

In Memory

Alice Marian Oliver (“Midge”) Zischke



Longtime Orinda resident Midge Zischke died at her Rossmoor home on March 13, after 90 wonderful years. She was predeceased by her husband of 63 years, Peter Zischke. She is survived by her son Michael, his wife Nadine Sponamore and their daughters Julie and Jessica; son Kurt and his wife Victoria (“Tori”) Adams Zischke and their daughter Alexandra (“Scout”); daughter Marian Baldauf and her husband Hans Baldauf and their son Fritz and daughter Liesl; and daughter Karen Zischke and her husband Bob Hackett and their daughters Alice and Hannah and son William.

Midge spent most of her life in three different Orinda homes, and was active in a wide variety of community and educational organizations, starting with the Garden Club of Orinda and the Sleepy Hollow Tennis Club, where she played tennis with friends for many years. She served on the Orinda School Board in the late 1970s when it faced the property tax reductions from Proposition 13, and later started the Educational Foundation of Orinda to provide additional funding for Orinda schools. She also served on the boards of the UC Berkeley Foundation and the Lawrence Hall of Science. When the California Shakespeare Festival moved from Berkeley to Orinda, she became an active supporter and started the Will’s Weeders group to help maintain the theater grounds. In 1986, Midge was named Orinda Citizen of the Year.

A memorial service is being planned for June 25 at the California Shakespeare Theater. For information please contact midgezischke@gmail.com. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the UC Berkeley Foundation (www.ucberkeleyfoundation.org), the California Shakespeare Festival (www.calshakes.org), Orinda Network for Education (formerly the Educational Foundation of Orinda, www.oneorinda.org), or the Alzheimer’s Association of America (www.alz.org/norcal).

In Memory

Julie Youngquist Fisher



Julie Youngquist Fisher, 92, passed away peacefully at home March 8, surrounded by family in The Villages, Fla.

A graduate of William and Mary in 1953 with a degree in psychology, she moved to New York for work in her early 20s. She eventually met George Fisher and married in 1955 at the “Little Church around the Corner” in NYC.

George’s job led them to reside in Boston, Los Angeles and eventually Moraga where they resided for 50 years. Both George and Julie were involved in the development of the town. Julie was instrumental in bringing emergency services to Moraga with the Rescue One Foundation. She also served on the

Moraga Service League, the Betas, the Moraga Parks and Recreation Foundation and the Moraga Movers. Both George and Julie were honored as Moraga’s Citizens of the Year in 2006.

George and Julie moved to The Villages, Florida to be closer to their family in 2014. The nine years in Florida were a treasure with lots of family trips and many celebrations.

Julie struggled with macular degeneration for over 20 years and never complained about her loss of sight. She was and continues to be an incredible example of a positive and optimistic outlook despite any challenge faced. Although she spent many of her final years blind, it is our belief she is now able to see in full color.

Julie will be missed by many lifelong friends. She touched so many. She was predeceased by son, John Fisher (March 2020), husband, George (June 2020), and daughter, Holly (November 2020). She is survived by her daughter, Ann, sons-in-law, Tim Wright and Jim Baumgartner, niece, Jane (Jeff) Chamberlain, grand-daughters, Casey Fowler (Garrett), Kelly Wright and great-grandson, Isaac.

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 storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include “Celebrations and Remembrances” in the subject line.

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



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High school Odyssey of the Mind team sponsored by Moraga Rotary advances to World competition



Photo provided

From left: Sol Dente (Campo), Claire Damiano (Campo), Finley Reid (Acalanes), Nina Damiano (Campo), Lily Thomas (Acalanes) and Valerie Yarve (Campo). They are all juniors.

Submitted by Rich Render

The junior class team of Campolindo and Acalanes students who compete in Odyssey of the Mind under the Moraga Rotary name, their sponsor, will advance from the NorCal State Tournament to World Championships at Michigan State University to be held May 24-27. The team coached by Kathi Dente won first place and also came in first in the Spontaneous portion of the competition.

Odyssey of the Mind is a creative problem-solving program for K-12 kids that engages students in their learning, by encouraging them to think creatively to solve one of five problems of the year. Teams made up of 5-7 members have to solve their selected problem (anything from building vehicles to presenting their own interpretation of literary classics) and present their solution to the problem to judges in an 8-minute skit.

Since 2005, Moraga Rotary Club has sponsored the international Odyssey of the Mind team competitions, held every year beginning in September and completing in May at the World Odyssey Championships at Michigan State University. This year,

Moraga Rotary sponsored four teams from grades 3 through 11, who competed in February at the Bay Regional Tournament, and the High School team advanced to the NorCal State Tournament in March. The teams were supported by Student Leaders Grace Franklin and Shiraz Usmani.

The Classics problem this year is about “The Iliad” and the team had to have a Trojan Horse, a wall, and a character from “The Iliad.” The team did a play on Greece by setting their long-term problem in a “Greasy” Diner and singing parodies from the musical “Grease.” A Cheese Burger and Onion Rings are trying to escape “the mouth” that is trying to eat them by getting to the vegetable drawer where the mouth never eats. To get there they have to disguise themselves as a HORSE radish with the help of “A-TEA-NA” (a play on Athena). There is also a Greek chorus made up of singing milkshakes.

Moraga Rotary is a community service organization under Rotary International that meets every Tuesday at Noon at La Finestra Ristorante. Guests and visitors are always welcome.

Share your love with shoes



By Cynthia Brian

Many people are unaware that 85% of consumer textiles end up in landfills, a practice that is extremely harmful to the environment. For the past 24 years, the nonprofit Be the Star You Are has been increasing literacy and saving trees by collecting thousands of new and used books and donating them to disaster relief efforts around the country. With the Russian war against Ukraine and the unprecedented natural disasters around the world, millions of people are currently experiencing difficult living conditions, and, although books are always an enlightening resource, this year Be the Star You Are pivoted to share the love and assist with a basic need: shoes.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, over 70% of the global population needs shoes. In collaboration with Moraga’s 5 A Rent-a-Space and Mark Hoogs State Farm Insurance, Be the Star You Are volunteers are launching a shoe drive to collect and ship shoes to several countries including Haiti, Pakistan, Ghana, Ukraine, and more to help lift women and families out of extreme poverty by

providing a means for them to create a micro-business.

These micro-entrepreneurs will be able to sell footwear at an inexpensive price from their home, a street stall, or even a tent to enhance their income and support their families.

“We are excited to launch this new micro-enterprise project. Everyone has a few pairs of wearable shoes that no longer serve us. What a wonderful opportunity to give them to those who need them and will repurpose them to

benefit themselves and their communities,” says Executive Director Cynthia Brian. All clean, new, or gently used shoes of all sizes, boots, and work boots are wanted. No ski or snowboard boots, rollerblades, or ice skates can be accepted. “If possible, please keep pairs together by tying laces or putting a rubber band around the shoes,” Brian adds.

Be the Star You Are teen chairperson, Ella Kalpakjian is spearheading the shoe collection at Campolindo High School. Shoes may be dropped in the designated Campo bin beginning on April 17. If you will be attending the April 29 Moraga Community Faire, shoes may be delivered to the Be the Star You Are booth.

Drop shoes at these two locations (May 1- June 30): Mark Hoogs State Farm Insurance (629 Moraga Road, Moraga) (925) 254-3344, www.TeamHoogs.com; and 5 A Rent-a-Space (455 Moraga Rd. #F, Moraga) 925-631-7000, <https://5aspace.com/>

If your business would like to host a drop-off box, email info@Bethestaryouare.org

For more information, visit www.bethestaryouare.org/shoedrive