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CAIFF CALIFORNIA INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

NOV 10 - 17

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CAIFF Program Director Efi Lubliner, right, with theater co-owner Derek Zemrak at the Orinda Theatre. Photo Jeff Heyman

CAIFF 2022 - Beloved film festival returns to Orinda Theatre

By Sophie Braccini

It has been three years since Lamorinda experienced its own live film festival. The 22nd California Independent Film Festival will include a lineup expertly designed to bring families, movie buffs, classic film lovers, and others back to the silver screen, and experience exciting and glamorous events, close to home.

Comedies, drama, family movies, sing-alongs, documentaries – 24 acclaimed movies from 20 different countries, four U.S. premieres, seven Bay Area premieres and seven Contra Costa County premieres

will be shown in the span of just one week, with no movie overlapping another. The breadth is vast and the program director guarantees that “there is no lemon” in the 2022 CAIFF.

Opening night is Nov. 10 at the historic Orinda Theatre. This year Derek Zemrak, co-owner of the theater, has given Efi Lubliner the program director’s job. Lubliner had been part of the Jewish Film Festival for many years, and he is the co-director of the International Film Showcase that brings celebrated foreign films monthly to Orinda. Lubliner breathes movies; for years he has been attending film festivals and negotiating with distributors, which has given him access to acclaimed movies, new and old.

The film chosen for opening night is India’s selection for the 2023 Oscars, “The Last Film Show.” The movie that has just been released in India tells the coming of age story of a young boy who is all consumed by his love of movies. It is the semi-biographical story of director Pan Nalin. The storyline is somewhat reminiscent of “Cinema Paradiso,” the 1988 Oscar winner from Italian director Giuseppe Tornatore. Nalin said in an interview to DNA India that “Cinema Paradiso” was one of the greatest films he ever saw, and even when he watched the film, he felt there were certain scenes the director might have stolen from his own life. ... continued on Page A14

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AUHSD forums address candidate funding, academic excellence



Screenshot taken during Oct. 14 forum

By Sora O’Doherty

Acalanes Union High School District school board candidates recently met for two election forums. The first candidates’ night was held on Oct. 14 at the Del Valle Education Center in Walnut Creek. It was co-sponsored by the League of Women’s Voters Diablo Valley, the Las Trampas Creek Council of PTAs; and the Parents Clubs of Acalanes, Campolindo, and Miramonte; Las Lomas high schools. The event was moderated by Janet Hoy of the League of Women

Voters, who neither lives nor votes in the district. The second, sponsored by the Lafayette Homeowners Council, was held via Zoom on Oct. 20 and was moderated by LHC president Bill Bucher.

During the Oct. 14 forum three of the candidates – Rene Nowac, Mark Woolway and Gabe Ledeen – were asked about contributions from donors outside the district to their campaigns.

A search of public records at the Contra Costa County Elections office revealed that these three candidates filed a joint Form 460 that lists 12 donors to their joint campaign, 10 of whom are

out of district. The highest donation was for \$1,000 from Los Angeles attorney Daniel Brunt, followed by \$500 from San Francisco attorney Patrick Tostado. Other contributions came from Pennsylvania, Missouri, North Carolina, and Virginia. Total donations collected by the three candidates were listed as \$4,781 and total expenses as \$4,882.15 at the date of filing, Sept. 24.

Nowac, while stating that she had no idea who donated to her campaign nevertheless claimed that rumors of a \$25,000 donation to the campaign was “compete misinformation.” Woolway said he had received donations from friends and family, in and out of the state. He acknowledged that the three candidates had received a donation of \$250 from Virginia Thomas, wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. He also opined that it was easy for incumbents to say that they haven’t accepted donations because incumbents generally don’t need to. Ledeen said that the information was publicly available and that he didn’t understand the question, but in an email received by Lamorinda Weekly after the forum, Ledeen

elaborated on the question. “It can be very challenging to fundraise for a first-time candidate with low name recognition in such a low profile local race ... so friends and family are a key source of donations,” wrote Ledeen, who grew up in the D.C. area. “The accusers point to a small \$250 donation by Ginni Thomas as further evidence of involvement in a conspiracy to take over the local school board. To answer this directly: I did not solicit from her and have not spoken with her, but I assume she donated simply because she’s an old friend of my family and wanted to show support. That’s it.” The AUHSD board consists of five elected board members and one student member. Candidates Christopher Severson and Nancy Kendzierski are incumbents running for reelection, and are challenged by Ledeen, Nowac, and Woolway in addition to candidates Jennifer Chen who participated in both candidates’ forums, and Clayton Gardner, who did not participate. Three seats are to be filled in the November general election. ... continued on Page A8

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Jay Lifson, Lafayette's 'Energizer Bunny' retires



Photo Jeff Heyman

Lafayette Chamber Executive Director Jay Lifson is all smiles at his recent retirement celebration at the Lafayette Park Hotel.

By Pippa Fisher

Most Lafayette residents have come across Jay Lifson, whether they know it or not. Perhaps they just know the friendly guy with the huge smile in a tie-dye T-shirt. Or maybe they've noticed someone in an orange vest leading a team of volunteers, schlepping traffic cones and barricades at the Art and Wine Festival or the Res Run, or that guy almost always present at city council meetings until the wee hours to advocate on behalf of local businesses. But now this stalwart of Lafayette is retiring.

After 17 years at the helm of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, Lifson is hanging up his traffic cones. He leaves a city of thriving businesses and a bustling downtown, which has not always been the case.

Hired in 2005, Lifson reflects that his first goal was to "say yes to every-

thing and to become more connected." He loved the friendly vibe of the community but says there was not enough outreach to attract new members. Lifson's efforts paid off. Chamber membership grew to over 720 members after the 2008 recession, and gradually the events became bigger and bigger; events such as the Art and Wine Festival (which now draws up to 80,000 attendees from all over the Bay Area), the Res. Run, Taste of Lafayette, Rock the Plaza, and others, all of which help build community.

Mayor Teresa Geringer says that Lifson is Lafayette's Energizer Bunny. "If something good for the community and our businesses is happening, Jay is there! Lafayette is a better place because of his creativity and tireless energy."

Lifson's second goal was to become more involved at the city, county and state level, advocating for businesses;

something he has done tirelessly over his tenure but perhaps never more so than during COVID.

Current Chamber Board President Fred Steingraf puts it this way, "Jay led the Chamber through good times and bad times, most notably through a pandemic." Steingraf points out that Lifson worked tirelessly to ensure that Lafayette's businesses had all the tools necessary to navigate through regulations, loans, and uncertainty.

Although Lifson recognizes that COVID was the biggest challenge during his tenure, it was not the only one. He reflects that the recession of 2008 was hard. And there was the challenge of a massive tree falling on the Chamber parking lot, followed just months later by a devastating fire that destroyed not only their office but also those of nine other Chamber members in the building.

With typical Lifson optimism, he says these challenges were an opportunity to reinvent themselves, to be better and that they helped define them, connecting them with nonprofits for whom they could market.

Clearly Lifson is proud of his staff, the board and Chamber Ambassadors. "Success starts with staff," he says. His laid-back management style makes it easy to get the best from those around him. He says he leans toward a collaborative style and builds relationships with others. "Catch people doing things right instead of catching them doing things wrong," he explains.

Lifson is also particularly proud of advances made by the Chamber in promoting recycling in business; an achievement recognized just recently with a Lifetime Achievement award from Sustainable Contra Costa. The organization gave particular mention to the Chamber's annual Art and Wine Festival, noting, "Jay encourages vendors to set up organic/composting, recycling and landfill containers throughout the festival and avoid using plastic water bottles. The event achieved a remarkable 89% diversion rate in 2019 and expects to attain zero waste in the fu-

ture." Lifson adds this award to several others including Lafayette Business Person of the Year, 2012.

Lifson credits his many prior years in the hospitality industry as being the perfect training for the job. From co-owning Lafayette's Rocking Horse restaurant, to managing the Hungry Hunter, the Lafayette Park Hotel Spa and Duck Club, and Bing Crosby's Restaurant, he progressed from chef to ownership and management, which necessitated managing staff, and talking to guests, and he became more confident and comfortable with public speaking. However the toll of working constant weekends and evenings pushed him to apply for the job of Chamber Director.

"When I took the job, I knew all about people and employees. What I didn't know was how much I'd need to find out about every business," says Lifson, adding that he's had to become an expert researcher, learning about all businesses in order to better serve his members.

"Being the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce is a strange job," says former City Manager Steve Falk, explaining, "You're not in charge of the members – but you're still expected to lead them. Jay has served kind of like the Lafayette business community's big brother – not the mom and dad who make the rules, but like the older brother, just down the hallway, who believed in us, who stuck up for us when we needed help, who was always there with an open ear and a helping hand."

Lifson will be missed by many including Steingraf. "Most notably, however, we will miss Jay's ability to fill a room with joy by simply smiling or telling a bad joke."

Lifson is quick to point out he will still be there for the community, but he is looking forward to spending more time with family, cooking, working out, and especially for his passion – attending live music concerts.

The man might be retiring, but the batteries on this Energizer Bunny are still fully charged.

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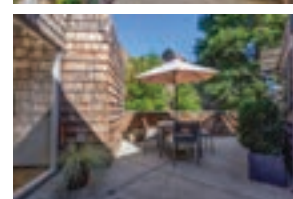
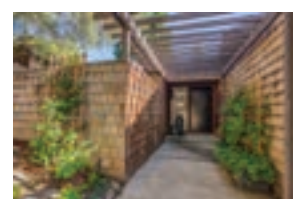


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Get a jump on Halloween at Lafayette's 'Trick-or-Treat Street' event, Oct. 28



Photo Pippa Fisher

Costumed children ages 9 and under and their parents/caregivers are invited to come downtown to trick-or-treat at local participating Lafayette businesses on Mt. Diablo Boulevard from Plaza Way to Dewing Avenue, Lafayette Circle and in La Fiesta Square from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 28. More than 40 businesses are signed up to participate in this free, fun, family-friendly event, sponsored by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. All participating businesses will display a trick-or-treat poster.

Don't forget to bring your trick-or-treat bag!

For more information about the event and the list of participants, visit: <https://lafayettechamber.org/trick-or-treat>.
- J. Wake

Lafayette Res Run strengthens relationships between businesses, community & schools



Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

By Sharon K. Sobotta

More than 2,300 runners and walkers made their way through downtown Lafayette bright and early Sunday, Oct. 23 for the annual Lafayette Res Run for Education.

Sandeep Patath participated in the race with his wife and his daughter for the first time. "Last year we didn't make it because it was soggy and rainy and we were really happy to make it this year," Patath said. "It was lots of fun to see so many people out having a good time together. It makes me think we should do this kind of thing more often."

Ria Di Costanzo was the Lafayette Elementary School Res Run Chair. "It's really beautiful to be out here on this day and to see so many other families out here from all the other schools in our community. It's really special." As the parent of a few elementary school students, Di Costanzo

said getting involved was a no brainer. "The Res Run raises money for the schools. They give back quite a bit of money to the PTAs. The PTAs help build community. All of these students will eventually be in the same school and the sooner we can connect them, the better."

Di Costanzo said she ran more of the race than she imagined she would and she was grateful for the opportunity to do it. "(Running alongside so many people from all ages and walks of life) reminds me that there are so many wonderful people in Lafayette," she said. "It's great to see the community, the schools and local businesses coming together. The more we can support our local businesses, the more they support us and our local schools and it just goes full circle. Everyone is very invested in this community and that's truly beautiful."



Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Regular Meeting
Monday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.
Teleconference via City of Lafayette's YouTube Channel:
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

Planning Commission Meeting

Tuesday, Nov. 7, 7 p.m.
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube
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Design Review

Wednesday, Oct. 26, 7 p.m. Zoom
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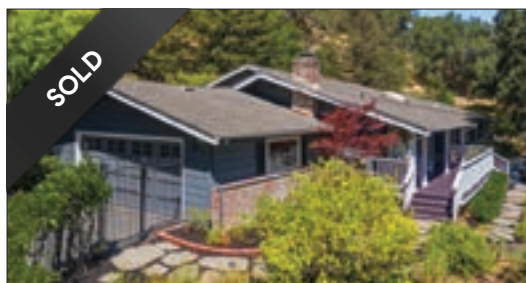
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Town Manager submits notice to retire at end of calendar year



Photo courtesy Town of Moraga

Moraga Town Manager, Cynthia Battenberg

By Vera Kochan

Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg officially submitted a written notice to the town council on Oct. 4, advising them of her impending retirement.

An excerpt from the letter states, "Thank you for the opportunity you have given me to serve as Moraga's Town Manager for most of the past five years. I have found the experience incredibly rewarding, and I am very proud of what we've accomplished together during that time." Battenberg continued, "Thus, it is with mixed emotions that I now submit this letter of resignation to you as part of my plan to leave full-time city management at the

end of this calendar year to pursue other career interests."

Battenberg noted the numerous challenges that Moraga has faced and overcome in recent years such as: climbing its way back to financial solvency; identifying unfunded infrastructure needs in order to invest in the town's storm drain system and other public assets; completing construction of the new Canyon Road Bridge; improving the condition of the town's streets; finishing legacy development applications and implementing the 2010 Moraga Center Specific Plan; working on the completion of the Comprehensive Advanced Planning Initiative towards future town development; activating the

Hacienda de las Flores for greater community usage; creating recreation and after school programs; and more. So many of these achievements were accomplished in the midst of COVID-19 county mandates.

During the Oct. 12 meeting, council members expressed their sadness and dismay at Battenberg's leaving, while also acknowledging the many undertakings that she and her small staff have completed in such a short amount of time.

The task at hand is to find a replacement for Battenberg's position, and the council has agreed to the services of an executive recruitment firm and has formed a Town Manager Recruitment Ad Hoc Committee

through Oct. 26 while interviewing firms to bring a recommendation to the council for their next meeting.

"I am confident that I now leave you in good hands, as Moraga's team of capable and dedicated Directors will continue their exceptional work on the numerous projects and initiatives currently underway," Battenberg's letter added. "Moraga Town employees have an unwavering commitment to serving this community, and it has been my sincere pleasure to serve with them.

"I wish you and the Moraga community all the best in the years to come. Thank you so much for your partnership over the years!"

Campo's new principal is no stranger to Moraga

By Vera Kochan

Campolindo High School's new principal, Pete Alvarez, officially took over the reins on July 1 from John Walker, who was promoted to Acalanes

Union High School District Associate Superintendent of Educational Services after a 10-year run at the school.

Born in San Francisco, Alvarez is Bay Area home-grown, going to high school in Napa. His first stint in Moraga came

when he attended Saint Mary's College, earning a BA in history and an MA in educational leadership. Before coming to Campo, he spent 12 years as the principal for a high school in Colorado.

"I never thought that I'd be back here," Alvarez commented. "Nothing much has changed, but I was surprised to see that the bowling alley was gone." While at SMC, he took a bowling class that was worth a quarter of a credit.

Commenting on the rest of Moraga, Alvarez stated, "It's relaxing and offers a lot of the things people are looking for, especially the schools. When I was coming back from Colorado, I wanted to find a school that was special and Cam-



Photo Vera Kochan

Campolindo's Principal Pete Alvarez with his extensive "Mr. Potato Head" collection

polindo was it." He also believes in challenges, and after 12 years he felt it was time for a new one.

Speaking of challenges, Alvarez contracted COVID his first week on the job. Once he was able to assume his duties, he set about gaining the trust of the community and getting to know his students and staff. Uppermost on his mind was, "Campo is so high-performing, how do you get the needle to move higher?"

When asked how receptive the students have been to him, Alvarez replied, "The students have been awesome. I've been a principal for 19 years. I like to be around students, and staff, and parents. I feel incredibly blessed and am building relationships more and more every day. I love high school!"

Alvarez has plans to initiate some new programs at Campo. "One of the things that I'm looking at is, what are our needs? I want an increased and improved peer tutoring program. I also want every family to be able to participate in every program that Campo has to offer regardless of their financial status." He also wants to expand the Woodshop Program to offer a focus on engineering to give kids an added career benefit from the class. Another item on his wish list is to expand the school's Wellness

Program in order to meet the social and emotional needs of the students.

Looking to build trust with the students, Alvarez spends as much time as possible in and around campus and being accessible to them. In the works is a Principal Advisory Group that will include 16 students who are tasked with the job of being the pulse of the student body and sharing their findings through conversations with Alvarez. By doing this, he hopes to become aware of what his campus' needs are and what is important to the kids.

Expect to see Campo's students become more visible in the community through philanthropic efforts such as their Leo Club and the more recent Moraga Community Service Day.

Alvarez got to exercise his acting chops recently with his appearance in "Campo Night Live" (a spoof of TV's "Saturday Night Live"). Admitting that he was terrified, he added, "It was my first time on the stage. I had a monologue with my black lab, Steve, about our journey from Colorado."

All in all, Alvarez's excitement is evident and infectious. "It's great to be back in Moraga. It feels like coming home, and with the education level - it's still a special place."



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Wednesday, Nov. 9, 6:30 p.m.
Planning Commission: Tuesday, Nov. 1, 6:30 p.m.,
Park and Recreation Commission: Monday, Nov. 21, 7:00 p.m.,
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To many, Oktoberfest means only one thing – beer



Photo Vera Kochan

Polkageist West entertains Canyon Club Brewery's Oktoberfest revelers

By Vera Kochan

As you hoisted that stein of beer, you may not have known the origin of Oktoberfest, and you may not even have cared, but the annual festival in Munich, Germany is held over a two-week period and ends on the first Sunday in October. It originated on Oct. 12, 1810, to celebrate the marriage of the

crown prince of Bavaria, who later became King Louis I, to Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen. Moraga's Canyon Club Brewery has its very own biergarten which provided a perfect backdrop for this third annual event. The celebrations were held Oct. 14-16 and included a special menu of German potato cakes, Bavarian pretzels, bratwurst, sauer-

kraut, applesauce, fries with German curry ketchup, and German rice pudding. Folks washed that down with either imported German beer or CCB's special Oktoberfest Beer. On Saturday, Polkageist West provided traditional German music with a twist.

CCB had every intention of conducting a "stein-holding contest," but apparently the crowd was full of "hühner," which means "chickens" in German. Let this information serve as a notice for next year!

General Manager Kirsten Popcke was busily enjoying the atmosphere while taking care of guests. "Oktoberfest is my favorite time of the year. It's lively and fun with the music. I love it!" At one point, an elderly couple found some space in the crowd large enough to dance in – proving that where there's a will, there's a way.

Moraga resident and former recreation assistant for the town's Parks and Rec Department, Kim Burrowes, came by to see the band. Now working in Emeryville, she stated, "I've hired them before, and I know they are good." Prost!!

Moraga joins other local cities in banning the sale of flavored tobacco and electronic smoking devices



Photo courtesy Moraga Police Dept

Vape pens disguised as permanent markers

By Vera Kochan

Choosing to be proactive, Moraga's town council voted to ban the sale of flavored tobacco and electronic smoking devices (also known as vape pens) just ahead of Prop 31 on the Nov. 8 ballot. A "yes" vote on Prop 31 means in-person stores and vending machines could not sell most flavored tobacco products and flavor enhancers.

Moraga Police Chief Jon King, Officer Fabiola Hernandez and Assistant Town Attorney Denise Bazzano gathered information to compile a staff report that was presented during the Oct. 12 town council meeting. It was noted that Contra Costa County and the cities of Antioch, Lafayette, Orinda, Pinole, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, and Walnut Creek have adopted similar bans.

According to results from a 2019-20 Tobacco Survey presented by King, 32.5% of Contra Costa high school students had used a tobacco product; 92% of students who were current tobacco users reported using a flavored tobacco product; highest use of flavored tobacco products was among current vape users (95.8%) and smokeless tobacco (73.3%); 40.6% of current cigarette smokers report using menthol cigarettes in the previous 30 days; and 77% believed that tobacco companies targeted youth through flavored product advertisements.

A New York Times article

by Christina Jewett states this year's National Youth Tobacco Survey "showed that 85% of adolescent e-cigarette users favored vapes in fruit, dessert and candy flavors. Some mentioned PuffBar; Vuse and Juul as their favorite brand among those on the survey's list. But many said their favored e-cigarette brand was not one of the 13 listed. That finding highlights how nimble the industry has been in stamping an array of brand names on vapes with flavors like strawberry ice cream and fresh vanilla that are largely made in China and shipped from warehouses to corner stores and into e-commerce."

On a more local level, Campolindo High School's 2019 Healthy Kids survey results found that 36% of the students admitted to using vaping products. An unexpected and nearly tragic by-product of vaping was the cause of the 2019 Merrill Fire in the Sanders Ranch neighborhood where a discarded vape pen was found at the fire's origin.

King described flavored tobacco and vape products as being a "gateway" for some users to potentially seek a progression to more dangerous tobacco products and even drugs.

The sale of tobacco products to anyone under 21 years of age is prohibited thanks to an existing law, Stop Tobacco Access to Kids Enforcement (STAKE) Act. There are currently five tobacco retailers in Moraga: ARCO-Carwash; 7-Eleven; Moraga Chevron; Mor-

aga Star Station; and Moraga Wine & Spirits. None of these rely solely on the sale of tobacco-related products to stay in business, nevertheless the town council was willing to postpone the ban until Jan. 1, 2023, in order for those retailers to legally sell or dispose of their inventories.

Staff's proposed ordinance would repeal and replace an existing one (Chapter 7.24), which would "prohibit the sale of flavored tobacco and vaping products in the Town of Moraga." Modeled after Orinda's May 2022 ordinance, aspects of it include: "updated definitions of specific products; prohibition on the non-sale distribution of tobacco products; an updated requirement that all tobacco sales be tobacco retailer assisted; and a change to the Violation/Penalty section allowing the town to utilize civil, criminal or administrative sanctions rather than mandating a misdemeanor violation, which could potentially result in a jury trial in Superior Court for a minor violation."

The Ordinance will return at a future town council meeting for a second review and approval.

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Orinda Library Rotunda to be named in honor of former mayor Amy Worth

By Alison Burns

It is perhaps fitting that the Orinda Library rotunda is about to be named in honor of five-time mayor Amy Worth as she approaches retirement at the end of this year because, as one caller laughingly remarked at the city council's most recent meeting, "beyond Amy's love of her family, I think the library comes a close second ... maybe even a little before the city of Orinda."

As Vice Mayor Inga Miller pointed out, when the time came to discuss the agenda item involving the library rotunda, the council was first asked to examine "the purpose of the naming policy and whether the current opportunity fit this policy."

After quoting the definition of the naming policy as being "a way to remember shared history and identify local natural resources and honor individuals who have contributed significantly to the city of Orinda," Miller concluded, "I think we can all

agree that Council Member Worth has more than triple-done that."

Although Resolution 52-22, originally initiated by Mayor Dennis Fey and Council Member Darlene Gee, was overwhelmingly approved, Miller suggested that instead of calling it "The Amy Worth Library Rotunda," the somewhat irrelevant word, "library" should be removed "because, well, it's a library."

She also went on to say that because Worth "has made our city what it is," this is a really wonderful way to create intuitive use of this naming opportunity and proposed that perhaps the less formal words, "Amy's Place," could also be incorporated.

Mayor Fey agreed, and suggested that if both phrases were used on the rotunda, front and back. "You'd read the words Amy Worth Rotunda as you're walking in and Amy's Place as you're walking out," he said.

When consulted, City Attorney Osa Wolff advised that there was flexibility for city staff to work with the Friends

of the Orinda Library to come up with the actual wording for the signage, although City Manager David Biggs asked for the final decision to be made as soon as possible as his department needed to order the necessary materials within the coming week, in order to have the work done in time for the official unveiling ceremony planned for Dec. 4.

Gee added that she was happy that the council had the opportunity to name something that was so obviously significant to Worth because "everyone will enjoy it for many years to come, recognizing your great value to both Orinda and our library."

But the final word went to Worth, now contemplating the bittersweet prospect of retirement after an unbroken record of almost a quarter century on Orinda's City Council. She was visibly touched by the honor, joy and privilege of being recognized in this way and spoke of being taken to the library every week by a mother who taught her about community service,

and how, on moving to Orinda, her first volunteer job was with the Friends of the Orinda Library, as publicity chair for the Book Fair.

From such small beginnings, Worth became deeply involved in building Orinda's present library and regards her leadership in this area as one of her most significant accomplishments. The Friends, which was formed in the 1950s, own the physical building, while the city of Orinda owns the land, and the library — the only Friends-owned library in the county — is operated by the Contra Costa County Library system.

Carol Brown, a longtime Friends of the Orinda Library stalwart, quite simply calls Worth "a gift to our community," because championing the Orinda Library is not the only remarkable achievement for which we should all be grateful to Council Member Worth.

"Each time I drive west through the fourth bore of the Caldecott tunnel", says Brown, "I actually whisper, 'Thank you, Amy.'"

Union support again an issue at MOFD Board election forum

By Sora O'Doherty

With three seats in three districts of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District up for election in the general election of 2022, the six candidates running

are in one of two slates. Incumbents Steven Danziger and Michael Donner are joined by candidate Christopher Young on the slate funded almost exclusively by the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 1230

Political Activity Committee. They are opposed by candidates Gregory Allan Hasler, Vincent James Dell'Aquila, and Michael Roemer, whose campaigns are largely funded by Moraga-Orinda Citizens for Fire Safety Supporting Hasler

(MOFD District 1), Dell'Aquila (3), and Roemer (4), with additional large donations from Hasler to his own campaign and Orinda resident Steve Harwood to Dell'Aquila's campaign.

... continued on Page A7

Applications for grants for fire fuel reduction on evacuation routes accepted Nov. 1

By Sora O'Doherty

The city of Orinda will begin accepting grant applications Nov. 1 from residents who live

on evacuation routes in the city for funding up to \$599 for work done to reduce fire fuel.

The measure was approved by the city council at its Oct. 11 meeting, and the application for the grants can be found in the agenda packet for that meeting. Applications may be submitted online or by mail to the city of Orinda.

There are a number of requirements that must be met in order to qualify for the grants, which are set forth on the application form. The grants are intended to help homeowners on evacuation routes to remove vegetation in accordance with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District fire code, including removal of dead or dying trees, eucalyptus and/or Monterey Pine trees, ladder fuels, juniper bushes, and bamboo within specified distances from the road. The pilot grant program will be in effect until Aug. 31, 2023, unless the authorized funding of \$400,000 is depleted sooner. Residents may only apply for one grant.

At the same meeting, the city council rejected a suggestion from the Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission (SSTOC) to enter into a contract with Dr. John Radke, a professor at UC Berkeley, for a strategic wildfire planning process for Orinda. The proposed project would cost the city \$598,196.

Although the SSTOC had recommended that the city enter into the contract, city staff recommended that the city not proceed using Measure R or city funds, but perhaps to consider pursuing grant funding. The city council agreed among themselves that the amount proposed was high, and declined to take action on the proposal.

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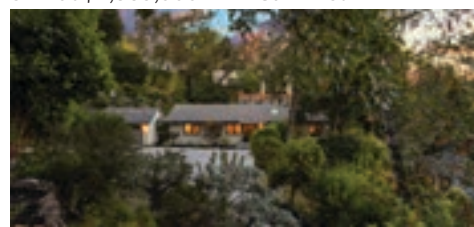
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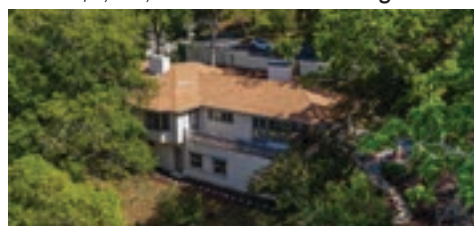
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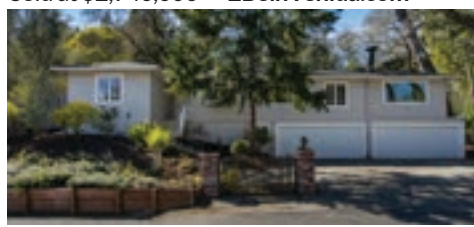
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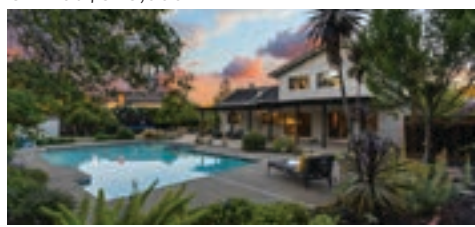
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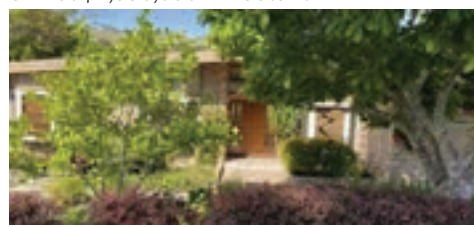
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Regular Meeting:

Tuesday, Nov. 1, 7 p.m.

By Teleconference Only

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Nov. 8, 7 p.m.

By Teleconference Only

Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 6:30 p.m.

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Union support again an issue at MOFD Board election forum



Photo provided

MOFD District 4 incumbent Michael Donner (left) and challenger Michael Roemer speak at the Oct. 13 candidates forum hosted by the League of Women Voters Diablo Valley.

... continued from Page A6

Candidates are required to disclose donations, and the information is available to the public on the website of Contra Costa County Elections.

There were two forums for MOFD candidates in October. The first, reported by the Lamorinda Weekly in the Oct. 12 issue, focused on Districts 1 and 3, while the second covered Districts 3 and 4. District 2 is not

included in this election. At both candidate forums the issue of potential consolidation of MOFD with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District arose. In response to questions from the public, all the candidates avowed their opposition to any possible merger at both forums. District 1 incumbent Gregory Baitx had asked that the question of a merger be agendized last year, which caused a public outcry. Baitx is not run-

ning for reelection, so candidates Hasler and Young are vying for that seat on the board.

The second forum on Oct. 13 was the first appearance by Roemer, who is challenging incumbent Donner. Roemer, a 30-year resident of Orinda, is a retired federal prosecutor, a trained CERT volunteer, an MOFD support volunteer and a Fire Ambassador. He opined that his legal experience would be an asset to the MOFD board.

Roemer, in answer to a question about the relationship between the board and the union, suggested that "there are times when the board has to say, 'we don't agree with the union.'" He also highlighted the differences in funding, saying, "When a candidate is funded entirely by one entity, it creates a perception that something is expected in return." Danziger took offense at Roemer's suggestion, and said he was not 100% funded by the union, and didn't believe that Donner was either, but added that he was proud to have the support of the firefighters.

Donner, against whom Roemer is running, said that the relationship between the board and the union is friendly, but

that there had been a problem in the past with attracting new hires and having low numbers of firefighters. He said that the board had reached out to the union to adjust requirements, and it had been agreed to change the hiring process to increase the pool of firefighters and increase retention as well. Dell'Aquila said that he did not have knowledge about the relationship, but praised the department for its very quick response time and expressed total faith in MOFD.

Candidates were queried about how to encourage public entities who own land in the Lamorinda area to remove dead trees and brush on their property and otherwise comply with the fire code. Danziger suggested that, in light of the failure to comply with the fire code and recent issues regarding access to Bollinger Canyon, a summit should be convened to discuss the issue. Donner mentioned that this is an ongoing issue for the district and may be the subject of litigation. "If we win," he said, "we will lead departments around the state." Donner cited Caltrans and UC Berkeley as being among the public entities that "don't feel that they have to

play by our rules." Dell'Aquila noted that PG&E has come under a lot of fire lately, so they are doing a lot to mitigate the situation. "Others have not been in the spotlight, so we need to put them in the spotlight to encourage action," he suggested.

Another ConFire related question asked how MOFD's pension fund compared to ConFire in terms of solvency. Again, no candidate favored merging MOFD with ConFire, but Danziger said that "over the last four years [MOFD's] finances were the strongest they've ever been," and that the board had continued to aggressively fund unfunded pension liability.

"In the next 12 to 15 years," he said, "pensions will be 100% funded."

In answer to other questions, the candidates expressed their views on outreach and communications. The MOFD's candidates forum can be viewed in its entirety at

<https://youtu.be/YO4bOZHv5kA>

Information about donations to candidates is available from Contra Costa County Elections at <https://public.netfile.com/pub2/?AID=CCC>

Throngs fill Theatre Square for annual 'Art of Mixology'

Orinda's Theatre Square was packed with enthusiastic taste testers on Oct. 22, who not only gathered to sample the unique concoctions of top-end craft cocktails created by both professional and amateur bartenders vying for top awards, but to experience the fun of this festive fall event replete with a flash mob performance that tied it all together. For winners, see lamorindaarts.org



Bartender Nicholas Valdez of Bounty Hunter in Walnut Creek



Canyon Club Brewery bartender Jeremy Schlachter pours for Loredana Astiphan and Badr Astiphan

Photos Jeff Heyman



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Newsom signs important legislation into law

Both Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and state Sen. Steve Glazer, whose districts

cover Lamorinda, had multiple bills signed into law by Gov. Gavin Newsom, including

Bauer-Kahan's much touted AB 988, co-authored by Glazer, which implements 988, the Mental Health Crisis Hotline, which went live on July 16 for the purpose of connecting individuals experiencing a mental health crisis with suicide prevention and mental health services.

The two co-authored several other bills, including AB 2282 Hate Crimes: Nooses, Crosses, and Swastikas, which equalizes the penalty for the crimes of hanging a noose, displaying a symbol of hate, including a Nazi swastika, and burning or desecrating religious symbols, on specified property, for the purpose of terrorizing, and expands and aligns the places where this conduct is

prohibited for each offense. And AB 2374 Crimes Against Public Health and Safety: Illegal Dumping, which increases the maximum fines for illegal dumping for persons employing more than 10 full-time employees, and requires any person convicted of illegal dumping to remove or pay the cost of removing the waste matter they were convicted of illegally dumping.

As the chair of the Assembly's Select Committee on Reproductive Health, Bauer-Kahan has championed abortion rights with AB 1242 and AB 1666.

Signed by the Governor in June, AB 1666 protects those who aid, receive, or provide abortions from civil penalties they face from other state's ex-

tremist anti-abortion laws. AB 1242, which was signed in September, is a groundbreaking measure crafted with Attorney General Rob Bonta to protect abortion providers and their patients from criminalization and create a path for California companies to keep personal data and messages private when served with warrants from extremist states.

"California has no obligation to be complicit in the criminalization of the right to abortion," said Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan. "AB 1666 and AB 1242 ensure safe essential care stays legal, putting up a legal shield to protect from arrest, information sharing, and civil penalties." - J. Wake



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AUHSD candidate forum

... continued from Page A1

During the Oct. 20 LHC forum, much of the conversation from participating candidates revolved around maintaining or improving academic excellence. Nowac and Gardner were not present.

When asked about the decision to keep schools closed during the pandemic, both Ledeen and Woolway said they disagreed with how the board handled the COVID situation, stating how the board kept students off campus more than they needed to. Severson noted he advocated for opening schools at every opportunity, but "we were under a set of health orders" and were "stuck with state and county restrictions." And Kendzierski added that when surveyed, 80% of parents wanted a hybrid option. Everyone agreed that the lockdown had consequences. When asked about the

AUHSD homework policy, Woolway said "the idea is that some students aren't as equipped to meet deadlines or do work at home and students get 50% credit no matter what. ... This is not something that should be touted by the board; it needs to be fixed immediately."

Kendzierski rebutted, saying "the board looked at homework policy and tried to both respect students' time without dropping the academic rigor," adding that with longer class times, students have more time to finish problems in class. "We don't want students doing homework until midnight," Severson said. Chen noted that as a mother of a son in the AP trenches, "homework is very much alive, and very challenging and engaging."

All of the candidates live in the district and all except Nowac have children who are either attending local schools, will attend local schools, or have graduated from local schools.

During introductions at the Oct. 14 forum, Chen focused on her background as a clinical social worker professionally trained as a "creator of positive change and community collaboration." She stated, "excellence can only happen if our students are feeling safe and supported and have a sense of belonging."

Kendzierski said, "Excellence is not maintained by standing still; new ideas and continuous improvements are an essential part of education." She listed among AUHSD improvements the introduction of block schedules, Academy periods, wellness centers, and new science standards and graduation requirements to enhance college and career readiness. She supports a student-centered culture with a strong academic focus. Kendzierski has served on the board nine years.

Ledeen said he was inspired to run by the "urgent

need for leadership in service of our students and their families" and a strong belief that he can make a positive difference. Ledeen served four years as an officer in the Marine Corps including two tours in Iraq. He emphasized the leadership training he received and used in the Marines. Ledeen attended Stanford Law, clerked for a federal judge, and practices technology and data privacy law.


Nowac, a Moraga resident, has had a long career as a workplace investigator and specialized in investigation of sensitive matters such as harassment and discrimination. She said her priority is to strive for the best academic education for each student, including those who might have a learning disability or are suffering from learning loss from the past several years.

Severson has served on the board for eight years and works as an emergency medicine physician. He recently attended a 30th year Miramonte class reunion. He emphasized his reliance on science and wellness and noted that "that has never been more needed than in the last few years."

Woolway, a 10-year Lafayette resident, has been a head coach of several youth sports teams and in his 22-year career in tech, he's been an executive and investor in high growth companies. He wants to see greater transparency and responsible budget planning.

The candidates mostly agreed on diversity, equity and inclusion and social emotional learning, but differed on budgeting ideas. The Oct. 14 candidates' forum can be viewed on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_Nir9RnQP8. The Oct. 20 forum can be accessed at the Lafayette Homeowners Council website: <https://lafayettehomeownerscouncil.org/>

Jennifer Wake contributed to this article.




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Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report

Oct. 2 - Oct. 15

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|-------------------------------|----|
| Alarms | 34 |
| 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) | 21 |
| Traffic | 51 |
| Suspicious Circumstances | 9 |
| Suspicious Subject | 27 |
| Suspicious Vehicle | 12 |
| Service to Citizen | 32 |
| Patrol Req./Security Check | 24 |
| Public/School Assembly Check | 7 |
| Supplemental Report | 32 |
| Vacation House Check | 39 |
| Welfare Check | 17 |
| Ordinance Violation | 2 |
| Vehicle violations | |



Hit And Run Misdemeanor
Pleasant Hill Rd./Shreve Ln.
Springhill Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
Stanley Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
Pleasant Hill Rd./Wb Sr 24
School St./Moraga Rd.
Brook St./Moraga Rd.
Moraga Rd./Tofflemire Dr.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
1000 Block 2Nd St.
Reckless Driving
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.
Glenside Dr./Michael Ln.
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd.(2)
Brook St./Moraga Rd.
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Happy Valley Rd.
St Marys Rd./Rohrer Dr.
500 Block St. Mary's Rd.
Pleasant Hill Rd./Rancho View Dr.
Deer Hill Rd./1St St.
Tc - Property Damage
Withers Ave./Taylor Blvd.
Lucas Dr./Huntleigh Dr.
Deer Hill Rd./Miller Dr.
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Dolores Dr.
St Marys Rd./Topper Ln.
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700 Block Moraga Rd.
Loud Music
1200 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.
Loud Noise
3400 Block Golden Gate Way
Loud Party
1700 Block Ivanhoe Ave.
Bacon Ct./Happy Hollow Ct.
500 Block St. Mary's Rd.
1000 Block Via Roble
Public Nuisance
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (4)
30 Block Lafayette Cir.
No House Number
Silverado Dr./Bradbury Dr.
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Vandalism
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Other
Animal Cruelty
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
H&S Violation
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Lafayette Cir.
K9 Outside Assist Request
1200 Block Diamond Way, Con
Loitering
3200 Block Old Tunnel Rd.
900 Block Leland Dr.
Stray-traf Haz
Pleasant Hill Rd./Rancho View Dr.
Threats
900 Block Hough Ave.

800 Block Moraga Rd.
400 Block Helen Ave.
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
Trespass
900 Block Dewing Ave.
800 Block Birdhaven Ct.
Unwanted Guest
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Violation Custody Order
Police Department
Violation Restraining Ord
900 Block Janet Ln. (2)
1000 Block Miller Dr.

ORINDA POLICE

Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report Oct. 2 - Oct. 15

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Alarms | 40 |
| 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) | 8 |
| Traffic | 89 |
| Suspicious Circumstances | 4 |
| Suspicious Subject | 16 |
| Suspicious Vehicle | 16 |
| Service to Citizen | 57 |
| Patrol Req./Security Check | 12 |
| Supplemental Report | 18 |
| Welfare Check | 7 |
| Vehicle violations | |
| Accident Injury | |
| Moraga Way/Altamount Dr. | |
| Accident Property | |
| Wilder Rd./Big Leaf Rd. | |
| Moraga Way | |
| Bear Creek Rd./Camino Pablo | |
| Reckless Driving | |
| Rheem Blvd./Glorietta Blvd. | |
| El Toyonal/La Encinal | |
| 10 Block Los Altos Rd. | |
| Vehicle Theft | |
| 10 Block Chapparral Pl. | |

Other criminal activity
Grand Theft Veh Parts
10 Block Spring Ct.
Identity Theft
30 Block Evergreen Dr.
Illegal Entry
30 Block Eastwood Dr.
Petty Theft
70 Block La Espiral
Petty Theft From Veh
10 Block Chapparral Pl
400 Block Camino Sobrante
10 Block Rio Vista
Residential Burglary
50 Block Camino Del Diablo
Robbery Armed
600 Block Washington St, Oakland
Warrant Arrest
50 Block Persimmon Walk
Camino Sobrante
Orinda Way
Camino Pablo/Camino Sobrante
Nuisance to the Community
Drunk In Public
80 Block Davis Rd.
Loud Music
Martha Rd./Glorietta Blvd.
Orchard Rd./Valley Dr.
Miller Ct./Stein Way
Scenic Dr./Estates Dr.
Loud Party
100 Block Zander Dr.
100 Block Brookwood Rd.
Other criminal activity
Failure To Obey
Camino Pablo/Wb Sr 24
H&S/Pos Paraphenalia
Moraga Way
Mentally Ill Commit
10 Block Theatre Sq 106
Resist Delay Or Obstruct
200 Block El Toyonal
Revocation Of Probation
Orinda Theater
Susp Circ/Sexual
Moraga Way
Terrorist Threats
10 Block Sycamore Rd.
Unwanted Guest
10 Block Theatre Sq

Letters to the editor

Current and Former Mayors Support Foreman, Smith & Sturm

We know as community leaders that a city thrives on excellence in all its institutions, and here in Lafayette, we highlight the importance of one in our slogan: Green Hills and Great Schools. Our schools are a magnet for families to choose our city, and parent involvement begets a long-term commitment to our community.

Schools are prominent on our ballot for the November election. We believe that the schools will prosper and continue to improve with the most highly qualified board members. We endorse candidates Foreman, Smith, and Sturm for the Lafayette School District. Incumbents Smith and Sturm have been strong partners to the City on issues including traffic and safety, and we are working in common on inclusion and belonging for all residents, families, and students. Katy Foreman has been a parent leader who has partnered with the City on safety issues and supported the schools constantly in volunteer roles.

We are confident these candidates will pursue continuous improvement for our schools, supporting access to a strong core curriculum for all students, and student wellness through meaningful social and emotional learning experiences. Please vote on November 8 to ensure our schools remain a vital part of our community.

Mike Anderson, Brandt Anderson, Carl Anduri, Cam Burks, Teresa Gerringer, Anne Grodin, Erling Horn, Don Tatzin, Carol Federighi

Support for Foreman, Smith and Sturm

As Lafayette community members who attended school here as children, and returned to raise our own children, we are writing to voice our support for Lafayette School Board candidates Katy Foreman, Dave Smith, and Rob Sturm. Each of these three have demonstrated a deep commitment to Lafayette's public schools and will provide critical leadership to move our schools forward.

Lafayette's public schools have a tradition of academic rigor and excellence, providing a safe and supportive environment for all children and creating pro-

gramming to prepare students to meet the challenges of the future. Lafayette's schools and students have benefited greatly from the significant involvement of parents and the broader community. Katy, Dave, and Rob are leaders among parent volunteers.

Rob Sturm has been a member of the Lafayette School District Governing Board since 2017, most recently serving two terms as Board President. Dave Smith has served on the Lafayette School District Governing Board since 2021, and on the LPIE Board for the two years prior. Katy Foreman has been a volunteer leader in a variety of roles throughout the district since 2018, including PTA President. Each of these parent volunteers are committed to continuing the school district's academic excellence, maintaining fiscal responsibility, and to providing a safe and supportive environment for all of the district's students.

The Lafayette School District has had a long tradition of forward-thinking programs to ensure that our students are prepared for the future. At this critical time, we require experienced leaders who will look forward and not backwards as they guide our school district. For those reasons, we believe Katy Foreman, Dave Smith, and Rob Sturm are the best candidates to lead the Lafayette School District. Jacinta Pister, Mary McCosker, Kathy & Rick Biro, Danielle Gallagher Lafayette

Ledeen for AUHSD board

I strongly encourage voters to read Gabe Ledeen's blog post at forbetterschools.org in response to his experience as a candidate running for AUHSD. Gabe is extremely well-qualified to serve on the board. Unfortunately, a small, but vocal minority of individuals are attempting to discredit him. Gabe is a father, Stanford Law graduate who served two tours of duty in Iraq after 9/11 and extremely bright. He is an exemplary person who has tossed his hat into the ring of local politics and would be an excellent addition to the AUHSD Board.

Jim Landau's "Trump Appointees Running" letter questioning the motivation of Nowac/Woolworth/ Ledeen "as they don't have children" in the district is misleading. neither of

the incumbents Severson and Kendierski nor newcomer Chen have children in the district either!! More smoke and mirrors from Jim Landau who is notorious for smear campaigns! Makes me wonder what else Landau (or his ghost writer) has wrong?

The COVID-related damage done to children because of incumbents Severson and Kendierski's choices are devastating. Their misguided decision to cancel grades in AP classes, refusal to reconvene in-person classes and elimination of differentiated courses (i.e higher level math) is an assault to the district. Severson and Kendierski capitulated to the detriment of children and it is clearly time for a change! Rebecca Van Voorhis-Gilbert, JD, PhD Orinda

When did school become political?

I was compelled to write a letter regarding the local school board elections as someone who grew up in Lafayette and have lived here for 20 years to raise my family. I have never been an active political voice but I felt the need to be heard for our children's well-being.

I am not active on social media but like many people, may log onto Nextdoor or Facebook every now and then to see what's happening. The anger and contempt that exists online is revolting.

I believe a school's primary focus should be academics. Pushing things like gender fluidity or accusations of white fragility onto young, impressionable children is a very serious and personal subject that generally should be discussed at home.

I admire anyone that has agreed to run for their local school board(s). It seems the main divide between the candidates is, do you want your schools to get back to focusing on academics, or are you in favor of pushing more social issues? Personally, I would like teachers to generally stick with reading, writing, and arithmetic and leave the social issues to the family.

I'm for getting back to education. Paul Souza Lafayette

... continued on Page A10

Re-Elect Sarah BUTLER

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, AREA 2

Experience Matters!

County Board of Education Trustee since 2018 former Orinda School Board Member (2012-2016) Board President, 2022, County Board of Education

Priorities include:

Student and Classroom Resources & Support School Safety and Mental Health Resources Transparency, Accountability and Oversight Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Parent and Family Engagement

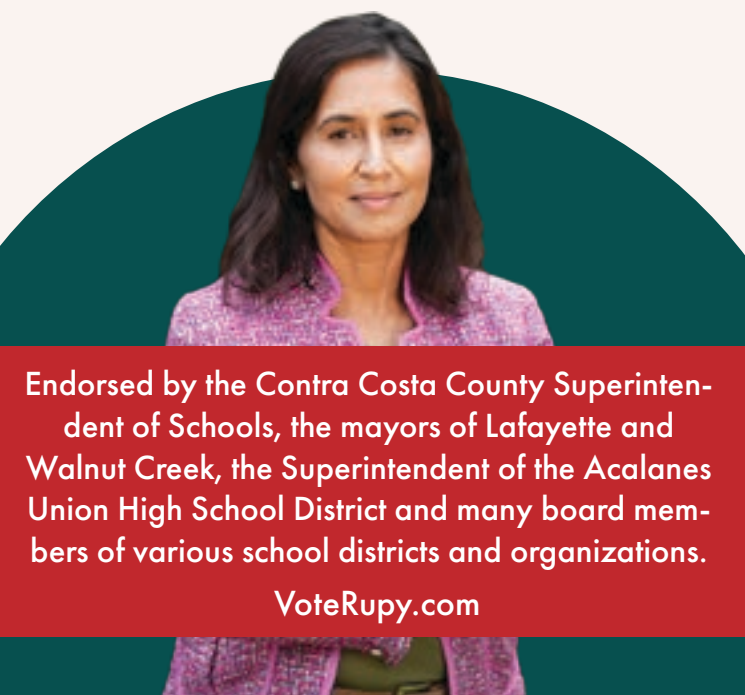


Endorsements on website: www.SarahButler2022.com

Paid for by Sarah Butler for CCC Board of Education 2022, FPPC #1410196

RUPY KRISHNAN

FOR CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION AREA 2



Endorsed by the Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools, the mayors of Lafayette and Walnut Creek, the Superintendent of the Acalanes Union High School District and many board members of various school districts and organizations.

VoteRupy.com

PAID FOR BY RUPY KRISHNAN FOR CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION AREA TWO 2022 FPPC #1453504

STUART HOUSE FOR ORINDA CITY COUNCIL

STUART SUPPORTS ...

- Orinda's schools in areas of intersection with the City to enhance OUSD's quality education plans.
- Senior Housing and Teacher Housing as primary components of the State-mandated Housing Element.
- The Precise Plan which improves the vitality and retains the charm of Downtown Orinda.
- Wildfire mitigation efforts including Measure R, the Orinda FireWise Council, and the MOFD wood chipping program.
- Traffic Safety and Traffic Calming measures (currently Vice-Chair of the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee).

ENDORSED BY: Orinda Mayor Dennis Fay, all members of the Orinda Union School Board, Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, The Lamorinda Democratic Club, The Orinda Education Association, Evolve California, Orindans for Fair Road Funding and numerous community and civic leaders of both political parties



VOTE NOV. 8

StuartHouse4OrindaCityCouncil2022.org

Letters to the editor

Vote Dell'Aquila & Roemer for an Independent MOFD Board

It's in the best interest of the Community that the MOFD Board be independent; not beholden to nonresident, interest groups. Four years ago, three candidates, whose campaigns were 100% funded by the Fire Union, were elected, and immediately became the majority of the 5-member MOFD Board (including electing one the three Board President). Since that time, this 3-member, non-independent majority, has voted as a 3 to 2 block against proposals by the independent minority members regarding funding for Key Fire Prevention measures, including: 1. Rather than spending \$450,000 of State prevention grant funding on fire break maintenance, they Transferred it

into the General Fund; 2. Reducing MOFD Fire Prevention grants for fuel reduction by \$250,000; and 3. Not budgeting even \$15,000, of the over \$30 million budget, to extend the critical Wood-Chipper program, into the hot summer of 2020. Both Vince Dell'Aquila and Mike Roemer are independent candidates, who are highly qualified, long-time community residents, well experienced in budget management, prioritizing goals and working collaboratively with all stakeholders. They will only represent the best interests of our community; not the non-resident entities, who fund their competitors' campaigns.
Bill Cosden
Orinda

A Statement from Former & Current School Board Members

AUHSD needs Board Members who are informed, engaged, independent thinkers.

Public schools rely heavily on state funding. School Boards transparently make educated fiscal decisions, with community input. The county certifies AUHSD's 3-year projected budget indicating it will meet all financial obligations. This reflects an understanding of education finance and prudent fiscal management.

The expressed goal of three slate candidates is to secure a majority of the board and immediately change the direction of our high schools. This is confounding given AUHSD continues to be ranked amongst the highest perform-

ing districts in the state/nation.

Effective Board Members use independent judgment to evaluate data and make decisions. Because these candidates are running as a slate with shared beliefs, there's significant risk that independent judgment and the community's desires will be usurped as acting in lockstep is prioritized over making decisions in the interests of students.

As former/current Trustees, we're concerned when individuals who have no prior involvement in our schools maneuver to advance a particular partisan agenda. Doing what is best for our students should transcend political ideology.

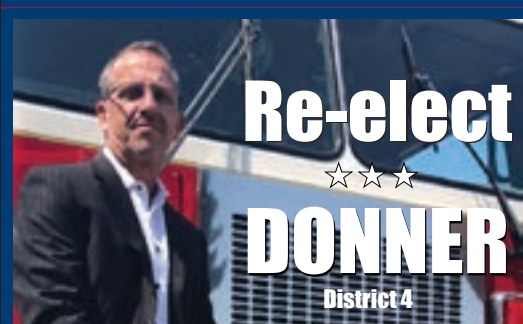
Please vote for the three candidates who have the requisite qualifications and who've demonstrated their commitment to acting in the best interests of students: Jennifer Chen, Nancy Kendzierski, and Christopher Severson.

Ann Appert, Trustee, Lafayette School District (2002-2010)
Liz Bettis, Trustee, Walnut Creek School District (2012-2021)
Angela Borchardt, Trustee, Walnut Creek School District (2003-2014)
Larry Briggs, Trustee, Moraga School District (1989-1992)
Judy Carney, Trustee, Acalanes Union High School District (2000-2008); Trustee, Lafayette School District (1993-2000)
Janelle Chng, Trustee, Moraga School District (2019-2024)
Kathy Coppersmith, Trustee, Acalanes Union High School District (2000-2020)
Vanessa Crews, Trustee, Acalanes Union High School District (2001-2010)
Liz Daoust, Trustee, Orinda Union School District (2018-2022)
Heather Davis, Trustee, Moraga School District (2018-2022)
Barby Eppinger, Trustee, Moraga School District (1983-1992)
Susie Epstein, Trustee, Acalanes

Union High School District (2010-2018)
Roger Falcone, Trustee, Lafayette School District (1999-2004)
Teresa Gerringer, Trustee, Lafayette School District (2000-2018)
Bob Hockett, Trustee, Acalanes Union High School District (2014-2022)
Cara Hoxie, Trustee, Orinda Union School District (2016-2024)
Kym Leserman, Trustee, Moraga School District (2010-2014)
Mary McCosker, Trustee, Lafayette School District (1989-2002)
Sherri McGoff, Trustee, Walnut Creek School District (2014-2018)
Aimee Moss, Trustee, Walnut Creek School District (2014-2022)
Maridel Moulton, Trustee, Moraga School District (1976-1982)
Tom Mulvaney, Trustee, Acalanes Union High School District (2006-2014)
Jon Nickens, Trustee, Moraga School District (2014-2022)
Jim Obsitnik, Trustee, Moraga School District (2014-2018)
Katie Peña, Trustee, Walnut Creek School District (2000-2020)
Julie Rossiter, Trustee, Orinda Union School District (2010-2018)
Richard Severy, Trustee, Moraga School District (2016-2024)
Shayne Silva, Trustee, Lafayette School District (1995-2012)
Shari Simon, Trustee, Moraga School District (2012-2016)
Margot Tobias, Trustee, Acalanes Union High School District (1993-2006)
Fred Weil, Trustee, Acalanes Union High School District (1987-2000)
Hillary Weiner, Trustee, Orinda Union School District (2016-2024)
Richard Whitmore, Trustee, Acalanes Union High School District (2002-2016)

... continued on Page A11

MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT



- I have fully supported our fire chief in his fire prevention efforts. The chief and I have a shared vision for district safety
- 4 decades of public Service
- Safety of the District is my number one priority
- Continue our increased efforts in Fire Prevention
- Restore Dedicated Ambulance Staffing in Orinda

Endorsed By:

State of California Democratic Party, Democratic Party of Contra Costa County, Lamorinda Democratic Club, Moraga Orinda Professional Firefighters Association, Orinda Teachers Association, California Professional Firefighters, International Association Of Firefighters, Matt Moran former Orinda Union School District President, Sarah Butler Contra Costa Board of Education President, Eve Phillips former Mayor of Orinda, Brian Offtedal Contra Costa County Fire Commissioner, San Ramon Firefighters, Alameda County Firefighters, Oakland Firefighters, Retired Assistant Chief Richmond Emon Usher, Contra Costa Firefighters, Retired Chief Vallejo current San Ramon Board Director Don Parker, Contra Costa Labor Council AFL-CIO, Diane Dwyer, Lecturer UC Berkeley Retired News Reporter, Local Business Leaders and many more.

Paid for by: International Association of Firefighters Local 55 Political Action Committee FPPC# 892160

Elect Greg Hasler

Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD)

Certified Public Accountant + Community Volunteer
PRIORITIZE FIRE PREVENTION - Keep MOFD Locally Controlled



Dick Olsen, Greg Hasler and Gordon Nathan



"During the 50 years our family has lived in Moraga I have been extensively involved in our local Fire and Emergency Medical Services. As a result of those experiences, I sincerely believe that at this November's MOFD Board Election Greg Hasler is the right choice to represent the interests of the residents of South Moraga (MOFD Division 1) -- as well as the interests of all the residents and taxpayers of the MOFD."

Dick Olsen, Former MOFD Board & Moraga Fire Commission
Past President of County Fire Commissioners Association
Moraga Citizen of the Year 2013

"As past two term member of the MOFD Board of Directors and three term member of the old Moraga Fire Protection Board, I think it is important to have Greg Hasler represent residents of MOFD as he has the financial skills and experience to add strength to the Board. He will listen and learn and ask hard questions on difficult issues. Therefore, I am supporting Greg Hasler for MOFD Board."

Gordon Nathan, Former MOFD Board & Moraga Fire Commission
Past President of County Fire Commissioners Association
Moraga Citizen of the Year 2011

"Please join me in supporting Greg Hasler for the Moraga-Orinda Fire Board. Greg supports the three fundamentals of a strong fire district: a laser focus on fire prevention (utilizing innovative technologies), strong financial oversight, and support for an independent fire district. Please, do what is right for Moraga's safety and our fire district's future: Elect Greg Hasler, MOFD board."

Anne Obsitnik, Co-chair, Bluffs Firewise community

Greg HASLER is endorsed by our Community Leaders and Hundreds of Community Members

(Titles for identification only. Partial list of supporters.)

Steve Glazer, California State Senator
Don Peralta, Former California Senator
Steve Woehleke, Mayor of Moraga
Ken Chew, Former Moraga Mayor
Karen Mendonca, Former Moraga Mayor
Dave Trotter, Former Moraga Mayor
Rochelle Tocchini, Former Moraga Town Council
Chris Severson, Acalanes High School District Board
Gordon Nathan, Former MOFD Director
Gene Gottfried, Former MOFD Board
Marna Eyring, Co-Founder Moraga Education Foundation
Dick Olsen, Former MOFD Director

John Jex, MOFD Board
Craig Jorgens, MOFD Board
Brad Barber, Former MOFD Board President
Dennis Fay, Mayor of City of Orinda, MOFD Liaison
Chris Laszcz-Davis, Lamorinda Presents Chair
Kathleen Duffy, Moraga Ridge HOA & Firewise Leader
Larry Jacobs, VP Sanders Ranch HOA
Anne Obsitnik, Co-Chair Bluffs Firewise Community
Melanie Light, Founder Lamorinda Firewise Neighborhoods
Dick Wilcox, Moraga-Orinda Citizens for Fire Safety
Ian Baird, Moraga-Orinda Citizens for Fire Safety
Moraga-Orinda Citizens for Fire Safety

Representing Moraga, not non-resident special interests.

HaslerforMOFD.com

Paid for by Greg Hasler for MOFD 2022, FPPC # 1454835

Letters to the editor ... continued

Yard signs reveal MOFD board agenda

Yard signs for Michael Donner and Steve Danziger, running for the MOFD board say "Ad paid for by International Association of Fire Fighters Local 1230 Political Activity Committee FFPC 744488." If the union is footing the bill for these campaigns, what might Donner and Danziger owe the union? How many dollars is the union spending this year? Last time the union ponied up at least double the money that an average campaign spends with no money from community members. How will balancing the interests of the union against the interests of the community, which is safety and fire prevention play out.

If past is prologue, these incumbents will not represent our community interests. The record shows that Donner and Danziger voted not to spend any of the \$400K windfall money from the admin portion of a grant. Both voted to reduce the home hardening grant program from \$750K to \$500K. Both Donner and Danziger voted against extending the free chipping program over the summer.

Our community needs to take back control of our MOFD from the outside special interests.
Melanie Light
Orinda

Dell'Aquila for MOFD

I support Vince Dell'Aquila for MOFD Board Division 3. He is a long-time resident with strong budget management experience. Vince is also 100% community funded and has received no special interest funding. As such, he's not beholden to the organization the Board oversees. That's smart governance.
Steve Sciamanna
Orinda

Elect Vince Dell'Aquila for MOFD Board - Division 3

Vince Dell'Aquila has the skills our community needs to run a professional MOFD Board.

The Board is legally required to represent the local citizens to do what is in our community's best interest.

Vince is a general contractor, coach and educator who is very involved in our community. Vince will listen to the residents and then guide MOFD's \$33 Million budget, large pension obligations and investment portfolio. The Board has hired an amazing Fire Chief and the best professional firefighting and emergency staff possible to run the day-to-day operations; the MOFD Board's role isn't to manage operations. The Board requires professionals, like Dell'Aquila, who have experience overseeing budgets with business and construction experience to help build Moraga's new fire station and represent only the interests of our community.

Dell'Aquila has received 100% of his funding from friends, family and local citizens and is endorsed by hundreds of local residents and community leaders. His competitor, according to the official State campaign records up to 10/11/22, has received 100% of his funding from non-resident organizations.

Support Vince Dell'Aquila as the most qualified choice for the MOFD Board.
John Kotowski
Orinda

The MOFD Election; Conflict of Interest

Candidates make promises which are impossible to hold them to.

Candidates are endorsed by individuals and institutions who may or may not know anything about the candidates' past performance.

And then there are financial endorsements. For individual donors, a contribution is a commitment to the candidate and the belief that the candidate will do the best thing for the com-

munity. But for institutional donations, one must ask "what are they looking for in return?"

Three MOFD Director candidates, Young, Danziger and Donner, to date are 100% funded by the MOFD employees' union. Four years ago that union provided over \$30,000 in funding to the candidates who then controlled the employees' contract negotiations. That contract comes due in another two years. The union was obviously happy with past results.

I smell a conflict of interest and will support their opponents Hasler, Dell'Aquila and Roemer.
Steve Cohn
Orinda

MOFD needs Greg Hasler as director

Over the past four years I have monitored the actions taken and not taken by the current Fire Board members. I see that they have failed to address the present and future financial needs of MOFD. Strong and successful organizations identify risks and how to prepare to meet them. MOFD needs Greg Hasler, who with his professional background would be a prudent, keen, and independent voice for our communities. I have known Greg for several years, and he is a man with admirable ethics and integrity.
Rachel Erickson
Moraga

Greg Hasler exceptionally qualified for fire district board

I am impressed with the strong financial professional background of Greg Hasler. Given his extensive experience, I know he will bring to the MOFD Board a skilled, perceptive, and independent voice to address what policies and practices should be adopted by the Board. His expertise is vital to meet the expanding needs for abatement, as well as for preparation to protect Moraga and Orinda from a devastating

wildfire.
William Weber
Moraga

David Shapiro for Moraga Shapiro for Town Council

David Shapiro is the strongest and most fitting candidate for Moraga Town Council. He clearly has the insight, intellect and aptitude to be a key contributor on the Town Council. I have known David and his family for over 20 years. Our youngest daughters grew up together. We need David on the Council because he can work efficiently and decisively to ensure our finances are protected. We need David because he will work diligently to find ways to fund the Town's now underfunded pensions. And, a very important topic looming in front of us all is finding ways to meet State housing mandates while protecting the interests of all Moragans. David's background as an accomplished attorney demonstrates his keen ability to strategize and to analyze the difficult issues facing Moraga. He will work earnestly to protect our community. I am voting for David Shapiro for Moraga Town Council and encourage you to vote for David Shapiro as well.
Jack Davis, Ph.D.
Moraga

Riley for Orinda City Council

Janet Riley has been instrumental in many areas of our civic life, especially supporting our treasured Orinda schools. She has served our schools in nearly every capacity, from chaperoning field trips to balancing six-figure budgets for Parents Clubs. We would especially like to call attention to her leadership of the Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO) as an example of her tireless advocacy for Orinda's families.

Janet's knowledge, experience, and willingness to listen to all stakeholders was a hallmark of her tenure on the board. She effectively brought together the

varying interests and priorities of the school community in an effort to do what was best for students. During her two years (2007 - 2009) as president of EFO (predecessor to ONE), the organization raised nearly \$3 million to benefit our schools.

Janet's clear vision and thoughtful approach to problem-solving make her a highly effective leader. We have no doubt that Janet Riley will bring an unwavering commitment to community service, fiscal responsibility, and consensus building to the table once she's elected to the Orinda City Council.

Karen Derr Gilbert, EFO President 2005 - 2007
Alison Holland, EFO President 2003 - 2005
Joan Kiekhaefer, EFO President 2009 - 2013

Janet Riley endorsement

It is my privilege to highly recommend Janet Riley to the Orinda City Council. I have known Janet for 30 years, and believe her to possess the skills and experience necessary to be an effective City Council member. Janet is an engaged, energetic, and open-minded Orindan who will help guide our City in a balanced and collaborative way. Please consider Janet Riley when you cast your vote in November.
Dayna Sayres
Orinda

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



Katy Foreman
EXPERIENCED LEADER IN LAFAYETTE SCHOOLS

- Lafayette School District "Rapport" Chair, 2021-22
- Lafayette Elementary PTA President, 2020-21
- Recipient of the Las Trampas Creek Council PTA's "Special Person Award", 2021
- 19-year Lafayette Resident

www.katyforeman.org

Endorsed by Lafayette Teachers via the Lafayette Education Association

Lafayette Education Association, as the representative for certificated and credentialed staff in the district, feels that **Rob Sturm, Dave Smith, and Katy Foreman** are the best candidates for Governing Board.

- Debbie Deltch, Lafayette Education Association President



Dave Smith
LAFAYETTE SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBER

- Lafayette School District Governing Board Member: 2021 - Present
- Lafayette Partners in Education Board, 2019-21
- Measure L Parcel Tax Leadership Team, 2019-20
- 20 years of executive leadership as entrepreneur in nonprofit, government, and business sectors

www.daveforlafayette.us



Rob Sturm
LAFAYETTE SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD PRESIDENT

- Lafayette School District Governing Board: 2017 - Present
- Lafayette School District Governing Board President: Consecutive Terms (2020-21, 2021-22)
- 30+ years of law practice and legal community leadership

www.robsturm.org

Our Shared Goals

**Academic Excellence • Fiscal Responsibility • Sustainability + Safety
Inclusion + Belonging • Mental Health + Wellness**

Supported by Lafayette Community Leaders

Current and Former Mayors, Lafayette Citizens of the Year, LPIE Presidents, School Board Presidents, Library Board Trustees, and Superintendents


Mike Anderson


Carl Anduri


Teresa Gerringer


Erling Horn


Don Tatzin


Janet Thomas


Tom and Karen Mulvaney


Danielle Silvani


Kristin Conneily


Jala Kaufman


Mary McCosker


Richard Whitmore


Rachel Zinn

it's April in Lamorinda for Real Estate



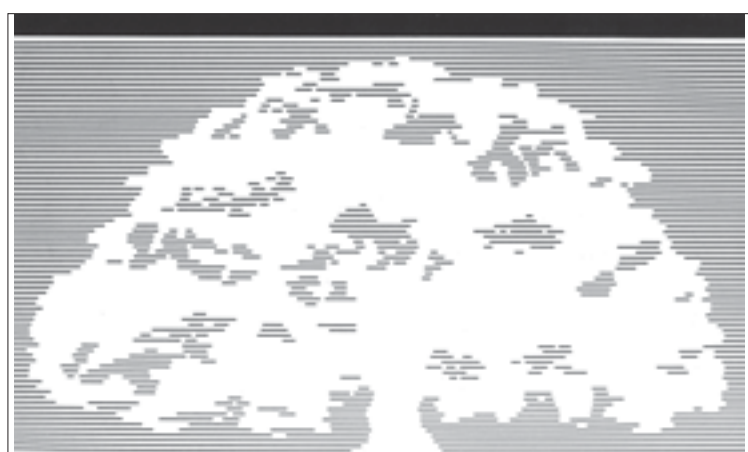
The Real Estate Market is Changing!

Interest Rates and Inventory are Up
Sales and Multiple Offers are Slowing
Homes that are Well Prepared and Priced
Appropriately are Still Selling

Put my 25+ years of Real Estate Experience to Work for you!
I have successfully navigated these types of
changing markets before.



April Matthews 925.200.0773 1.april.matthews@gmail.com DRE# 01221153



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Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary

Every Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.
Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building
OR Zoom Link at <https://lamorindasunrise.org/speakers>

November 2022 Weekly Speakers

Nov 4 - Alumni Day - All Lamorinda Sunrise Rotarians past and present are welcome to share camaraderie and stories of living the four way test.
Nov 11 - Jim Blair Director of College Advancement, Diablo Valley College. The Mission the Community Colleges
Nov 18 - Jim Marggaff - Lamorinda Sunrise's serial entrepreneur - Discussion of Rotary's involvement with The Golbal Impact Group
Nov 25 - No Meeting

CAIFF 2022 - film festival returns

... continued from Page A1

But these are two very different movies, with "The Last Film Show" painting a family and social environment that are unique, and giving a magnificent portrait of resilience with a very young child pursuing a dream.

As it is opening night for the CAIFF, the evening will start with a party at the Orinda Theatre catered by local Indian restaurant, Safran. Zemrak had decided to put the festival on hold during the COVID shutdown because he believes that the experience of the live audience getting together and sharing their enthusiasm can never be matched by an online event. He was proud to indicate that sponsors and donors are back to support the artistic endeavor.

After opening night the other films should continue to attract a wide range of viewers. Lubliner and Zemrak wanted to revive the tradition of offering free family movies during the weekend's matinees. The first is an animated musical comedy, "Cats Don't Dance," and the animator, Mark Dindal, will be at the festival to answer questions. On Sunday the festival is offering the musical-comedy-medieval-romance "The Court Jester" with a young Angela Lansbury and Danny Kaye.

Acclaimed foreign films have the lion share of the

lineup. "Perfect Strangers" from Israel or "Heroic Losers" from Argentina are examples of the comedies that Lubliner loves so much. He adds that comedies are really best enjoyed in the theater, on the big screen, feeling the amusement and hearing the laughter of your fellow movie goers. "Perfect Stranger" was initially an Italian film with such an intriguing storyline that Lubliner had been chasing it for years trying to get distribution. Now it has been produced and adapted in 20 different countries and finally the festival program director was able to get the Israeli version.

Several directors will be able to come to Orinda to answer questions from the audience. It will not be the case of Iranian director Mohammad Rasoulof, whose film, "A Man of Integrity," won the "Un Certain Regard" prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 2017. Rasoulof is currently incarcerated at Evin prison in Iran, which burned on Oct. 15 after a clash between police and inmates; he is reportedly still alive. Rasoulof was sentenced to jail for propaganda against the system since "A Man of Integrity" talks about oppression and what one has to do to survive.

The festival also features some remarkable documentaries such as "The Boys" that tells the adventures of the Sherman brothers who created so many unforgettable musical

scores for films such as "Mary Poppins" or "The Jungle Book." Lubliner adds that there is a lot of music in the festival such as the pianist who will play live during the presentation of the incredible 1922 classic film "Nosferatu," or the fun sing-along event scheduled for the movie "Grease."

Other examples of the exciting diversity of the 2022 CAIFF are "The Night of the 12th," a mystery/crime movie from France, "Fire of Love" – a true story documentary about two volcanologists, "Voodoo Macbeth" – Shakespeare in Harlem; the true story of "The King of Laughter," "Hallelujah" telling the story of Leonard Cohen, and more. Lubliner encourages all to check the website (CAIFF.org), trusting that if one is interested in a topic, the experience will not disappoint.

Closing night has been reserved for the Hungarian movie "Bet on Revenge." Lubliner says that despite the aggressive title this is a sweet movie where the real story of a horse intertwines with a wonderful love story. The director Gábor Herendi will join the audience on Zoom from Hungary.

Lubliner declares that he is a believer in the great movie theater. With a festival designed to impress, he and Zemrak wish to bring back the Lamorinda audience and beyond to the silver screen. Program, tickets and details at CAIFF.org

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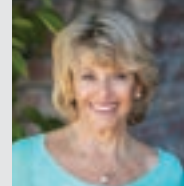
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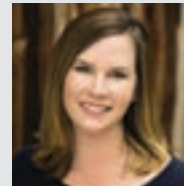
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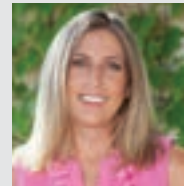
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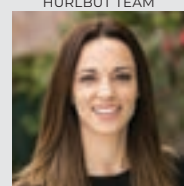
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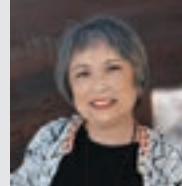
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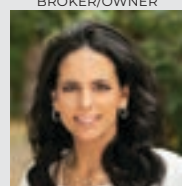
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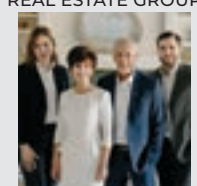
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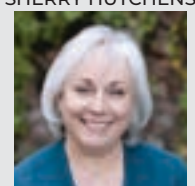
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~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

At Casa Orinda, the spirits aren't only the kind you drink



Photo Vera Kochan

Two orbs in upper left corner of the main dining room (circled)

By Vera Kochan

The popular fine dining restaurant, Casa Orinda (casaorindarestaurant.com), known since 1932 for its hearty fare and cowboy-type ambience, seems to have a bevy of guests remaining on the premises long after closing hours.

Located at 20 Bryant Way in Orinda, the establishment has had a colorful past back in the 1960s when illegal gambling, and possibly more, was delegated to the upstairs area. There was even a murder reported in 1965, by local newspapers of the day, when original co-owner Thomas B. Snow was found lying on his back beside his new car, shot on his way home along Taylor Boulevard in Pleasant Hill one evening. The case has never been solved.

Casa Orinda's employees and customers alike have experienced unexplained noises and ghostly sightings quite frequently. Although current owner, John Goyak, doesn't give any credence to the phenomenon experienced by others, he good naturedly consented to this article and an investigation.

General Manager Claudia Tata has devoted nearly 10 years to the restaurant, but can only claim one personal odd occurrence when she opened the main front door one day only to see a glowing, red ball of light float past her out of the building.

Bartenders have mentioned occasional odd and unexplained noises near the bar area; and one server refuses to go upstairs to the back room.

Tata explained that on two separate evenings children have witnessed ghosts in the upstairs area. During one sighting, a family was having a meal downstairs when the 9-year-old son asked Tata, "Who are the three people at the top of the stairs?" She looked and saw no one there. He asked her to follow him upstairs and kept insisting that the three "peo-

ple" were still there, yet she could see no one.

There are three tables for private dining upstairs. One evening a 5-year-old boy began screaming uncontrollably. Tata raced up the stairs and asked the father what was wrong. He replied, "Oh, my son sees ghosts."

Assistant Manager C. Rose has been with Casa Orinda for 25 years and used to experience electrical difficulties with the computer and printer in the office area upstairs. She often sensed the presence of three entities (a man, woman and child). She decided to acknowledge them with a greeting before she began her duties each day and has never had electrical issues again.

During this reporter's visit to the restaurant for interviews and photos, a shadow, very low to the ground, came around a corner and shot into another room. Several times, in certain areas of the restaurant, the flash feature on the camera refused to work, leaving the captured photo black as the restaurant has no windows downstairs to provide illumination. However, there were also instances when orbs (floating balls of light/energy) were captured on camera, too large to be considered a speck of dust.

Realizing that there was more here than just noises that went bump-in-the-night, Rose (email: lacienrose@mac.com), a practicing shaman, who helps people to create a happier space in their homes by seeing things through color, suggested that a friend of hers could be of greater help in identifying the activity.

Two days later, Holly Million, a professional shaman, artist, herbal medicine-maker and micro-homesteader arrived at Casa Orinda, in order to put some focus onto the odd happenings. According to her website (hollytheshamanartist.com), "When I was a child, I had one foot in this world and my other foot 'on the other side.' As I got older, I

realized that I was super sensitive to energies, people's vibes, intuitive insights. In recent years, I began to have more and more mystical experiences. As an adult, I realized the best word to describe me must be 'shaman.' A shaman is a bridge between the material and spiritual worlds, between the seen and unseen worlds."

Before this reporter even mentioned seeing a shadow two days earlier, Million stated she had seen one as well and said that not only does Casa Orinda have ghosts, it's loaded with them, and they are from varying time periods and walks of life.

In the course of 1.5 hours, Million spotted a woman from the 1950s wearing a knit dress in one of the dining rooms; George (a bartender for 30 years); Denny (another long-time bartender); a washer woman dressed in 1800s attire; and more – and that was just the downstairs. Upstairs she saw three women; and a man in back of the storage room who was dressed in dark western-style clothing with an intense demeanor. Even though the restaurant wasn't opened until 1932, Million stated that the different time periods where the ghosts come from are due to the fact that they often drift about, and then attach themselves to places that suit them. In Casa Orinda's case, it has always been a lively establishment, and so the departed have gravitated to the atmosphere and the company.

Rose has also seen a woman and a young girl (approximately 8 years old), often together, but isn't certain if they are related.

Million and Rose have agreed to return to the restaurant at a later date to perform a cleansing and release as many of the lost souls that are willing to move on. Hopefully, after that, the only spirits remaining at Casa Orinda will be in a bottle.

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Halloween events planned to brighten the season



Photo J. Wake

In addition to enjoying spooky (or somewhat silly) decorations displayed in Lamorinda neighborhoods (skeletons seem to be the popular item this year), community members can enjoy a few fall events for Halloween, such as the Halloween Harvest Festival at the Moraga Farmers' Market from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 30 – which includes a costume parade at 10:30 a.m. as well as mini pumpkin decorating – and the Halloween and Karaoke Movie Night, with Karaoke (at 7 p.m.) and "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" screening at 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29 at Town Hall Theatre in Lafayette. –J. Wake

For information, visit www.cafarmersmks.com/events/halloween-festival-wjz7f-yc825 and <https://www.townhalltheatre.com/>

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Make these mini Jack-o'-Lantern stuffed peppers, perfect for Halloween



Jack-o'-Lantern Stuffed Peppers

Photos Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

We love a good Halloween project and this one is deliciously edible! Carve orange bell peppers with cute little pumpkin faces and then stuff them with whatever filling you like, from rice and veggies to meat and cheese. Bake them in a casserole dish until the filling is hot and serve for a great weekday meal. It's a good dish to serve the kids before they head out to enjoy a whole bag of sweet treats on Halloween night.

We really love wild rice and it goes so well with arugula, shallots, goat cheese, Parmesan, mushrooms and the peppers to make a great vegetarian filling. But if you want to add meat to this mixture, that would be delicious too, or come up with your own ideas, which might include tomatoes, ground meat, cheese and spices. Make your own vegetarian or meat filling to cater to your family's tastes. You can also easily vary the cheeses used in this recipe by using cream cheese, or grated cheddar or even mixed Mexican

cheese. The wheat germ crust would be good on both meatless and meat filling. This crust is from The Vegetarian Epicure's recipe for Baked Stuffed Eggplant and it is fabulous. We love it all by itself, but it's wonderful as a crust topping for baked dishes like this!

Wild rice is one of our favorite foods, because it's kind of fancy and it has a nutty flavor, but it's also really good for the body. Not actually rice at all, but rather unrefined seeds from marsh grasses that are grain-free, wild rice is full of antioxidants and high in fiber, which is great for the digestive system as well as the heart. And if all that isn't enough, it's got the best bite when cooked al dente. It's delicious in stuffings, soups and pilafs.

Plan to carve the peppers before you cut the tops. The structure of the pepper is much stronger when it is whole, and that helps when cutting out their little faces! After you've created your face, then you can cut the top off the pepper and scoop out the seeds and the pith before filling them.



INGREDIENTS

(Serves 4)

Bell Peppers

- 4 orange bell peppers (They need to be orange for this recipe!)
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 shallots, or one small onion, chopped
- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- 3 oz. goat cheese, softened to room temp
- 2 cups arugula leaves
- 6 whole cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 1 large egg, beaten (This is optional, but holds the filling together a bit better than without the egg)
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp. lemon pepper
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground pepper

Wheat Germ Crust Topping (From The Vegetarian Epicure)

- 1 cup toasted walnuts and/or pecans, chopped
- 1/2 cup wheat germ
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan
- 2 tbsp. melted butter
- 1/2 cup half and half

INSTRUCTIONS

Stuffed Bell Peppers

Spray an 8x8 baking dish with cooking spray. Preheat oven to 350 F.

While still whole with stem intact, carve the eyes and mouth of your Jack-o'-Lantern on each bell pepper. Then slice off the top keeping the stem intact. Remove any seeds and white pith from the inside of the pepper and finish punching out any of your carvings that didn't come loose from the outside. Don't worry if the stem falls away from the top, you can just rest it on top when baking and no one will ever know the difference!

Heat oil in skillet and sauté shallots over medium heat until translucent. Add mushrooms and continue to cook for five minutes longer. Set aside.

Meanwhile, cook wild rice according to instructions. When cooked, mix with all of the remaining pepper stuffing ingredients: sautéed mushrooms and shallots, arugula leaves, goat cheese, egg, Parmesan, lemon pepper, salt and pepper. Mix well.

Stuff the carved bell peppers with the wild rice filling.

Wheat Germ Crust Topping

Melt butter and mix with all of the remaining ingredients.

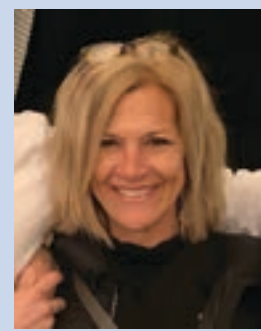
Distribute the topping evenly amongst the four bell peppers and spread out over the top of the rice filling.

Replace pepper cap with stem onto each pepper and arrange stuffed peppers into the prepared baking dish. Cover with foil.

Bake, covered, at 350 F for 25 minutes. Remove foil and bake for another 10 minutes uncovered.

Serve hot.

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>



Family Focus

Issues for grandparents and their adult children

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

"Young people need something stable to hang on to — a culture connection, a sense of their own past, a hope for their own future. Most of all, they need what grandparents can give them...."

~ Jay Kesler

"Grandparents, like heroes, are as necessary to a child's growth as vitamins."

~ Joyce Allston

If you are fortunate enough to be a grandparent, you know what a special position you hold. And how you have even more people in your life to love and nurture. But what if you don't feel very appreciated for all of your efforts and caring? Or, worse, what if you feel criticized when you are only trying to help? Sadly, some grandparents experience hurt from their children and their children's partners, the parents of their beloved grandchildren.

"Melanie" and "David" zoomed with me to discuss ways to cope with their difficult family situation. They have two grandchildren, ages 2 and 5, and their son and daughter-in-law live an hour away. Melanie always thought that when her only child, her son, had a family of his own, she would be closely involved in helping with the children. She has offered to babysit, but her offer has never been accepted. Yet her daughter-in-law's mother, who

lives nearby the family, babysits frequently. Melanie and David see the grandchildren for birthdays and holidays, and the little ones always seem to enjoy being with them. They have asked their son if there is anything they are doing that bothers "Gabby," their daughter-in-law, and he reassures them that nothing is wrong. It is hard and hurtful for Melanie and David to have such limited access to their grandchildren, and they feel powerless to change the situation.

Frequently, as in the case of Melanie and David's family, no one will discuss underlying issues that have led to some degree of estrangement. And sadly, grandparents have no way of knowing how to remedy the situation.

Another set of grandparents, Mitch and Sue, decided to take it upon themselves to propose visiting their son and daughter-in-law and family in another state rather than wait for an invitation that never seemed to come. Several times now they have said they would be in the area and would like to visit. They have never been invited to stay in their son's house, although relatives on his wife's side have been welcome to stay with them. They know they will stay in a nearby hotel, clear their plans with their son and family ahead of time, and limit their stay to just a few days. They are careful to accept

any limits their son and daughter-in-law present and to speak and behave in only positive ways. It has been hurtful and hard to be treated like distant relatives who aren't really welcome.

Both sets of grandparents had a good relationship with their sons when they were growing up. Although it's been mystifying as to why they are now deemed to be peripheral people in their sons' lives, each couple knows that their best course of action is to wait and be patient. They tried early on to find out what they could do to improve the relationships, but once they were told that "there was nothing wrong," they knew not to keep inquiring. If they speak up too often or forcefully, they could risk jeopardizing what little relationship they still have.

Too often the reasons behind this kind of shabby treatment are not rational and reasonable. Some friends who considered themselves loving and generous with their adult children and little grandson were criticized by their son-in-law for not contributing enough each month to their grandson's 529 college fund. The son-in-law is from an extremely wealthy family who are able to contribute large sums of money to the fund, whereas our friends give what they can afford. Sadly, this issue has interfered with our friends' ability to see

their grandson as often as they would like. And of course, the grandchildren in these situations are also the ones who are missing out on these valuable relationships with their grandparents.

Many people have unresolved issues with a number of things in their lives. Sometimes they project their dissatisfactions with their work or their relationships onto others. Parents of adult children and their partners can be the unfortunate recipients of various resentments and judgments that are not really warranted. And because some adult children don't examine their own issues and address them in constructive ways, they can be quick to find fault with others.

If you are among the grandparents who are not being treated fairly and respectfully, there are important steps you can take for yourselves. You can continue to be respectful of your grandchildren's parents by asking permission before sending gifts and also by asking for gift suggestions. You can exhibit patience and willingness to take direction from them when it comes to interacting with your grandchildren. You want to be sure you comply with the parents, especially if they are sticklers about things like food, screen time, etc.

In addition, you can work with a family therapist on your own and include your adult

children in sessions if they are willing. Many adult children appreciate their parents' willingness to be responsive to them and accepting of their viewpoints. If your adult children are unwilling to participate, it is especially important for you to find support for your understandable hurt and frustration. Books, such as "Rules of Estrangement: Why Adult Children Cut Ties and How to Heal the Conflict" by Joshua Coleman, PhD., can help and so can sharing your pain with trusted friends and family. And as always, don't hesitate to talk to a professional if you are experiencing unhappiness from this kind of heartache.



Margie Ryerson, MFT, is a local marriage and family therapist. Contact her at 925-376-9323 or margierye@yahoo.com. Her books, Family Focus: A Therapist's Tips for Happier Families, Treat Your Partner Like a Dog: How to Breed a Better Relationship, and Appetite for Life: Stories of Recovery from Anorexia, Bulimia and Compulsive Overeating are available on Amazon.com.

Worsley returns to Cal Shakes as executive director

Submitted by Kevin Kopjak

California Shakespeare Theater's board of directors announced Oct. 4 that Managing Director Sarah Williams will depart the Bay Area nonprofit theater organization following three years at the helm. Veteran arts leader, actor, and advocate Clive Worsley has been named to the newly created position of Executive Director. As part of a comprehensive

reimagining of the organization, Worsley will take up the newly created Executive Director role, which will oversee and direct the strategic vision of the organization.

"Our board knew we were dealing with change taking place on many levels at once: In the theater, in the performing arts, in the community, and on the land," said Betsy Streeter, Cal Shakes Board Secretary and leader of the transition team. "We

knew that no matter what happened, we wanted our work to reflect and extend the purpose and values that Cal Shakes has long embraced. Clive embodies these principles personally, in the community, and in his past work at Cal Shakes leading Artistic Learning, which makes him the ideal choice to come in and have an immediate impact."

Worsley has been a leader in Bay Area performing arts nonprofits as

an artist, educator, and administrator for over 30 years. From 2013-2021, Worsley served as Director of Artistic Learning and expanded the reach of arts education to communities around the San Francisco Bay Area. Worsley served as Artistic Director of Town Hall Theatre in Lafayette from 2008-2013, where he cultivated greater integration of the Main Stage and Educational Programs, including a shadow cast program for

teen actors. Under his direction, Town Hall built new community partnerships, recovered from a devastating flood, achieved financial solvency, and received numerous Shellie Awards.

"I'm delighted and honored to be back at Cal Shakes, and to help shape the next phase of this vital community resource," said Worsley. "As we steward Cal Shakes into the future, I'm grateful to the Board, leadership team,



Photo courtesy Cal Shakes

Clive Worsley

and staff who have worked tirelessly to support and advance the mission of the organization."

At 95, local sculptor continues craft



Photo Geoffrey Meredith

Sculpture Michael Rizza holds one of his pieces.

By Geoffrey Meredith

Imagine for a moment that you are nearly 95 years old, a widower for 28 of those years, and legally blind. As you lie down to take a nap, what do you suppose passes through your mind as you are in that twilight zone between awake and asleep?

Well, if you are Michael Rizza, what drifts into

your mind are the forms and materials for new sculptures. Rizza, who currently lives in Rossmoor has been sculpting for 61 years, completing dozens and dozens of pieces, ranging from tabletop-size to cast bronze pieces over 10 feet tall, many that were exhibited in the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery in Lafayette, until she went to Carmel. His materials encompass nearly everything used in sculpture: 10 different kinds of stone, bronze, aluminum, plaster and composites from all over the world.

Rizza grew up in the '50s in New York, which was becoming the center of the art world at that time. He was influenced by the largely organic, abstract forms exhibited by sculptors like Jean Arp, Constantin Brancusi, Barbara Hepworth, Isamu Noguchi, and Henry Moore. Before he became a sculptor, he says, "I was what you would call an architectural 'detailer,' doing the finished architectural drawings to create decorative details." He moved from New York to Louisville, Kentucky to become a supervisor. "As a supervisor, I was unable to create. So, I took a sculpture class at a local college, because when you're in architecture, you work in three dimensions." But he didn't really get the "sculpture bug" until he moved to California and took classes at DVC in both carving and metal sculpture, using the foundry there.

Since then, Rizza has created more than 500 sculptures, getting his materials from a variety of sources. He used to get most of the stones from a company in Oakland called Renaissance Stone, but the proprietor died last year. So, he now gets his stones from a Kansas quarry called "2 Sculpt." There's also a stone yard in Ventura. He explains, "I call them and ask them what they've got. They say, 'Don't you want us to send you a picture of the stone?' I say no, just send it to me – my hands are my eyes. Plus, it's been in the ground for a million years, and my job is to bring out the beauty that lies in it."

When he gets a block of stone, sometimes the block suggests a form. Other times he matches it with

a maquette, a small 5-to-6-inch model of his concept. He has many, many maquettes; when he receives a new stone which doesn't call out what it wants to be, he matches it with a maquette. He then makes a drawing on the stone from the maquette, and the sculpture flows from that. The maquettes are not for sale – they are his original pieces, and he wants to keep them as a set. He is planning on donating the entire set to the Italian American museum in Fort Mason, where many of the works by world-renowned San Francisco sculptor Benny Bufano are displayed.

Rizza has created so many sculptures he is running out of names for them. For example, he named one piece in alabaster "Spanish Ice" because that's what it was called by the people that quarried it. As another example, a piece of alabaster he got was tangerine-colored, so Rizza named the finished piece "Tangier." Another time Rizza had a piece of cut travertine marble which is often used for countertops. He wanted to do a piece in the style of Noguchi – not a copy, but his own interpretation of Noguchi's style. When the piece was finished, a friend of his looked at it and said "that reminds me of a Picasso." So, Rizza ended up calling it "Paguchi."

To sum up a 61-year career in his own words, Rizza says, "There are so many different kinds of stones. Most people only know marble, alabaster, soapstone, that's about it. But me, whenever I hear about rhyolite, pyrite, I have to carve it. It's my job is to take that piece of stone, which doesn't have any character, and make it alive. I was put here on earth to do that."

A selection of Rizza's work will be displayed in a special exhibition at the Valley Art Gallery in Walnut Creek, which opened Oct. 1 alongside the annual Fall show of new work from the gallery's stable of 100 artists. For information, visit ValleyArtGallery.org.

Rizza's work will also be on display in Tracy, Calif., at the Grand Theater Center for the Arts from Sept. 10 through Oct. 29. Call 209-831-6278 for details.

Every kid's dream – a new toy store opens in Lafayette



Photo Vera Kochan

Five Little Monkeys has toys for the young and the young at heart

By Vera Kochan

The toy store chain known as Five Little Monkeys has opened its seventh store in Lafayette (3527 Wilkinson Lane in La Fiesta Square), taking up residence in the space formerly occupied by Cake Box Bakery. The company's other locations are in Albany, Berkeley, Burlingame, Corte Madera, Novato, Walnut Creek and store number eight in Pleasanton.

Owner Stephanie Sala's first store opened in 2001, and with her family background, her involvement in the toy industry was almost inevitable. Her father, Andre Sala, a renowned designer of infant developmental toys, and her mother, Anna Hobbet, a co-owner and founder of a children's wear manufacturing company with several stores in the Bay Area, served to provide insight and support for Sala's toy store venture. The store's name, Five Little Monkeys, is a descriptive family phrase used to refer to Sala and her siblings. Her kids, ages 20 and 17, have both worked in her stores.

When asked if she had an eye to opening a store somewhere in Lamorinda, Sala replied, "It's been in my mind for a long time – I am always drawn to areas with good school districts that seem to really support local. As soon as I saw the old Cake Box building, I fell in love with it!

It is a charming building that fell into disrepair and needed someone to love it and see a future for it."

Officially opened in late July, the store is a feast for the eyes as well as the senses. According to their website, "Five Little Monkeys is a community based, hands-on toy store focused on providing unique, high-quality toys in a fun and friendly environment. Our carefully curated selection focuses on creative toys for imaginative minds that are educational, sustainable, and have exceptional play value."

Store Manager Cassie Warner agrees. "It's non-stop on the fun! You want to open stuff up and say, 'What is this?'"

It's not often when a toy store encourages children to interact with the toys, but Sala finds that concept very important. "Admittedly, this has been more challenging since COVID, but I always wanted to be a hands-on toy store where kids could play and experience toys first hand, rather than a place where kids were scolded and told, 'Don't touch that!'"

Five Little Monkeys sells toys that appeal to newborns as well as teens, and there's even a small "nostalgia" section stocked with Slinkys, Etch A Sketch, and other toys, for adults who want to walk down memory lane.

The store and its contents are meant to bring out the kid

in everybody. A floor-to-ceiling English cottage contains child-size kitchen appliances; and running along the upper circumference of the establishment is a diorama that will have a moving train rolling past the scenery. Dolls, stuffed animals, costumes, games, LEGOs, books, and toys to develop cognitive learning skills are just some of the many offerings at Five Little Monkeys. All this, and free gift wrapping with purchase.

Having won more than 25 regional and three national awards/recognitions, the chain was the first toy store to become a Green Certified Bay Area Business by offering toys whose impact on the environment is minimal. "I was reluctant to go into business at first, but my mom encouraged me, pointing out that if I had my own business I could run it however I wanted," explained Sala. "I made a commitment to my employees, the environment, the local community, and to the concept of learning through play at the outset."

Five Little Monkeys also takes pride in donating to local schools and nonprofits, as well as sponsoring youth sports teams and events. "We feel so loved and appreciated by the Lamorinda community already!" Sala stated. "We are very pleased with our decision to move here."

Store hours are: Sundays – Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Fridays-Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information visit: www.5littlemonkeys.com or phone: (925) 633-7510.

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Dr. Matthew Tamplen, who grew up in Lafayette and is a well-known Facial Plastic Surgeon with Kaiser Permanente, just opened a private practice in Downtown Orinda to better serve Lamorinda patients.

Matthew Tamplen, MD
Orinda Office:
77 Moraga way Suite G, Orinda
925-444-0824
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Double Board-Certified Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon.

White Pony Express launches annual Star Program



Photo provided

Submitted by Steve Spraitzer

White Pony Express (WPE) is launching its third annual Star Program with the help of local businesses. This unique holiday program uplifts lives throughout the county during a season where warmth is meant to be shared. Each star is hand-decorated and lists a specific item needed by an adult or child experiencing challenges. Businesses can display the stars in any creative way they choose, while clients and friends can select a star and purchase the item listed on the star. White Pony Express will schedule a time to pick up the gifts which will be beautifully wrapped and then delivered to neighbors in need. In this way, everyone can make the holiday season sparkle a little brighter.

To request your Star Program Kit, please contact Mandy at - mandy@whiteponyexpress.org or call 925-322-0604 Option 4. Learn more about WPE at <https://www.whiteponyexpress.org>

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

Vanderbilt admissions official to speak in Moraga



Annie Wells Photo provided

Submitted by Gary Irwin

The Rotary Club of Moraga is partnering with the Moraga School District and Acalanes Union High School District to present Annie Wells, the Assistant Director of Admissions at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN, who will speak about "The Ins and Outs of the College Admissions Process" at noon on Tuesday, Nov. 1 at the Holy Trinity Serbian

Orthodox Church.

Wells' talk will provide attendees a baseline understanding of the college admissions process along with insights to the financial aid process and what a college admissions officer from a highly selective university looks for in an application. Reservations are required at <https://moragarotaryevents.com>. The \$10 charge is to provide each person with a light lunch of a sandwich, chips, cookie, and bottled water. Rotary Club of Moraga is a service organization, within Rotary International, chartered in 1967.

"Rotary Club of Moraga has always supported the School Districts as evidenced by Club funding for Campolindo scholarships, buying security cameras for MSD schools, and sponsoring a multitude of Moraga Odyssey of the Minds teams over the years," stated Hubert Ma, Moraga Rotarian and event organizer. "Superintendents Nickerson and Parks, along with the Principals and PTAs, have been tremendous partners in this event. It is because of Superintendents Nickerson and Parks leadership that this event is happening."

You are invited to be a guest at a future Rotary noon-time Tuesday meeting; additional details can be found at <https://www.moragarotary.org>.

◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

Art

Lamorinda Art Alliance presents: Enhance and Abstract the Human Figure in Art with Melinda Cootsona, who will be conducting two instructional Zoom chats with LAA members on the topic of abstracting the human figure. Tuesday, Nov. 15, 3 p.m. will take us into the intriguing world of the cold wax process. <https://www.melindacootsona.com/>

Art Embraces Words – Oct. 29, 2 to 3:30 p.m. – Costume Event. Writers paint images with words. Artists tell stories with color. To-

gether they enrich our community. The Lamorinda Arts Council invites you to show up as your favorite literary or artistic character at its free program in the Lafayette Library. Emerging writers read from their work surrounded by artwork from local artists. In this way art literally "embraces" the spoken word. The final 2022 program will be a Webinar hosted by AEW alumni Denise Nomura and Natalie Samuels Wheeler in November; date TBD. Visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/art-embraces-words/> for more information. This program is made possible by a generous grant

from the Lafayette Community Foundation.

Valley Art Gallery presents "Focal Points" – A New Juried Collection for Fall. Through Nov. 12. Twice a year, the Valley Art Gallery juries works from their 100+ member artists to hang in a new exhibition. 1661 Botelho Drive, Suite 110, Walnut Creek, www.valleyartgallery.org; (925) 935-4311.

The Moraga Art Gallery's lush holiday exhibit, "Variations on the Theme of Beauty," debuts on Nov. 9 with a display of works by more than two dozen area artists:

ceramicists, sculptors, oil painters, etchers, and many more whose talents will be front-and-center until Jan. 15 at 432 Center Street in Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center. Ordinarily open Wednesday through Sunday from noon to 5 p.m., the gallery will be open daily between Dec. 1 and 24. Save the date: Saturday, Nov. 19, 5 to 7 p.m., free holiday reception to view the art, meet the artists and enjoy snacks and live music. www.moragaart-gallery.com, (925) 376-5407.

Art show at the Orinda Library Art Gallery. On display in November is "Looking Out, Looking

In: Paintings by Nicole Reader." View 13 paintings of contemplative people turning their eyes elsewhere. See more at www.nicolereader.com and lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits. Join the artist for drinks and refreshments at a reception on Saturday, Nov. 5, 3-5 p.m.

Fall open studios on Nov. 5, 6, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Nov. 12, 13, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be over 110 artists to visit and view their art at this free event. All artist and event details, including map, may be viewed at Eastbayopenstudios.com ... continued on Page B5

In Memory

John Arthur Baitx

Jan. 28, 1947 – Oct. 15, 2022
Resident of Moraga




John Arthur Baitx passed away peacefully in his home surrounded by his loved ones on Oct. 15, 2022. He was the youngest of three children, the son of Josephine and Alfred Baitx. John spent his youth riding through the hills and pear orchards of Moraga. He grew up in a time where you helped your neighbors, volunteered at the fire department and worked cattle with the local ranchers. John graduated from Miramonte High School in 1965. While part of the Moraga Horsemen, John met the woman he would spend his life with, Gail Gregory. The two were married in 1970 and raised four children, Tanya, Greg, Corey and Katy, on the same property where John grew up.

Following in his father's footsteps, John began his career as a firefighter in 1968. He served with the Dublin Fire Department for 31 years, retiring with the SRVFPD. John loved being an engineer, driving the fire engine on all the calls. It was during this time that his "fire family" was born. John often remarked that the bond between firemen was strong and universal. Even after his retirement, he continued to get breakfast with his brothers and reminisce about the years they served.

John greeted everyone with a smile and a joke. He laughed with friends and could talk for hours. Always up for an adventure, John loved to go crabbing in Oregon and fishing in Mexico. He looked forward to the many family vacations to Disneyland and visiting family in Southern California. John and Gail were fortunate to raise their children in the same town as Gail's sister Dana and her husband Don. Throughout the years the two families did everything together.

John's greatest passion in life was his family. His home was always open to the kids' friends, often becoming the center of all their activities. He enjoyed being part of all sporting and school events. John served for numerous years as a board member of Moraga Ranch Swim Club. Many summer nights were spent playing dominoes, watching the kids swim and creating memories. John volunteered building sets for musicals and grad nights, as well as the floats for homecoming every year. When grandkids came along, John's heart only grew bigger. He headed the Leos Club, a division of the Moraga Lions Club, in order to spend more time with his grandsons. Papa John could always be found in the bleachers or on the sidelines cheering on the grandkids.

John is survived by his wife Gail of 52 years, their children and grandchildren, Tanya, Chris, CJ, Luca and Grayson Rago, Greg, Kris, Gannon and Sean Baitx, Corey, Doug, Macy and Molly Eckley, Katy, Chris and Brann Binnings, Dana and Don Glasgow, and all the nieces and nephews he loved so very much. Papa John will be missed not only as a husband, father and grandfather, but as a treasured son of Moraga.

A Celebration of John's life will be held on Dec. 10 at the Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church in Moraga from 1-4 p.m. The Fire Department Last Call Bell Ceremony will take place at 2 pm. We invite all our loved ones to join us in saying goodbye to John. In lieu of flowers, John would love for you to watch an old Western movie and think of him.

In Memory

Deborah Clayton White

June 15, 1948 – Oct. 7, 2022



Moraga's Deborah Clayton White passed away peacefully in her home surrounded by her loving family after a year-long battle with cancer.

Debi, the oldest of three daughters of Frank and Betty Clayton, grew up in Yuma, Arizona, helping her family to run their feedlot business, raising thousands of head of cattle during her youth there. Graduating from the University of Arizona, she swore off the desert and made her way to the Bay Area in the early 1970s, where she met the love of her life, Tom White, and the two were married in 1974. Two sons, Matt and Michael, soon came, and the young family settled in Moraga in 1979.

For over 40 years, Debi was a fixture of the Moraga community. She involved herself with numerous local organizations, including the Moraga Junior Women's Club, Meals on Wheels, the Moraga Baseball Association, and the Moraga Ranch Swim Club, to name a few. Most notably, she worked as a teaching assistant at Camino Pablo Elementary School for 15 years, partnered with the legendary fifth-grade teacher, Glenn Robak, with whom she helped to educate Moraga's youth.

Debi was a devoted mother who loved spending time with her family. She relished in planning gatherings to bring the family together, including organizing Thanksgiving feasts each year for 35, Christmas trips to Paso Robles, where her parents and sisters relocated, and the annual family week at Tahoe Taverns, coordinating accommodations for 20. Her organizational abilities were unmatched.

In her second act, Debi partnered her knack for planning with her passion for travel by becoming a travel consultant in the early 2000s. For the next 20 years she expertly planned countless worldwide trips for customers, family, and friends. With their rotating "Travel Tribe," Debi and Tom traveled the world, experiencing diverse cultures, creating indelible memories, and developing deep personal connections with their companions. Debi's motto was "Life is too short to take a bad trip!"

Debi is survived by her husband of 48 years, her sons, daughters-in-law Jessica and Amanda, her three beloved grandchildren, Harper, Jonah, and Everett, and her two sisters, Suzie Rava and Pam Wilken. Beyond that she leaves behind an extensive network of friends and family that have been so supportive over these past few months. During her final days testimonials poured in from extended family, sorority sisters, book club cohorts, professional group members, travel companions, Moraga Ranch buddies, co-workers, fellow Indian Guides families, and numerous others who were touched by Debi during her lifetime. While ending too soon, Debi lived a full and rich life, leaving no stone unturned. Above all else, she will be remembered for her positivity, her sense of humor, and her head on approach to life.

A celebration of Debi's life will be held in November. In lieu of flowers, please consider a contribution in Debi's name to the Helen Diller Cancer Center at UCSF or to Hospice East Bay.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to story-desk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.

◆ **Not to be missed** ◆ **Not to be missed** ◆ **Not to be missed** ◆ **Not to be missed** ◆

Music

Shotgun Players presents "Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812" on Nov. 5 - Dec. 31. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 5 p.m., at Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Ave, Berkeley. From celebrated and award-winning composer Dave Malloy comes 'Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812,' an electro-pop opera based on "War and Peace." Cost: \$7 - \$65. For more info see <https://shotgunplayers.org/online/article/great-comet> or call (510) 841-6500 x303 or email boxoffice@shotgunplayers.org.

Trinity Lutheran Church presents: Celtic Concert: Jason Pollock and the Western Shore. Saturday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m. In this show, Western Shore will present the lively, energetic, compelling (and sometimes haunting) traditional music of Ireland and other Celtic lands. 1225 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton, Tickets: \$20 General; \$5 Student; 12 and under free. No one will be turned away! Proceeds support The Artists and our ongoing Concert Series. www.tlcplesanton.org/, (510) 512-2623

St. Paul's Concert Series is excited to present Austin & Owens Guitar Duo, featuring Travis Austin and Robert Owens in a spectacular performance on Nov. 12, at 7 p.m. We discovered this incredible guitar duo in the town of Lakeport, California, and invited them to join the limelight with us here in the East Bay Area. 1924 Trinity Avenue, Walnut Creek. Donations graciously accepted at the door (avg. \$20/\$10 Students) and in our online registration. All are welcome regardless of donation! <https://stpaulswc.org/concert-series/>

The Saint Mary's College Dance Company proudly presents "Unveiling," the fall dance concert created by nine senior choreographers from the Class of 2023, along with guest artist and alumna Micah Sallid. Nov. 17, 18, 8 p.m.; Nov. 19, 2 p.m. (also live-streamed); Nov. 19, 8 p.m., LeFevre Theatre, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga.

Theatre

Saint Mary's College Theatre Performance of "The Caucasian Chalk Circle" by Bertolt Brecht is the story of a big-hearted servant girl, Grusche, who rescues an abandoned baby in the midst of a military coup. Their journey of survival ultimately raises the question: who has parental rights - the rich woman who gave birth to the child, or the poor one who risks everything to protect him? LeFevre Theatre, 1928 St. Marys Road, Moraga. In-Person Show Dates: Thursday, Nov. 3, 8 p.m.; Friday, Nov. 4, 6 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 5, 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.; Sunday, Nov. 6, 2 p.m. www.stmarys-ca.edu/Caucasian-Chalk-Circle

Literature

The Viet Nam War: Two Perspectives. Author Steven Burchik will present "Compass and a Camera, A Year in Viet Nam." DAR member, Leslie Pfeifer, will present, "Flying Tigers and the Vietnam War." Thursday, Nov. 10, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Lafayette Library Learning Center, Don Tatzin Community Hall (across the library plaza). Free.

Tyler Bridges will discuss his new book, "Five Laterals & a Trombone," that documents the wildest finish in a college football game, the Big Game between Cal and Stanford in November, 1982. He traces the ups and downs, mood swings, and hijinks surrounding the 85th Big Game between the University of California at Berkeley and Stanford University. Wednesday, Nov. 16, 4:30 p.m. Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, Orinda, (925) 254-7606, www.orindabooks.com

Other

The W.C. Elks Lodge No. 1811 is conducting its famous Annual Haunted House is on Friday, Oct. 28 and Saturday, Oct. 29 from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. located at 1475

Creekside Drive, W.C. Come to the Scary, Spooktacular and Spine-tingling haunted house with games and treats afterwards! Adults \$12 and Kids under 18, \$8. Proceeds go to Elks charities. Contact Mike Rittenhouse coach_ritt@yahoo.com.

Mocktails & Cocktails, Sunday Oct. 30, 3 to 5 p.m. Join those who love art, literature, music and everything in between at The Coop, 32 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Time for some artsy conversation with Ani Breslin and Elana O'Loskey of the Lamorinda Arts Council. Look for our framed poster of a crazy art lady - that's us! No host bar. Just show up. Email literary@lamorindaarts.org.

Free Parent Enrichment series offered in Orinda at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Episode 1 ("The Gift of Love") of "The Kindness Diaries" will be shown from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 9. Pizza, bottled water, and childcare will be provided. There will be Q&A after this short film with a Marriage and Family Therapist. The premise of this series is that Leon travels the world relying entirely on the kindness of strangers for food, shelter, and gas for his vintage motorcycle. Looking for the good in humanity, this film looks at the nature of generosity and gives glimpses into the hearts of some truly selfless people. Random acts of kindness are repaid in unexpected gifts.

Appreciating Diversity Film Series presents Diversity Film Series: Education/Sports for Girls on Thursday, Nov. 3, from 7 to 9 p.m., at Ellen Driscoll Playhouse, 325 Highland Avenue near the corner of Oakland Avenue, Piedmont. Come see two award-winning shorts films about Education/Sports for Girls. "Mink!" and "Almost Famous: Queen of Basketball" at ADFS in-person reopening. Cost: Free, no RSVP needed. For more info see <https://diversityfilmseries.org> or call (510) 655-5552 or email Maude@diversityfilmseries.org.

The Cycle Recycle: Don't toss that repairable bike on the garbage heap! For the month of November, Bobbie and Tom Preston are accepting repairable bikes that will be refurbished by volunteers and various biking organizations and distributed to kids, refugees, and those in need by White Pony Express, The Bike Charity Institute of Alamo, Keeping our Promise, and Waterside Workshops. New and/or used adult or children's bikes—in working order or repairable—or useable bike parts may be delivered to the side driveway of the Preston's home at 1307 Larch Avenue in Moraga through the month of November only. No skateboards or plastic bikes please; no need to call beforehand, but for more information contact Bobbie or Tom Preston at (925) 376-8474.

Please join us for a Veterans Day Vigil on Monday, Nov. 11, at 4:30 p.m. at the Lafayette Hillside Memorial. The memorial is across from BART in Lafayette. Thoughts will be focused on U.S. soldiers who have served on behalf of our country and the sacrifices they've made. It will include short speeches, music and reflection. www.lafayettehillside.com

Mindful Littles welcomes Bay Area families, community members, and businesses to celebrate its 4th Annual Peace & Kindness Carnival in Orinda. The carnival includes community service projects benefiting local nonprofits, carnival games, face painting, food trucks and more. Sunday, Nov. 6, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Orinda Community Park, 28 Orinda Way, Orinda.

Garden

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will hold its monthly meeting on Monday, Nov. 14 at the Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Dr, in Walnut Creek. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a brief business meeting, social time and an educational program. Guest Speaker and Contra Costa Master Gardener, John Fike, will give a fascinating talk on succulents. www.walnutcreekgardenclub.org. Master Gardener Website: www.ccmg.ucanr.edu

Moraga Garden Club. Free Lecture: "Garden Tools", Thursday, Oct. 27 at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday, Nov. 5 at 10:30 a.m., Moraga Library, sponsored by the Moraga Garden Club. What to use, when and how to use them, and getting them ready to put away for the year! Master Gardener Keith Silva will tell you all you need to know! Free raffle for 6 Corona tool sharpeners. Register at MoragaGarden-Clubevents@gmail.com (indicate which date and how many will attend)

Lafayette Garden Club monthly meeting begins at 10 a.m. on Nov. 10 at the Veteran's Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. John James will be the guest speaker. He comes from an artistic family with a father who was a landscape architect. As a young boy, John would create wildflower arrangements for their home. He later became a talented floral designer and landed a rewarding job with Stanley Gatti in San Francisco and then opened his own design shop in 1997. The meeting is free to attend. If interested please contact LGCMembershipCommittee.com.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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ONLINE WORSHIP SCHEDULE
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682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, www.stanselms.us

ORINDA Community Church
10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org
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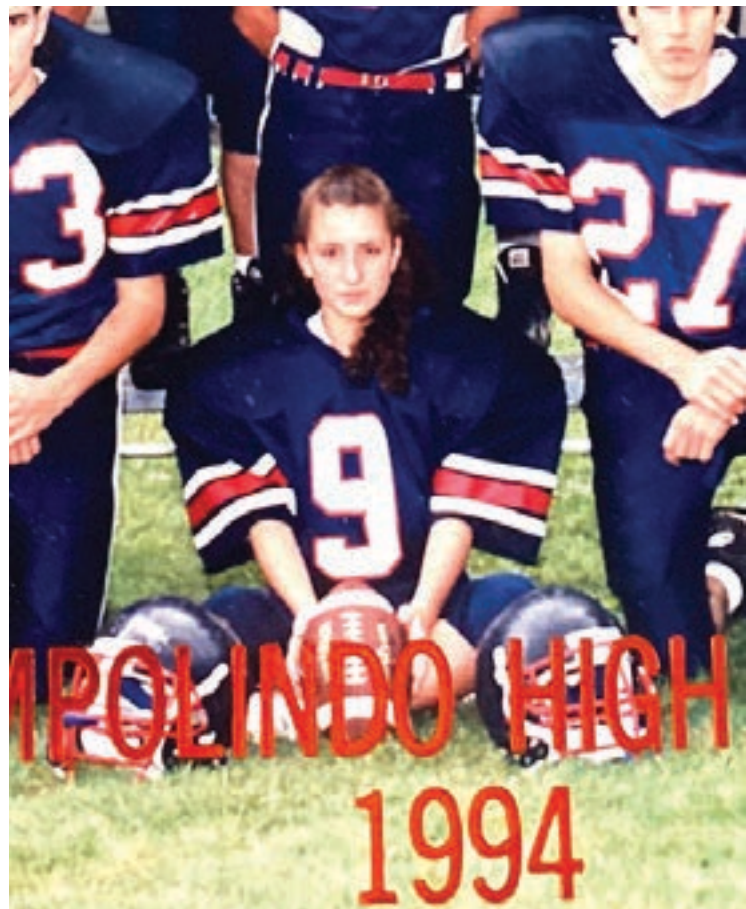
Sunday Service 10 am or join us online.
Mondays 9:30 am Centering Prayer in the Chapel
Wednesday 10 am Contemplative Worship in the Chapel

LAMORINDA SPORTS

The two Campo females who broke the glass ceiling in football, 28 years ago



Pamela Anderson, 1994



Kim Henry, 1994

Photos provided

By Jon Kingdon

When our story about six girls playing football in Lamorinda was published a few weeks ago, Dan Hagen, Campolindo's head coach before Kevin Macy, wanted it known that the "glass ceiling" on the football field had been broken 28 years ago by Pamela Anderson (now Cridlebaugh), a linebacker, wide receiver and special teams player, who played for the Cougars her senior year and by Kim Henry (now Anderson), a placekicker who played for the JV team as a junior in 1994 and the varsity in 1995.

In 1994, when it came to Hagen's attention that there were girls who wanted to come out for the football team, he was excited at the prospect. "I encouraged it because I thought it was a challenge for the girls, like climbing Mt. Everest and thought that it was a neat thing," Hagen said. "I did have some reservations about the velocity of the game at the varsity level for the girls."

Each of the girls had a different reason for going out for the team. For Pamela, it was at the suggestion of her friend Rhianna Street, also a football fan, that they should sign up for spring practice for the football team. "I was always up for a challenge, especially for things that are hard to achieve," Pamela said. "Rhianna ended up not playing because she had to work. I stayed and actually enjoyed it even though it did kick my butt. At that point, my teammates were my friends, and everyone was nice and supportive. When I went out for the team in the fall, Rhianna became one of the team's managers."

Pamela's parents were

caught off guard when they heard about her decision to play football. "We had been away for the weekend when Pamela sat us down and said that she made a decision which was to try out for football," Pamela's mother, Patti said. "Our first reaction was 'No way,' but we had always taught her and her younger sister, Stephanie, that as a woman, you can do anything that you want."

Ironically, Pamela's father Karl, was not allowed to play football at St. Ignatius because his mother was afraid that he would get hurt. Karl would not stand in Pamela's way. "We always told our daughters to never take no for an answer. I first said no because if I were a boy playing against you, I would look for you and hit you so hard," Karl said. "All during the summer when she was training with the team, a number of the other players' parents kept asking me why I was making my daughter play football and I told them that it was her decision alone."

Pamela had not played on any sports teams prior to going out for football because she was a competitive dancer who performed with the California Academy of Performing Arts and traveled to Japan to dance with the team. "I suffered a torn ACL in my knee and was put on the sidelines," Pamela said. "After the rehabilitation, Dr. Lucie, who was a doctor with the 49ers got me a knee brace that allowed me to play football."

Hagen spoke to the football team prior to the girls' arrival. "I talked to the players and told them that this was something that we wanted to support, and they were, for the most part, accepting of it," Hagen said.

"When we had home games, the visiting teams always had an interest in the girls on our roster and attendance at the games was up 20%. The gate went up, but that money went to the district which didn't vary for us according to the attendance."

The experience was difficult for Pamela on more than one level. "It was really challenging physically and mentally in that I did not find a lot of support from a number of the players who had been my friends because I was getting a lot of attention," Pamela said. "I was emotional some evenings, and even though my mom said I could quit, I would not let them make me quit. So, I did what I was strong at, learning all the plays and coming to practice and giving my best. Three-a-day practices and the social aspect were really challenging but players like Darrin Takakura and Eric Brown always ran drills with me and were very supportive along with my high school boyfriend and a number of my classmates. I think that it's pretty awesome that there are five girls playing for Campolindo now."

Hagen was also always there for her and Kim. "Coach Hagen was a blessing. He was very supportive and complimentary and made me feel I could do it, which is exactly what I wanted from a coach. Kim and I were lucky to have him as part of our journey," Pamela said. "Plus, he did not put me in situations where I would get my ass kicked and he shared that with my father."

At 5'10", Pamela was an outside linebacker, played wide receiver and was on the punt return team in the games. "We had a drill where Pamela was

holding the bag and a runner came through the line and she stepped up and put him down on his butt," Hagen said. "She knew the playbook as well as any of the players and after half the season it was no longer a big deal."

Looking back, Pamela feels it was a mostly positive experience. "I was able to do something that most people felt I couldn't or shouldn't do and I had so many people that rallied around me," Pamela said. "It really left an impression that we can do really hard things when we put our minds to it, even things that seem insurmountable and that really carried me through some physical, mental and intellectual challenges in my career."

When applying for college and law school, Pamela listed her football experience on the applications. She would go on to graduate from San Diego State where she was on Panhellenic – the collegiate sorority governing body – and was also voted the school's Homecoming Queen her senior year. She met her husband, Travis, who had played football at San Diego State. She is now an attorney and Vice President for Human Resources for Niagara Bottling and lives in Southern California with Travis and their children Kellan (10) and Emma (8).

For Kim Henry Anderson, playing football at Campolindo was an extension of her talents as a soccer player. "I played soccer growing up, and I competed in the Powder Puff football games during homecoming when the players saw me kicking a football on the sidelines, and they asked me to try out for the team," Kim said. "I kicked for the JV that year and the varsity the next year, kicking extra points and a couple of field goals."

Her time on the football team proved to be very memorable for Kim. "My parents were super supportive, and it was, in fact, one of the best experiences of my life," Kim said. "The guys on the football team were very accepting and encouraging and if I did get hit on a roughing-the-kicker penalty, my teammates had my back. They would get pumped up and play that much harder. I was lucky that I had a line that did a good job in protecting me."

Learning to kick a football and developing the timing with the snapper and holder, Kim soon learned that she would have to kick the football differently from the way she would kick a soccer ball. So after receiving a flyer about a kicking camp in Oakland from Coach Hagen, Kim signed up for it on her own and further developed her football kicking skills.

Wearing the requisite football gear was also a learning experience. "It was brand new to me," Kim said. "I was practicing kicking on the sideline

and the coach called for me to run sprints with the team who were at the far side of the field. I wanted to show the guys that I was also working hard so I sprinted as fast as I could towards them, and my pants fell down in front of the whole team because I did not know I needed to have a belt for my pants. The next day the team presented me with a belt."

As a female on the football team, Kim found it easier to deal with her teammates than with those on the soccer team. "Looking back at my journey at Campo, what I liked about being able to play on an all-male team was finding them more forgiving when you made a mistake as opposed to how it was handled on the soccer team which would hold on to grudges for most of the season."

Off the field, Kim's presence provided the coaches with the unexpected. "After the JV game, I had dressed up for the homecoming court and was putting on my makeup when a coach said that this was the first time he had ever seen anyone do that before in the locker room," Kim said. "In my senior year, I went out at half-time in my football uniform, along with some of the boys who were also in uniform."

Kim went to college at UC Davis and played for their lacrosse team the next four years, ultimately playing for the USA West Coast lacrosse team that got to play overseas. Kim and her husband Chuck now live in Moraga with their kids, Cale, a junior, and Declan, a sophomore, at Campolindo. Their daughter, Hope, is in sixth grade at Joaquin Moraga and Kyburz is in third grade. Kim has taught in the Moraga School District and is now Director of Faith Formation at the St. Perpetua Elementary church.

When Kim learned about Lucca De Biasse, the girl who is kicking for the Acalanes JV football team, Kim wanted to acknowledge her accomplishment. "When someone posted on Lamorinda Families about Lucca, I did a shout out to her, welcoming her to the club and hoped that she was having a good experience."

For Dan Hagen, the experience was more than just having two girls on the Campolindo team. "It had a unifying effect for the boys who were protective of the girls, and it encompassed them in appreciation that they made the effort to be on the team so that was a unifying effort," Hagen said. "All in all, it was a positive experience for the entire school, and I think the community also got involved and appreciated that the girls were participating. It was a growth factor for me in the sense that it widened my perspective about having the girls play."

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Girls' tennis teams gearing up for post-season tournaments



Photos Grace Kim

Miramonte's No. 1 singles player, Soleil Skjorshammer

Undefeated No. 2 singles player for Miramonte, Caitlin Chan

By Jon Kingdon

It's been an overall successful season for Acalanes, Campolindo and Miramonte and once again each of them found their toughest opponents in Lamorinda.

Miramonte

After eight years as an assistant coach to Mike McCullum, Riki Sorenson was promoted to head coach after McCullum's retirement. Sorenson's first season was during the pandemic and as things were finally settling down, she had to address the recent heat wave.

The first step was to move their practices to the evening and after that it was a matter of getting the players used to the high temperatures. "We made sure to acclimate the girls," Sorenson said. "We took it really easy at the start when it was especially warm and when it got really hot, it wasn't that big a deal for the girls not feeling the exhaustion they went through the first couple of days. They were just playing and having fun."

There were still many precautions taken by Sorenson. "We made sure that the girls were hydrated," she said. "We talked about strategies with cold towels and ice and when a few of the girls had more issues with the heat, we sat them down until it cooled off and then they were back to playing."

As a former college athlete at Stanford, Sorenson brings a player's mentality to the team and an understanding as to what it takes to be successful. "I see greatness in this team though they don't see it in themselves," Sorenson said. "However, they are gamers. The stronger the opponent, the better they compete and without fear. They have to learn the mental aspect of the game as they have learned their physical skills. Time will tell just how much this team can achieve. When they are ready for a match, physically, emotionally, and mentally prepared, they are really competitive and the key is to keep that level all the time."

Miramonte has a great deal of depth with 20 girls on the team and great class balance with five seniors, five juniors, four sophomores and six freshmen. The singles players have been a strength of the team. "Our top six are very strong and seven through 20 are very close in ability which makes for very high-quality practices," Sorenson said. "I've never had so many freshmen on one team with two, Caitlin Chan and Maddie Silveira, our number two and four singles players."

The number one singles player is junior Soleil Skjorshammer. Seniors Elena Sullivan plays number three and juniors Nicole Hui and Nicole Guo round out the group. "Elena has been a pleasant surprise for us," Sorenson said. "She is a phenomenal athlete and is someone who is able to adapt in the middle of a match to figure out what to do to beat her opponent and she has gotten stronger each match. With the two Nicoles, there is never a letdown and it's amazing to have girls that will put it on the line every match."

Sorenson attributes much of the success of the singles

players to assistant coach Julie Silveira: "Julie, who is a top player in her own right, is working closely with our singles players and they are so lucky to have her expertise."

The doubles teams are still works in progress where chemistry is the key. "We have one partnership that is really strong in junior Ali Rhee and sophomore Audrey Kosla, and we've been working on new combinations," Sorenson said. "Emily Suh and Jessica Hui, a sophomore and a freshman, are starting to figure it out."

Heading into the postseason, Sorenson has been able to count on the upperclassmen to lead the team. "They are extremely inclusive, kind and great role models showing how to balance athletics, academics and just being good people," Sorenson said.

To be successful in the tournaments is a matter of not letting up, according to Sorenson. "We have to take advantage of every opportunity to improve every day," she said. "They have the talent, and they just need to channel it and get serious in their competitive spirit."

Campolindo

With an 8-2 league record, both losses coming against Miramonte, it has been a successful season so far for the Cougars and head coach Sunun Faulkner. Unlike Acalanes and Miramonte, during the head wave, the Cougars moved their practices to 6:30 in the morning. "Our girls really show good sportsmanship and are very team orientated. Every one of them came out for those practices," Faulkner said. "I don't think we would have played as well had they not come out for those practices, which allowed us to win the James Logan Tournament early in the season."

The singles are led in order by senior Alex Goett, sophomore Sophia Raldugina-Zhu, seniors Sienna Carroll and Paige Davis, junior Dilara Basegmez and freshman Summer Chang.

"We have a solid team from top to bottom and I can say that, overall, this is one of the strongest singles lineups I've ever had with a lot of depth," Faulkner said. "Alex always takes on our opponent's top player and often goes to third set tie breakers. Sophia is a very hard worker and has gotten better and better. Sienna has played very well and Paige who is a great athlete and a top lacrosse player. Dilara is a real fighter and has improved every year and Summer, as a freshman, will only get better and better."

The doubles teams have always been a strength for the Cougars.

"My number one doubles team are seniors Liesel Hilkemeyer and Emily Floyd. Alyssa Muller and Louise Goldblatt are the number three doubles team. Louise is a senior and it's her first year on the varsity and it has been a pleasant surprise," Faulkner said. "She will run anything and everything down and makes some impossible shots and I'm just so excited about her."

Goett and Hilkemeyer are the captain on a team with eight seniors. "They have been good leaders and the senior

group as a whole have been good leaders as well," Faulkner said.

With so much depth on the team, Faulkner has a lot of options when the North Coast Sectionals come up. "We are deep enough in singles that I may move some of them to doubles and then move some lower line singles players up," Faulkner said. "It should be very interesting to see how things turn out."

Acalanes

Head coach Janice Metzger and her staff have been very consistent in league play with a 5-5 record and four of the losses coming against Campolindo and Miramonte.

The attitude that the staff wants to imbue in their players is for them to know that it is fun to win, but the most important goal for the team is that they enjoy themselves while fighting hard and doing the best they can. With nine seniors on the roster of 19, many of the players came out for the team during the pandemic, a difficult time for all, but the players also found a way to bond.

Leading the team all season has been senior Ari Ruczynski

who has been a dominating player. Following close behind have been Martha Burns, freshman Aamena Shipchandler, Ashley Donner, Siena Moise and Cate Condy. Piper Duff has played both singles and doubles all season.

The doubles teams have complimented and given a lot of support to the singles players led by the pairing of Emily Berkowitz and Kailyn Broad, consistent winners all season. Marcella Wisniewska and Lucy O'Brien and Olivia Dawkins and Liv Heglie have all had a good deal of success throughout the year.

In keeping things light, every match for the Dons was a "dress up day" for the team where a theme was chosen for all the girls to dress up to. There was a country-western day, a rainbow day where each girl was assigned a color to

wear and even a day when they dressed up as one of the coaches.

Ruczynski is the team captain and many of the seniors have also taken the mantle of leadership as a number of them are on the leadership group at the school. The seniors have done a good job in bring up the newer players. The players have been more than accommodating in moving from singles to doubles and vice versa. This is a team that likes to be together and play together as well.

With the DAL tournament coming up, the players will have the option to decide whether they want to play singles or doubles. Metzger plans to work with each of the players but will be allowing them the independence to decide where each feels they will fit in best.



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Matador Express delivers rock music to high schoolers



Photo Casey Scheiner

The Matador Express performs a variety of 1970s rock and roll songs Oct. 20 on the Miramonte Quad.

By Casey Scheiner

As students devoured their lunches between classes on Oct. 20, a harmony rang out across the Miramonte quad very different from the usual murmur of conversations: rock and roll. During lunch, the high schoolers listened to their fellow students perform

a selection of rock classics. The group, known as the Matador Express, consists of Miramonte students and a teacher who perform together at school.

The band traces their roots back to the end of last school year, when band teacher Thomas Dwyer and English teacher Steve Poling conceived the idea for a group

in which students and staff played rock music together. While Poling had to leave the band due to other educational commitments, Dwyer continues to lead the Matador Express, in addition to his other capacities as the teacher of both the Symphonic Band and the Jazz Band.

"I've been here three years and I'm trying to build

up the music program, and this is a great way to do this," Dwyer said. "[Poling] suggested we have staff play with students in a rock band, and I thought it was a great idea. Since then, we've been practicing during academy periods when the students have time for independent study."

Much like their teacher, the student members of the Matador Express bring great enthusiasm to their performance, explaining why Miramonte students enjoy both listening to and participating in their concerts.

"I only joined [Matador Express] a month ago, but I'm already enjoying it because I get to be in a rock band," Miramonte sophomore Thomas Boifort, a member of the Matador Express, said. "Bass and guitar are my favorite instruments, so I really enjoy playing metal and rock."

This time, the group focused on rock anthems of the 1970s, like "25 or 6 to 4" and "Does Anyone Really Know What Time Is," both by the

band Chicago. However, in future performances, the group may shift to a different time period of rock and roll history.

"Next semester we may add more modern tunes, like from the 90s or 2000s," Dwyer said.

Spectators met the performance with great fanfare, flocking to the quad to take in the music of the Matador Express.

"The concert was lively and lit up the mood for all students," Miramonte junior Kokomi Banerjee said. "I really like having live music on campus because it boosts moods and makes school a more enjoyable place to be, especially during lunch between hard classes."

Fortunately for students like Banerjee, the Matador Express has no plans of stopping.

"We're planning on doing another performance this fall," Dwyer said. "In the spring we'll have brand new tunes and perhaps new performers."

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Publishers/Owners:
Andy and Wendy Scheck; andy@lamorindaweekly.com, wendy@lamorindaweekly.com
Editor: Jennifer Wake; jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com
Sports Editor: sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com
Advertising: 925-377-0977, Wendy Scheck; wendy@lamorindaweekly.com

Staff Writers:
Vera Kochan; vera@lamorindaweekly.com, Sora O'Doherty; Sora@lamorindaweekly.com, Jon Kingdon; sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com, Digging Deep; Cynthia Brian; Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com, Food: Susie Iventosch; suziventosch@gmail.com
Contributing Writers:
Conrad Bassett, Sophie Braccini, Diane Claytor, John T. Miller, Fran Miller, Jenn Freedman, Mona Miller, Moya Stone, Margie Ryerson, M.D. Jones, Linda Fodrine-Johnson, Lou Fancher, Jeff Gomez, Chris Rauber, Sharon K. Sobotta
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Phone: 925-377-0977; email: info@lamorindaweekly.com
website: www.lamorindaweekly.com

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 16 Issue 18 Wednesday, October 26, 2022



Organize yourself

read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Preventing gardening injuries



Photos Cynthia Brian

Liquid amber and Japanese maple trees with their fabulous fall foliage.

By Cynthia Brian

“Do what you can for as long as you can, and when you can’t, do the next best thing!” Chuck Yeager

One of the many lessons I’ve learned from my 40-plus years in the entertainment industry is that the show must go on! Except for the COVID-19 pandemic, actors go to work despite any personal circumstances. I’ve put on my acting mask when I’ve had walking pneumonia, broken bones, and deaths in the family. I even left my hospital bed to shoot a commercial two days after giving birth. My new baby girl went to work with me!

As a hands-on gardener, I have always pushed through the pain to get everything done on time.

Whether it was digging trenches, installing French drains, cutting dead limbs, building stairways, hauling gravel, pulling weeds, pushing a lawnmower, or planting twenty flats of ice plant, I did it with joy

and with ease.

Everyone knows that gardening is terrific exercise. The muscles of our backs, shoulders, legs, arms, thighs, and wrists get an intense workout. Because of all the bending, lifting, and twisting (BLT), lower back and neck pain are common after a strenuous gardening chore. When I start aching, my remedy is to soak in a hot bath with Epsom salts. That usually works.

Not this time.

Somehow this week I exceeded the limits of my body and ended up writhing on the floor with painful spasms beyond anything I’ve ever experienced. The spinal surgeon admonished me, “No BLT!” but as a gardener how can we eliminate bending, lifting, and twisting?

I’m using voice dictation to write this column because I’m bedridden, and like in show business, publishing must go on. The photos included are not of injuries but joyful fall favorites. Because I don’t want you to experience a similar painful situation to mine, I’m including tips on how to avoid injuries in the garden. As soon as I heal, I will be following my own advice!

Ways to Avoid Injuries in the Garden

1. Wear appropriate clothing including sturdy boots, gloves, and a hat. My favorite piece of gardening clothing is an apron with pockets where I keep a few hand tools handy.
2. Apply sunscreen and wear sunglasses during the daylight.
3. Prevent tick bites by treating your clothes with permethrin. I have had excellent success with buying clothing and sprays from www.InsectShield.com.



The golden leaves of the Hachiya persimmon tree with almost ripe fruit.

... continued on Page D10



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- 1048 Aileen Street, \$995,000, 1090 SqFt, 1934 YrBlt, 09-09-22
- 3344 Betty Lane, \$3,700,000, 5 Bdrms, 3821 SqFt, 2021 YrBlt, 09-06-22
- 6 Blackthorn Road, \$2,017,000, 6 Bdrms, 3031 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 09-07-22
- 10 My Road, \$1,850,000, 3 Bdrms, 2132 SqFt, 1982 YrBlt, 09-15-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,010,000, 09-28-06
- 1 Rancho Diablo Road, \$2,200,000, 5 Bdrms, 3246 SqFt,
1965 YrBlt, 09-07-22, Previous Sale: \$365,000, 12-01-86
- 3456 Shangri La Road, \$3,200,000, 5 Bdrms, 2879 SqFt,
1966 YrBlt, 09-09-22, Previous Sale: \$1,900,000, 10-04-21
- 3174 Sun Ridge Court #1, \$1,755,000, 3 Bdrms, 2700 SqFt,
1955 YrBlt, 09-08-22
- 1132 Sunset Loop, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 1240 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 09-12-22
- 709 Wee Donegal, \$1,580,000, 4 Bdrms, 2141 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 09-12-22,
Previous Sale: \$765,000, 09-24-02

MORAGA

- 6 Gloria Court, \$1,789,000, 4 Bdrms, 1713 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-12-22,
Previous Sale: \$733,000, 05-23-03
- 41 Kazar Court, \$2,615,000, 5 Bdrms, 2848 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 09-08-22,
Previous Sale: \$276,000, 11-01-86
- 208 Tharp Drive, \$1,600,000, 4 Bdrms, 2242 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 09-14-22

ORINDA

- 9 Berrybrook Hollow, \$3,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 5217 SqFt,
1991 YrBlt, 09-12-22
- 28 Crestview Drive, \$2,895,000, 4 Bdrms, 3560 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 09-09-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,525,000, 02-11-04
- 22 Irving Lane, \$1,470,000, 3 Bdrms, 1519 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-09-22
- 44 Ivy Drive, \$1,660,000, 3 Bdrms, 1465 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 09-09-22,
Previous Sale: \$835,000, 07-01-04
- 8 Keith Drive, \$2,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 3474 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 09-08-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,175,000, 07-19-12
- 118 Lombardy Lane, \$2,050,000, 3 Bdrms, 2046 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 09-16-22
- 5 South Point Road, \$2,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 2338 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 09-15-22,
Previous Sale: \$1,190,000, 08-14-21
- 332 Village View Court, \$2,200,000, 2 Bdrms, 2203 SqFt,
1987 YrBlt, 09-06-22, Previous Sale: \$1,607,000, 11-10-05



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Save time and stress by keeping up instead of catching up



Photo Shutterstock

It's so much harder to catch up than if you were to keep up on a regular basis.

By Jennifer Raftis, CPO®, Certified Professional Organizer

There is a big difference between keeping up versus catching up when managing your life. Keeping up is consistently staying on top of things you need to do. When you have the mindset of keeping up you probably have some good habits and systems already in place. If you find yourself often in catching up mode – running behind or overwhelmed – you are probably adding unnecessary stress to your life and could benefit from some new “keeping up” habits.

The Advantages of Keeping Up

There are many things in our lives that are important to keep up with, including exercise, personal or professional goals, laundry, organizing our homes, etc. For example, if you exercise regularly, you reap the benefits of feeling energized and less stressed. If you stop for a few weeks (or months), you might start feeling tired, out of shape, and unmotivated. As many of us have experienced, it's a lot harder to get back into an exercise routine (catch up) than it is to keep up with an established one.

Here are some more examples of the advantages of keeping up. Many of us hate managing paperwork. The picture I have in my head is piles and piles of paperwork (but it can be piles of anything). Looking at a huge pile is overwhelming and it's so much harder to catch up than if you were managing it on a regular basis. Your garage might be another good example. If you have spent 20 years adding items to your garage (because you couldn't decide what to do with them), then you probably have a huge collection of stuff. Organizing your garage (catching up) becomes a daunting task that you are likely to avoid as long as possible.

How do you start keeping up?

So, you're ready to take the first step toward learning some new habits but you are wondering “where do I start?” Great question! It reminds me of one of my favorite quotes, “How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.” Challenge yourself to start biting at whatever pile or project you have. Start with small bites so you don't get frustrated – continue to take small regular bites until it becomes a new habit that can help keep you in control.

There are many strategies for keeping up. Planning ahead is one of them. I love the beginning of each season as it can be a great time to reset and start new habits. Getting ready to welcome the colder weather and the upcoming holiday season can be exciting and refreshing. I don't know about you, but I hate being overwhelmed – it can cause so much stress – so I practice keeping up and try to prepare in advance. My first step is to look ahead to see what kind of work can be done now that will make the season run smoothly. Here are some ideas for keeping up that can save you time and stress:

Fire Season and Rolling Blackouts

I wrote an article last October (It's Wildfire Season: Be Prepared Beyond a 'Go Bag') about being prepared for fire season and you can find it on my website (efficiencymattersllc.com). Now, is a great time to check all of your flashlights and battery supplies, refresh your emergency kit with updated food and water, and gather your “go bag.”

Cold Weather

Before the cold weather arrives, I suggest you go through your cold weather clothes – hats, scarves, gloves, sweaters, and coats. Eliminate gloves that don't have a match, and check everything to see if they need to be washed or replaced. A good place to store these items is the inside of the door in the coat closet. Note: The Container Store has a great door rack – with adjustable components to fit your needs – called the Elfa Utility Door and Wall Rack Solution.

Note: As you are going through your winter coats, remember that many charities, such as “One Warm Coat,” will be asking for warm clothing donations as the weather gets colder.

Flu Season

Take everything out of your medicine cabinet (as well as other areas where you keep medicine). Toss any expired medication and make a list of all items you need to purchase. Check to see if your thermometer still works. Note: If you have kids under 18, it can be helpful to separate the adult medicine from the children's medicine within the same cabinet.

Holidays

Time for a pantry and kitchen refresh! Take all your spices out and check for expiration dates (this process takes less time than you think it will). Make sure you have any seasonal spices you might need (nutmeg, pumpkin pie spice, etc.) Next, pull out all of your canned goods and condiments. If you have canned goods that have not expired but you haven't used them (and likely won't) donate them to a holiday canned food drive.

Check table linens to see if you need to clean or replace any of them. Look through your food storage containers. Get rid of any containers that are missing lids. Trust me, the lids are not coming back. They are with the single socks that never returned either (get over it and move on).

If you are anticipating guests – yes, your adult children are considered guests – now is the time to make sure the pillows, blankets, and sheets are in good condition and clean. Check your guest towels too!

Some simple switches from catching up to keeping up habits can be a game changer and bring some calm and peace to your life. Tackle one project at a time and remember that consistent habits are key to keeping up.

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



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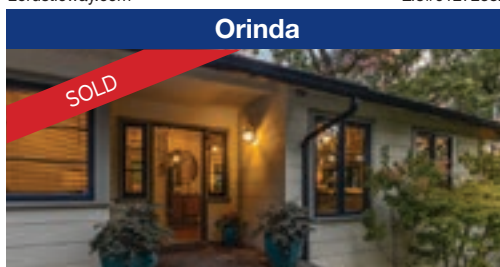
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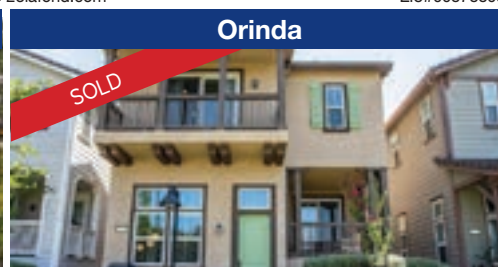
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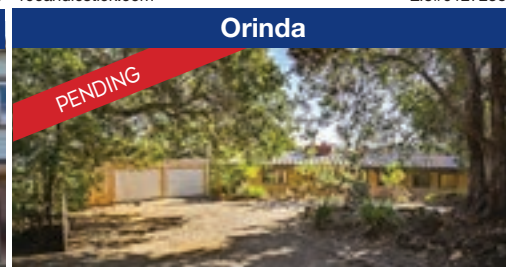
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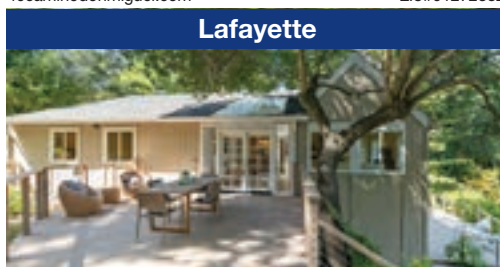
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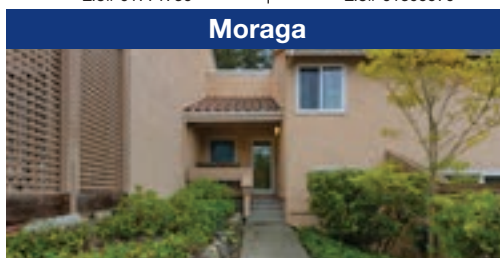
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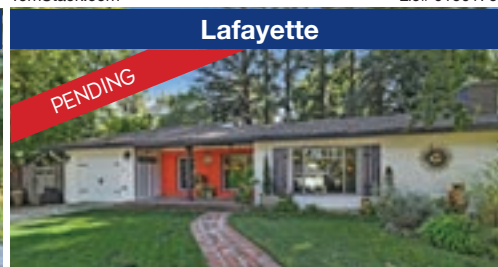
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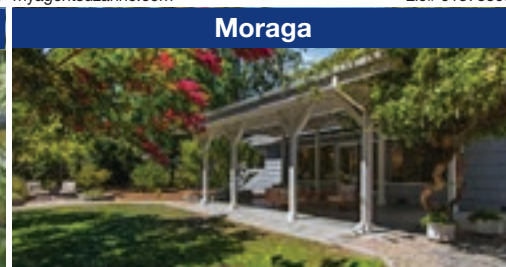
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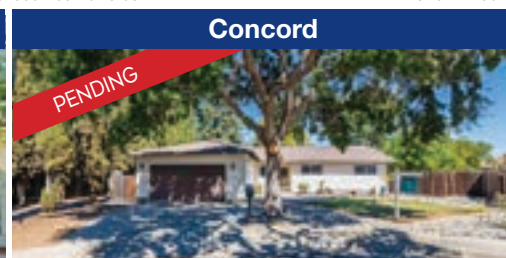
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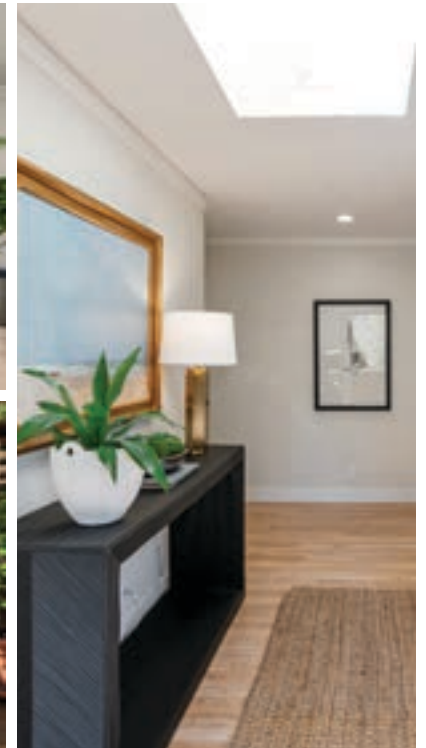
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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Preventing gardening injuries

Photos Cynthia Brian



Gather the self-harvested guavas to make jams, jellies, juice, or enjoy sauteed.



Mission figs are harvested through November.



A formal garden of boxwood parterres and artichoke plants is decorated with pumpkins.



Dahlias of many colors brighten the garden.

... continued from Page D1

4. Wear protective eye gear when operating any mechanical tool such as a chainsaw, weed eater, lawn mower, blower, or other machines.
5. Before jumping into a big task, warm your body up with a brisk walk, jumping jacks,

stretching, dancing, or gentle movements. When you have completed your gardening tasks for the day, perform simple stretches for five minutes.

6. Carry a bottle of water with you. Rehydrate often. It's very easy to get dehydrated while gardening, especially on a hot day. Dehydration puts extra pressure on the cardiovascular system and can be fatal.

7. Use the correct tools for each task to prevent injuries.

8. Protect your knees with a cushion or knee pads. An old pillow that is washable works well for me. Move the pillow close to where you will be working so as not to stretch your torso.

9. Minimize repetitive movements that put stress on one area of your body. Take a short break every 15 minutes. Stand, stretch, sit, relax, drink water, and breathe.

10. Avoid BLT as much as possible.

a. Bending: Instead of bending over to weed, sit on a stool or a bucket. Keep your back straight while you lean forward to pull weeds. Don't twist to the side. Always move as close to an area that you want to clean as possible.

b. Lifting: Protect your back by using your legs and hips. Stand close to the object you are lifting and spread your legs widely for added support. Keep your back straight. Bend with your knees, not your waist, and tense your stomach muscles as you lift. Use your core strength. Don't bend forward as you lift. Use your knees and hips to do the lifting.

c. Twisting: When sweeping, digging, raking, shoveling, and other chores that require using a long-handled object, minimize the strain to

your back by keeping your posture aligned with the object. Don't turn to the side or twist in any direction as that increases the strain on your back, shoulders, and neck. Pivot your feet when necessary and keep your body parts moving in the same direction.

11. Listen to your body. Our bodies are wondrous miracles that usually warn us when we are overusing a muscle or doing too much. It's natural to be a bit sore after a day of intense gardening. Know your limits and don't go past them. If painful symptoms persist or get worse, consult your physician.

12. Remember tomorrow is another day. You don't have to do everything on your "to-do" list in one interval. Gardening is a marathon that we can never outrun. Gardening requires patience. Spread tasks out over several days.

Gardening is therapeutic but can also be dangerous when precautionary measures are not followed. Be extra careful when using a ladder. Hire a professional to assist with tasks that you can no longer perform. Ask for help when needed.

One of my favorite stories in my book, "Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul" chronicled a couple in their 70s who loved to garden but because of weakened muscular systems embraced Chuck Yeager's quote. One morning when the wife spotted her husband lying flat on his stomach under an apple tree, she scurried to help. On closer inspection, she saw he had a trowel in his hand. Exasperated, she yelled, "What are you doing?" The husband replied, "The next best thing!"

... continued on next Page

In my mind, I'm still in my 30s, but, alas, my body has aged. I, too, find myself doing the next best thing. This injury that I've suffered has taught me to diligently heed my own advice. There is a silver lining to my agony: Because the show must go on, I wrote this article to help you avoid my mistakes.

This is the next best thing!

Stay healthy, follow the safety protocols, ask for help, and observe Chuck Yeager's advice: "Do what you can for as long as you can, and when you can't, do the next best thing!"

Have a safe and happy Halloween. Make sure to vote to ensure democracy prevails.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



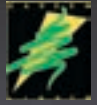
Cynthia Brian reminds you to visit www.StarStyleCommunity.com

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, No Barnyard Bullies, is available now. Buy copies of her books at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD and special savings. For an invitation to hang out with Cynthia for fun virtual events, activities, conversations, and exclusive experiences buy a StarStyle® NFT at <https://StarStyleCommunity.com>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

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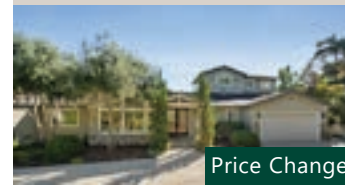
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ORINDA



5 De Soto Court
Mid Century Contemporary 4 bd/ 2.5 ba offers peaceful private setting on quaint court just minutes
\$2,395,000

ORINDA



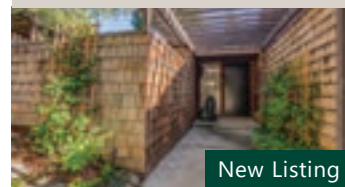
11 Los Altos Road
Special 4 bd/ 4 ba home sits on .70 parcel w/ privacy & filtered views in Orindas most popular neighborhood!
\$2,295,000

ORINDA



40 Via Floreado
Charming 5 bd/ 3.5 ba gem is full of old-world features yet perfectly updated w/ all the modern amenities!
\$1,995,000

ORINDA



120 Ravenhill Road
Completely renovated 3 bd/ 3 ba Orindawoods home offers an ideal setting w/ natural light, privacy & views!
\$1,795,000

ORINDA



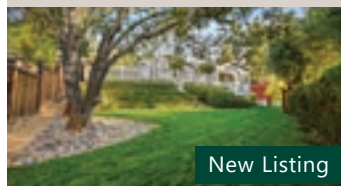
589 Tahos Road
Tucked in the hills of Orinda amongst mature oaks, sits this 4 bd/2.5 ba architecturally significant Mid-Century retreat!
\$1,675,000

ORINDA



2 Orchard Court
Home sweet home! 3 bd/ 2 ba home needs lots of TLC now & is awaiting the next generation!
\$1,195,000

ORINDA



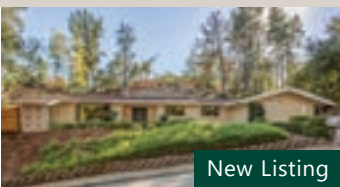
499 Miner Road
Set in Sleepy Hollow, this updated 3 bd/ 2.5 ba home w/ walls of windows, soaring ceilings & fabulous floor plan!
Call For Price

LAFAYETTE



3015 Bradbury Drive
Nestled among majestic oaks 3 bd/ 2.5 ba plus loft sits on 3.2 acres w/ panoramic views, multiple decks & pool!
\$1,895,000

LAFAYETTE



3255 Ameno Drive
Light filled 4 bd/ 2 ba home, features a lovely open floor plan w/ vaulted ceilings, skylights, & a peaceful setting!
\$1,675,000

MORAGA



92 Warfield Drive
Classic two story 5 bd/ 3 ba home sits on a private .39 acre parcel w/ 2527 sq.ft of a fully functional floor plan!
\$1,945,000

BERKELEY



7164 Buckingham Blvd
Sophisticated contemporary 3 bd/3 ba set in the Claremont Hills featuring lovely canyon views!
\$1,595,000

DANVILLE



501 Garden Creek Place
Updated 3 bd/ 2.5 ba end-unit townhome less than .5 miles from top-rated schools, downtown & more!
\$899,000

The Village Associates:

Ashley Battersby
Patricia Battersby
Shannon Conner
Meara Dunsmore

Linda Ehrich
Emily Estrada

Joan Evans
Linda Friedman
Liz Gallagher
Claudia Gohler

Gillian Judge Hogan

Dexter Honens II

Christina Linezo

April Matthews

Hillary Murphy

Karen Murphy

John Nash

Altie Schmitt

Judy Schoenrock

Ann Sharf

Amy Rose Smith

Molly Smith

Jeff Snell

Lynda Snell

Clark Thompson

Angie Evans Traxinger

Ignacio Vega

Ann Ward

Margaret Zucker

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93 Moraga Way, Suite 103 • Orinda, CA 94563 • Phone: (925) 254-0505

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