This program is presented by The Friends of the Lafayette Library.

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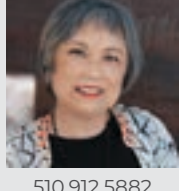
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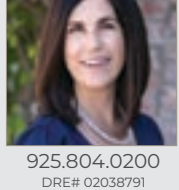
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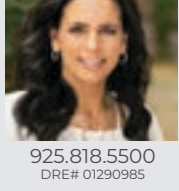
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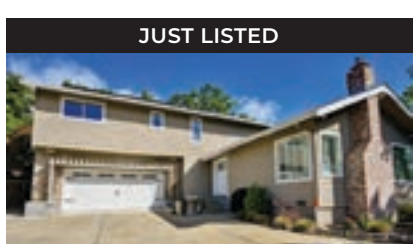
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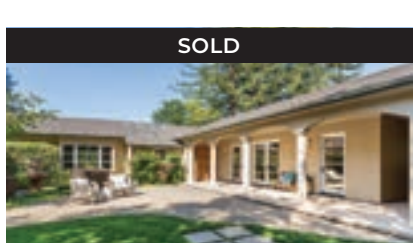
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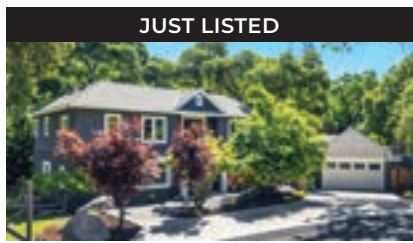
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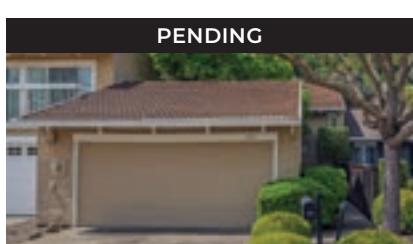
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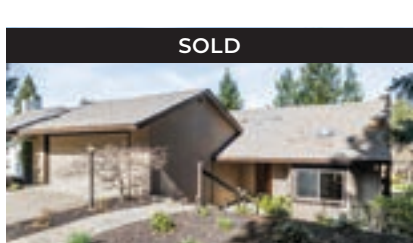
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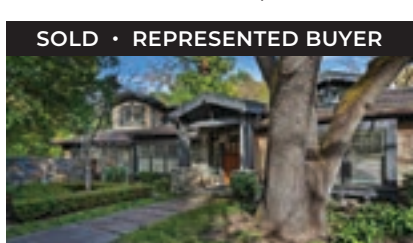
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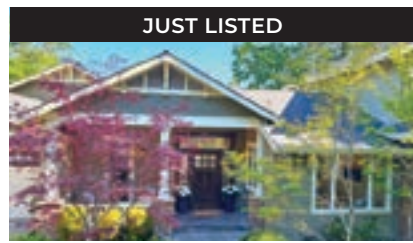
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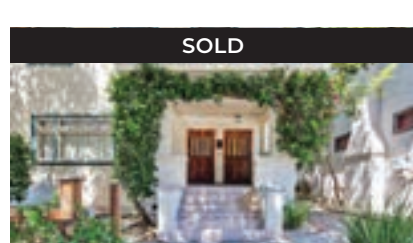
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3626 BROOK STREET, LAFAYETTE
CALL FOR INFORMATION
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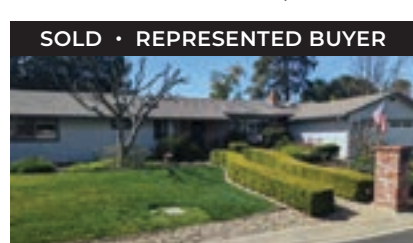
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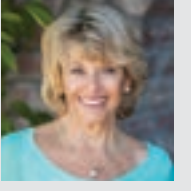
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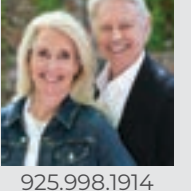
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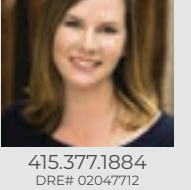
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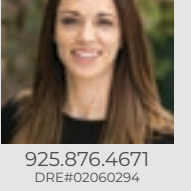
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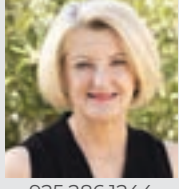
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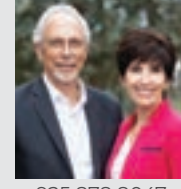
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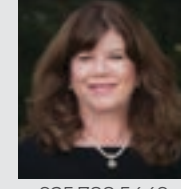
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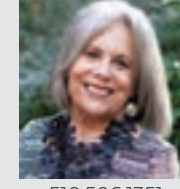
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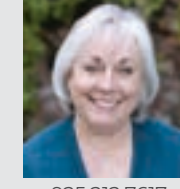
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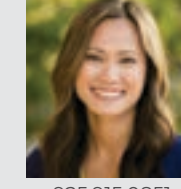
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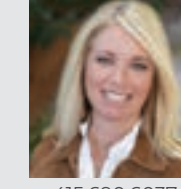
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Another agent

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 18 Issue 6 Wednesday, May 8



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page OH2

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

The Need to Weed

By Cynthia Brian

Photos Cynthia Brian



A plethora of flowers beneath the tangled weeds means hand-weeding is essential

“Digging the garden tending the weeds, Who could ask for more?” John Lennon & Paul McCartney

Before the weather gets too warm and the soil hardens, we must eradicate weeds from our gardens. I know, I know. A weed is just a plant growing somewhere it is not wanted; where we live and how we cultivate determines the perspective we may have about what is a weed and what is wanted a specimen.

The weeds in my garden are invasive, prickly, adaptable, and undesirable. The grass weeds that have blown in from the hills make excellent hay; yet the thistles, euphorbia spurge, hemlock, bindweed, black medic, pelargonium robertianum, and geranium purpureum are a constant source of pain, strain, and drain.

Everyone knows about wild thistles. They have prickly leaves and stems with colorful flower heads. They are in the same Asteraceae family as daisies and sunflowers. What you may not know is that they are ecologically important, providing food and nectar for pollinators, including bees, butterflies, birds, and mammals. In some parts of the



Pink azalea, yellow freesia, and bluebells appear after weeding

world, they are cultivated for their ornamental value. As I was about to pull out two large thistles, butterflies landed on the leaves and purple buds. Watching them savor their meal, I let these weeds live another day.

... continued on Page OH8

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42 TAPPAN LANE
SLEEPY HOLLOW NEIGHBORHOOD
\$6,895,000 | 5 BD | 6.5 BA
OFFICE | 8,096 SF | 2.26 AC

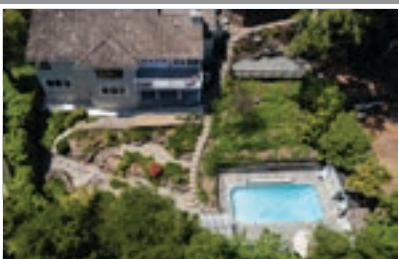
ORINDA | PUTTER'S PARADISE
10 ORINDA VIEW ROAD
ORINDA VIEW DEVELOPMENT
\$5,585,000 | 4 BD | 5.5 BA
OFFICE | 5,691 SF | 1.17 AC



MORAGA | AMPLE ABODE
221 RHEEM BLVD.
CONVENIENT LOCATION
\$2,198,000 | 4 BD | 3.5 BA
3,276 SF | .45 AC



ORINDA | Playful Paradise
3 LOS CONEJOS
EL TOYONAL LOCATION
\$1,995,000 | 5 BD | 3.5 BA
2,888 SF | .48 AC



LAFAYETTE | 2 SEPARATE LOTS
HAPPY VALLEY GLEN
1240 MONTICELLO RD | 15.52 AC
\$2,985,000
0 MONTICELLO RD | 7.64 AC
\$2,398,000



Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	16	\$750,000	\$3,850,000
MORAGA	6	\$710,000	\$2,125,000
ORINDA	13	\$1,091,000	\$2,625,000

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

968 4th Street, \$750,000, 1 Bdrms, 642 SqFt, 1939 YrBl, 03-27-24
3231 Burton Court, \$1,470,000, 4 Bdrms, 1924 SqFt, 1956 YrBl, 04-02-24
910 Carl Road, \$3,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 3654 SqFt, 1948 YrBl, 03-26-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,680,000, 09-16-03
1018 Dyer Drive, \$2,350,500, 3 Bdrms, 1997 SqFt, 1951 YrBl, 04-01-24,
Previous Sale: \$820,000, 05-17-17
1874 Hannibal Drive, \$2,050,000, 4 Bdrms, 2007 SqFt, 1965 YrBl, 03-27-24,
Previous Sale: \$530,000, 06-22-00
1087 Leland Drive, \$2,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 3779 SqFt, 2016 YrBl, 03-28-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,930,000, 10-25-17
3334 North Lucille Lane, \$1,884,000, 5 Bdrms, 2541 SqFt, 1951 YrBl, 03-25-24,
Previous Sale: \$83,000, 08-01-78
3434 Moraga Boulevard, \$1,601,000, 2 Bdrms, 1383 SqFt, 1941 YrBl, 03-28-24
19 Old Millstone Lane, \$2,675,000, 5 Bdrms, 2301 SqFt, 1963 YrBl, 04-01-24
36 Olympic Oaks Drive, \$2,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2329 SqFt, 1997 YrBl, 04-05-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,169,500, 08-20-13
1128 Orchard Road, \$2,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2665 SqFt, 1939 YrBl, 03-27-24
3392 Orchard Valley Lane, \$1,430,000, 3 Bdrms, 1384 SqFt,
1953 YrBl, 03-26-24, Previous Sale: \$73,500, 11-01-78
76 Revere Court, \$1,755,000, 3 Bdrms, 1918 SqFt, 1971 YrBl, 04-02-24,
Previous Sale: \$755,000, 11-12-02
3208 Ronino Way, \$2,089,000, 4 Bdrms, 2838 SqFt, 1983 YrBl, 03-25-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,754,500, 04-02-20
1594 Silver Dell Road, \$2,325,000, 5 Bdrms, 3711 SqFt, 1964 YrBl, 03-26-24
1071 Sunrise Ridge Drive, \$1,880,000, 5 Bdrms, 3572 SqFt,
1998 YrBl, 03-28-24, Previous Sale: \$1,045,000, 10-17-14

MORAGA

1988 Ascot Drive #C, \$710,000, 3 Bdrms, 1472 SqFt, 1970 YrBl, 03-28-24,
Previous Sale: \$480,000, 11-01-06
8 Harold Drive, \$1,650,000, 4 Bdrms, 1653 SqFt, 1956 YrBl, 04-02-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,470,000, 08-25-21
4004 Paseo Grande, \$2,125,000, 4 Bdrms, 2341 SqFt, 1969 YrBl, 03-28-24,
Previous Sale: \$185,000, 06-01-79
375 Redfield Place, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2340 SqFt, 1966 YrBl, 04-04-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,228,500, 04-08-08
243 Sandringham Drive, \$1,880,000, 4 Bdrms, 2353 SqFt, 1976 YrBl, 03-29-24,
Previous Sale: \$925,000, 10-11-12
5 Tracy Court, \$1,775,000, 3 Bdrms, 2717 SqFt, 1986 YrBl, 04-05-24,
Previous Sale: \$985,000, 01-08-04

... continued on Page OH5



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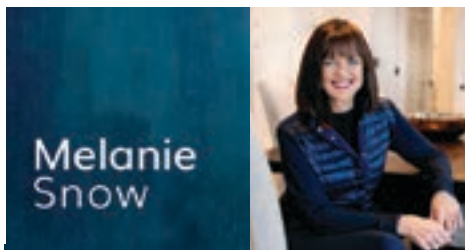


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Organizing is Not Always About Just Getting Rid of Stuff

By Jennifer Raftis, CPO(r), Efficiency Matters, LLC

If your previous attempts at getting organized have failed, it might not be all about getting rid of your “stuff”. It could be about a need to develop a few simple habits to help you manage your home and life.

People often claim, “if you get organized, you will save time and money so you can concentrate on what really matters”. That, of course, is partially true, but what you really gain is peace and calm instead of frustration and STRESS!



Shutterstock

I know that feeling frustrated is my number one reason to stay organized...frustration about lost passwords, being late, losing an important paper, etc. Being frustrated makes me crazy and I will go to

great lengths to make sure I don't have to experience that feeling.

I always encourage my clients to let go of the things they no longer use or need, but that's not going to totally eliminate your frustrations. So, how do you eliminate, or at least minimize, feelings of frustration? It's not necessarily because you have too much stuff (not necessarily is the key word here), but it might also be because you need to create habits to keep you organized. A few simple changes can make all the difference!

When people call me to get help with organizing, I will ask them what isn't working in their home. After listening to the answer, I instinctively know if it's because of their habits. For example, regularly putting things back in the correct place takes less time than searching for something you didn't feel like putting away at the time. Habits!

Here are 3 of my organizing client's top frustrations and suggestions on how to create new habits to fix them.

1. Not Being Able to Find Your Things: Do you know where to find items in your home when you need them?

Solution/Habit: All of your belongings need a home; every single item you own should have a place where it lives in your home and everyone in the home should know where that is (and return the item to where it lives after they use it). It's not as hard as you might think - remember that everyone always knows where the forks are located and that the forks get returned there after they are washed.

... continued on Page OH9

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

... continued from Page OH2

ORINDA

- 1 Ardilla Road, \$2,451,000, 4 Bdrms, 3391 SqFt, 2008 YrBlt, 04-05-24,
Previous Sale: \$159,000, 01-01-90
- 139 Ardith Drive, \$1,714,000, 3 Bdrms, 1633 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 04-04-24,
Previous Sale: \$951,500, 07-28-10
- 69 California Avenue, \$1,091,000, 3 Bdrms, 2105 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 03-25-24
- 1 Corte Del Rey, \$1,575,000, 3 Bdrms, 1605 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 04-01-24,
Previous Sale: \$363,000, 12-14-98
- 328 Glorietta Boulevard, \$1,750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1679 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 03-26-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 07-01-20
- 32 Hacienda Circle, \$2,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 3768 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 04-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$216,000, 03-01-78
- 192 Ivy Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1318 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 04-04-24
- 6 Jack Tree Knolls, \$1,876,000, 5 Bdrms, 2666 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 04-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,475,000, 12-15-16
- 23 Kellie Ann Court, \$1,844,000, 4 Bdrms, 2236 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 03-28-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,550,000, 04-23-19
- 51 La Cuesta Road, \$3,300,000, 5 Bdrms, 3712 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 03-27-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,875,000, 09-19-23
- 23 Marston Road, \$3,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 3695 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 03-27-24
- 84 Muth Drive, \$1,749,000, 5 Bdrms, 2372 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 03-29-24,
Previous Sale: \$600,000, 05-07-99
- 12 Ramona Drive, \$1,400,000, 5 Bdrms, 2299 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 03-29-24

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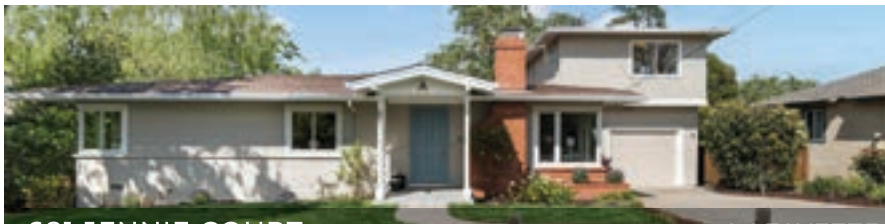


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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

The Need to Weed



Pink Poseidon clematis outshines the weeds.



Santa Barbara daisies, Dutch iris, and roses.



After weeding, California poppies fill the field.

... continued from Page OH1

The artichokes we enjoy on our dinner plates are also a thistle in the Asteraceae family. They have been specifically bred to be edible and tender without the spiky prickles.

In the past, I have written extensively about euphorbia, hemlock, bindweed, and black media. But most people are not familiar with pelargonium robertianum and geranium purpureum, although you may have seen it. Interestingly, geranium robertianum, a native of Europe, with its delicious musky fragrance when stepped upon, is coveted by many gardeners and foragers. Its flowers and leaves add a spicy flavor to food, and the crushed leaves are an insect repellent. It also boasts medicinal uses to lower blood sugar levels, reduce inflammation, and arrest diarrhea.

In a patch growing alone, it is a pretty groundcover; however, when it grows in mixed beds, it tends to twine and strangle plants. It is in the geranium family and is known by several names, including Herb Robert, Red Robin, and Stinky Geranium. The reason I don't cook with it derives from its common name...death come quickly. It arrived in my landscape about three years ago, probably in a potted plant or perhaps from a bird, and has spread everywhere.

A subspecies of geranium robertianum, pelargonium purpureum, known as Little Robin, is on the California Invasive Plant Council list. It doesn't possess a strong fragrance, only a very slight aroma. It is pervasive throughout California, spreading by seeds and dispersed by animal

and human activities. They both have tiny pink flowers and lobed leaves. Because I grow anemones, weeding is challenging if the plant is not blooming because their lobed leaves are very similar. It is for this reason that I weed slowly and by hand.

Can you tell the difference between a weed and a domesticated plant? Why is it necessary to weed? To maintain a healthy garden, weeding is obligatory. If you have an area that is growing only weeds, weed whacking is easiest. If you have a large landscape as I do that is filled with flowers and shrubs competing with the weeds, you'll need to weed by hand.

Here are the reasons that weeding is crucial.

Resource Competition: All plants require water, nutrients, and sunlight. Weeds compete with garden plants for these resources. By removing the weeds, the plants you love are allowed to thrive.

Aesthetic Appeal: In my opinion, weeds make a garden look unkempt. Look at the photos in this article of my garden. Although there are hundreds of blooming flowers, the weeds have overpowered the plants, making the garden look messy.

Disease and Pest Prevention: Weeds harbor diseases and pests that could spread to cultivate plants. My weeds are so dense and so tall, that again, this week I received another tick bite, despite wearing protection. Reduce the risk of ticks and other infestations by removing the weeds.

Air Circulation: When the weeds are dense, air circulation is impeded. Mildew can occur. Free up the airflow by getting rid of the weeds.

... continued on next Page



The ubiquitous weed, geranium robertianum...death come quickly.

... continued from Page OH8



Photos Cynthia Brian
Tournament of Roses rosebush blooms amongst the weeds.

Seed Spread: Weeds develop seed heads and once they burst, they disperse thousands of seeds that float through the air to increase the weed population in other areas. Many of my weeds have already started shooting their seeds before I could pull them.

Soil Health: Many weeds have deep root systems that disrupt the soil structure, making it difficult for other plants to grow. Weeds like euphorbia spurge emit a toxin in their roots that kills other plants, making way for only the spurge to flourish.

Stress Reduction: There is a peacefulness and tranquility to weeding. When I'm kneeling or sitting in the weeds, I am up close and personal with the plants. I hear the birds singing, and the wind rustling. I witness the butterflies, bees, and bugs that hover around the plants. I smell the leaves and scents emanating from the soil. My senses are alive and I feel connected to nature and all things. My prescription to stress less, is to get your hands in the dirt. Give it a whirl!

As fire season approaches, it is essential to cut weeds. The hills are lush and green now, but soon the heat of summer will be upon us, and the grass will be dry and brown. Heed the checklist from our fire departments to create defensible spaces around our homes. Many of us, including my family, have had our homeowner's insurance canceled or non-renewed because we live in a designated fire zone. As frustrating as this is, it is imperative to harden off our homes. Follow year-round directions at

www.mofd.org/our-district/fuels-mitigation-fire-prevention
To summarize fire district recommendations:

Prevent embers from igniting your home by clearing leaves, needles, and debris from gutters, eaves, porches, and decks.
Mow grasses and weeds.

Keep your garden watered.

Prune tree limbs to keep the lowest branches 6-10 feet from the ground.

Reduce "fire fuel laddering" by not allowing bushes or trees to touch one another.

Keep combustible materials 15-30 feet away from structures.
Maintain your property and be alert for any fire danger.

Organizing is Not Always About Just Getting Rid of Stuff



Shutterstock

... continued from Page OH 4

2. Arriving Late: Arriving late to an event or appointment is stressful!
Solution/Habit: Plan ahead, look at your week and know where you have to be. Map out how long it will take to get there and add 20 minutes to the time. Better early than late! You might want to gather the items that you'll want to take with you the night before. I personally always have a podcast or some type of work (knitting, crossword puzzles, phone game apps, etc.) with me if I arrive too early.

3. Managing Passwords: This is probably my biggest frustration. This can be especially frustrating if you do not live alone and someone else has the ability to change your passwords (and adorably does not tell you).
Solution/Habit: Set up a password manager on all of your devices and make sure everyone who uses your devices knows how to save passwords to the password manager. Many of my clients also keep a written copy of their passwords in a notebook or address book, and some of my clients keep them in their phone.

The next time you are feeling frustrated about managing your home or life, remember to focus on cultivating a new organizing habit - this might just be the solution you need.

Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPO® founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals.

She is also an independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more. In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. Jennifer@efficiencymattersllc.com, 925-698-3756
www.efficiencymattersllc.com



Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Gardening Guide

To easily kill weeds in cracks, bricks, driveways, or paths, use a solution of 30% vinegar available at hardware stores mixed with table salt. Spray on a windless, hot, sunny day. This spray will kill whatever is growing, so be cautious around desirable plants.

Mosquitoes are breeding. Empty any containers of water or add Dunks or a few drops of bleach to birdbaths or other non-circulating water features.

Don't cut back your daffodils or other yellowing bulbs. To provide the nutrients for next year's bloom, the leaves need to dry and be crackling like potato chips before pulling.

Make sure to rotate the location of your vegetables when planting this season. Don't plant tomatoes near potatoes as they are members of the same family and susceptible to the same diseases. Plant neither of them in the soil where peppers or eggplants grew previously.

Check your irrigation system for leaks and breakage. As the weather warms, watering in the morning or evening at least once a week will be necessary for garden wellbeing.

It's Mother's Day. Make sure to treat your special Mom with a glorious bouquet or potted plant. Flowers are always appreciated.

Digging in the garden. Tending the weeds. Who could ask for more?

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Mother's Day



A bee savors nectar from a mock orange tree.



Edible wild leeks, also called ramps, can be as invasive as weeds.



Like every mom, Cynthia Brian enjoys her beautiful bouquet of blooms.

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 which was just honored as the 2024 Nonprofit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, Books in the Barnyard: Oh Deer!, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available for discounted pre-sales at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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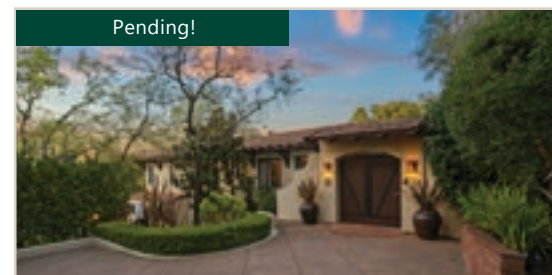
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