

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Tomizaki's Champions Kung Fu performs a Lion Dance Feb. 10 at Orinda Library.

Photos Sora O'Doherty

Lions and swords open the Year of the Dragon in Orinda

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda celebrated Chinese New Year at the Orinda Library on Saturday, Feb. 10. The Year of the Dragon was welcomed by members of the Tomizaki's Champions Kung Fu, who performed a Lion Dance and a sword demonstration at the Orinda Library auditorium. This special event was sponsored by the Eng family. The Eng Family Library Endowment was set up when the Library was being built. According to Waylin Eng, the Engs helped with the building funds, but told Dick Heggie that they would like to put money aside to bring Asian culture to Orinda in perpetuity. The endowment has now existed for over 20 years. This year's celebration has been organized by Eng's daughter, Amy Eng, who

also organized the Pan Asian Festival in 2004. Proud father Weylan Eng recalled that Amy was the Cherry Blossom Queen of Northern California in 2004. Eng added that Amy holds a master's in education and public policy from Stanford. Amy represented the family this year, as others were unable to attend, being in Hawaii on family business. In addition to the Lion Dance celebrations, the Eng family displays historical Chinese artifacts in Orinda Library each year. Eng praised library manager Michael Beller as very supportive, and expressed his appreciation to Lin Look who has worked very hard on the exhibition every year.

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Not sure what to do for Valentine's Day? You might consider Dublin

By Sora O'Doherty



Courtesy of Whitefriar St. Church in Dublin

No, not the Dublin in Alameda County, but Dublin, Ireland. Whitefriar Street church has been a place of pilgrimage on Valentine's Day for many years. Of course, for those who have already found

love, Lamorinda offers many lovely ways to celebrate this February as well. The heart and blood of St. Valentine rests in this Dublin Church, and many visitors come for prayers of love and blessings for engaged couples. Today a statue of the saint stands over the reliquary that is emblazoned with the words, "This shrine contains the sacred body of the martyr, together with a small vessel tinged with his blood." Legend has it that Valentine was a priest from Rome in the third century AD. Emperor Claudius II prohibited soldiers to marry because he thought married men were bad soldiers. Valentine allegedly felt this was unfair, so he broke the rules and arranged marriages in secret. Valentine was imprisoned and condemned to death. Some say he fell in love with the jailer's daughter and when he was taken to be killed on Feb. 14 he sent her a love letter signed "from your Valentine," leading to the subsequent exchange of "valentines" between sweethearts and even school children. And what better way to spend time together for Valentine's Day than by visiting Dublin? Mind you, the weather forecast isn't great. Expect drizzles and a high of 50 degrees. Still, you probably won't have to fight hordes of tourists to pay your respects to St. Valentine. Or maybe you might.

Chinese Lunar New Year celebrated at Moraga Library

By Vera Kochan



Chinese Calligraphy

Photo Vera Kochan

While the Chinese New Year technically began on Feb. 10, the Moraga Library's interactive celebration was held on Feb. 3. Attendees were encouraged to sample, as well as help make their own Dumplings, Sweet Rice Ball Soup, and Hot Pot edibles. A calligraphy table offered guests the chance to write Chinese phrases appropriate for the occasion. According to Community Library Manager Rita Carrasco, "This is the first time we've done a community event like this before. We had already planned on doing a display in the library, but wanted to do something bigger. Cathy Chang set up the various stations and coordinated them. We had decided on a registration list of 40 people, and we ended up with another 20 on the wait list, so eventually anyone that showed up was invited in." Cathy Chang, Moraga's 2023 Citizen of the Year, typically decorates the library's display case for the holiday, but took charge of the event with the participation of volunteers from Moraga and Orinda (including her children, Brian and Sara, who manned the Hot Pot and Dumpling stations respectively). ... continued on Page 4

Civic News

Moraga welcomes new Town Clerk, Amy Heavener – Page 4

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