

Longtime editor is leaving Lamorinda Weekly

By Diane Claytor



Jennifer Wake

Photo Sora O'Doherty

Almost 17 years ago (March 14, 2007 to be exact), the Lamorinda Weekly published its very first issue. Among the early writers was Jennifer Wake, who wrote stories about Saint Mary's College happenings. With a degree in media communications from Cal State, Sacramento, and work stints in a San Francisco PR firm as well as serving as PR Director at Saint Mary's, this was Wake's first foray into newspaper writing. Apparently she liked it because she's been at the paper ever since.

Wake began writing about SMC before moving into writing more Life section stories. From there she became sections editor, associate ed-

itor and then, in 2014, was promoted to editor. Editors are the backstage workers; they're quietly in the background, doing so much but receiving little credit. This describes how Wake has happily spent the last 10 years at the helm.

Warm and humble, Wake laughs easily and treats everyone with equal respect. She has calmly encouraged and supported the writers to become better at what they do. Vera Kochan, who covers Moraga for the paper, says, "I have no doubt I was able to grow as a writer over the years thanks to Jen."

"The job of editing is so minor compared to what the writers and columnists do," Wake

says. "We have such great writers, it's amazing what people have been able to put together." She also notes how impressed she is with Lamorinda residents. "It's incredible all the things Lamorindans have done and how so many of them give so much of their time to help others without ever expecting anything in return."

As editor, Wake makes many decisions on a regular basis - from what stories to write to which photos to use and what headline is best. She recently made one of the more difficult decisions of her professional life: after all these years, Wake is leaving the paper; this is her final issue. "It blows my mind that I've been here this long," she wrote when announcing her departure.

Married with two adult children, the former Moraga resident has several aging family members and she will now have more time and flexibility to help them. She will, however, also continue writing, most likely as a freelancer. "I don't want to lose that part of myself," she states. "I need that cre-

ative outlet. "I'm definitely going to miss working regularly with all the writers and columnists and being part of this fantastic team," Wake continues. And the writers and columnists are all going to miss working with her. Since her announcement, the accolades have been plentiful.

Longtime garden columnist Cynthia Brian called Wake a "remarkable editor" and "the sweetest woman," noting what a joy she has been to work with; Susie Iventosch, who writes the food column, echoed Brian's comments, noting it has been "a pure pleasure to work with Jen," who is the "most wonderful editor."

Wendy Scheck, associate publisher, who was instrumental in hiring Wake in 2007, comments that "she is the backbone of our editorial team ... she has a talent for managing the mix of articles for every issue and has a keen creative eye for photos. ... She also worked hard to keep, expand and nurture our pool of writers."

Sora O'Doherty, who covers Orinda for the paper said, "In addition to

being a highly competent editor, Jen is a person of great sensitivity and compassion, whose warmth and understanding kept the staff together and happy."

Kochan perhaps said it best: "Jen is like the great and powerful Wizard of Oz behind the curtain; ...she has masterfully orchestrated so much of what our readers have come to enjoy and done it with a gracious guidance. ... I will miss her encouraging words, her sense of humor and her calmness under stress."

As is often the case, when one exits, a new one enters. And in this instance, Jaya Griggs has been selected to replace Wake as the Lamorinda Weekly editor.

Griggs was raised in Moraga and grew up with the newspaper. As the Schecks' daughter, Griggs was there from the very beginning and has had a variety of roles and assignments over the years. She's illustrated stories, edited, proofread, and worked on the paper's layout. She's even written articles occasionally. "The Lamorinda Weekly is a family-owned, family-run, family-oriented pub-

lication," Griggs notes, and she's excited to become more involved in the family business. At 29 years old, with this new expanded assignment, she'll unquestionably bring a young, fresh perspective to the publication.

An avid reader and graphic artist, Griggs graduated from the California College of the Arts. She says there may be some changes in the paper eventually but nothing immediately. "I need to get my feet wet," Griggs states. "Once I'm more comfortable with how it all works, I may suggest some changes." In the meantime, she looks forward to getting to know all the writers and their different styles.

Both Wake and Griggs are wished the very best of luck in their new endeavors.



Photo Susan Loenneker Incoming editor Jaya Griggs

Love Lafayette

Anthony's
Custom Picture Framers

After 30 years of service, we are proud to reintroduce ourselves as Anthony's Custom Picture Framers. Family owned and operated since 1991. Anthony and Tony look forward to seeing you soon and assisting you with all your framing needs.

1020 Brown Ave, Suite A Lafayette, CA 94549
925-283-7620
anthonysCPF.com

Monday by Appointment Only
Tues-Sat 10:30 am to 6:00 pm
By Appointment Only

\$30 off your next order with this ad!

Lafayette Glass Co. Inc.
Shower & Window Glass Specialist

- Frameless Shower Glass
- Shower Enclosures
- Custom Mirrors
- New Windows/Patio Doors
- Replacement & Installation

SHOP LOCAL

BEFORE **AFTER**

3375 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette
next to Premier Kitchens, USE DYER STREET TO ENTER
925-284-9510
www.lafayetteglasscompany.com | CSLB # 489426, CSLB # 795837

MARK BELLINGHAM PAINTING

HIRE A LOCAL NAME YOU CAN TRUST

925-247-0092

MarkBellinghamPainting.com

Interior & Exterior Painting Deck & Fence Restoration
Kitchen & Bathroom Cabinet Painting Dry Rot Repair
Light Carpentry Drywall Repair Stucco Repair

For a Quick Preliminary Estimate Email Photos of Project to: Office@MarkBellinghamPainting.com

See our Reviews on NextDoor, GOOGLE & YELP

Local Business Owner - Since 1985 - Licensed & Insured

Piano Studio
Keys to success

Piano Lessons in Lafayette with professional instructor MTAC member. Competition, CM exam Preparation.

Rita Yegiazaryan
925-323-8969
ryegiazaryan@yahoo.com

1060 Sierra Vista Way, Lafayette

Ware Designs
Fine Jewelry since 1977

- Custom Designs
- Appraisals
- Expert Repairs
- Pearl Restringing
- Free Ring cleaning

All your jewelry is insured with Jeweler's Block Insurance.

\$5 off Watch Battery
Reg \$15, Now \$10
1 watch battery per person. Exp. 3/13/24. Usually installed while you wait. W/coupon. Restrictions apply.

3645 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette between Trader Joes & the Post Office
283-2988 www.waredesigns.com Tues-Sat 10-5

Shop, Dine + Gather in Lafayette

Visit the new **ExperienceLafayetteCA.org** website from the City of Lafayette to discover places to shop, dine + gather in Lafayette.

Scan the code.

Making Bay Area Homes Beautiful Since 1946

Blodgett's
FLOOR COVERING
"Quality and Service Since 1946" Abbey Carpet.

Larry Blodgett Owner
www.blodgetts.com

3291 Mt. Diablo Ct., Lafayette 925.284.4807

PROUD TO SUPPORT OUR SCHOOLS & OUR COMMUNITY!

Join us! **LAFAYETTE CHAMBER**

2024 SIGNATURE COMMUNITY EVENTS

Taste of Lafayette Restaurant Stroll Tuesday, May 21

Rock the Plaza Concert Series Fridays June 7, 14, 21, 28

Lafayette Art & Wine Festival September 21-22

Lafayette Res Run for Education Sunday, October 20

LPIE GOLD Business Partner

In 2023, Lafayette Chamber events gave back over **\$67,000** in beneficiary checks to our local schools and programs!

LAFAYETTECHAMBER.ORG/EVENTS

Lafayette Physical Therapy
Moved to:

3658 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 100
Lafayette, CA 94549
925-284-6150 www.LafayettePT.com

Come see our beautiful new location!

Reasonable Books
New * Used * Vintage

A collection of carefully curated selections, classic and contemporary.

3645 Mt Diablo Blvd Lafayette
(925) 385-3026
www.reasonable.onLine

EAST BAY TREE SERVICE INC.

- Tree removal,
- Stump removal,
- Juniper removal

to meet fire regulations.

Call **925-377-8733** for **FREE Estimate**
Serving Lamorinda for over 30 years.