

LAMORINDA WEEKLY



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Wednesday, March 18, 2009



Miramonte High School teacher Campbell Hunter and Acalanes student Deanna Jarquin join local district teachers and administrators in downtown Lafayette to protest recent termination notices Photos Andy Schreck

Budget Cuts Prompt Pink Slip Protests

By Andrea A. Firth

The passage of the State budget last month clarified the fiscal picture for public school districts across Lamorinda, and improved the outlook somewhat. Unfortunately, it was not sufficient to enable the districts to avoid issuing preliminary notices of termination—pink slips—to several teachers and other certificated and classified staff.

Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD) notified certificated staff representing 40.6 full-time positions—an improvement from the original list of 92.4 fulltime positions facing layoffs when the District’s 2009-10 revenue deficit was projected to be over \$5 million. In addition, about 17 classified employees (16.75 fulltime equivalents) may be on the list to receive layoff notices after the

AUHSD Board meets on March 18.

Far fewer certificated and classified staff faced termination in Lamorinda’s kindergarten through 8th grade districts. However, teachers and staff working in the elementary and middle schools in the areas of environmental science, libraries, technology, music, physical education, and maintenance are at risk of losing jobs.

As school administrators continue to parse through the fine print, many aspects of the State budget remain unknown and to be determined. “In some ways it’s a moving target,” stated Kathy Bell, chief business official for the Moraga School District (MSD). “Everyday we are getting new information.”

The California Legislature’s 2009 Budget Act is

contingent on the passage of several propositions on the May ballot, some of which directly impact school funding such as establishing a Rainy Day Fund, amending Proposition 98, and borrowing from future State lottery profits. When and how much money districts will receive from the American Recovery Investment Act (a.k.a. the stimulus package) is also unclear.

Each of the Lamorinda school districts anticipates receiving money and eagerly awaits a final read on the amount and date of arrival, yet none of the districts are quite ready to bank on it. The risk of the monies being siphoned off by the State before reaching the district level remains a possibility.

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Lamorindans Recall Life During the Great Depression

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MOFD Rejects LAFCO Report



Bocce Ball Bind

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Cut it Back so the Trucks Can Get Through

By Andrea A. Firth



Pictured are MOFD Firefighter Julie Mulliken and Engineer Mike Murphy with their engine in a tight spot Photo M. Mentink

Vegetation growth such as trees, shrubbery, and weeds that block or curtail the passage of emergency vehicles on the narrow streets and roadways throughout Canyon, Moraga, and Orinda is a common problem, according to Fire Marshal Mike

Mentink. “[The vegetation overgrowth] can damage the emergency vehicles and really slows you down,” states Mentink.

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) recently responded to a fire in a two-story residential structure up a narrow road in Canyon. Ladders stored on the outside of two of the MOFD trucks had brackets broken by overhanging vegetation, and the ladders fell to the roadside before the trucks reached the home. In this case, the MOFD firefighters were able to contain the fire with the equipment on hand and no one was hurt, but there is a real potential for the emergency effort to be impaired, explains Mentink.

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Lamorinda’s Youth Baseball Season Begins

By Lucy Amaral

Mother Nature cooperated quite nicely, offering up a sunny day for Lamorinda’s youth baseball Opening Day on March 7. Most of the fields may not have been play-ready, but there were no damp spirits as teams were announced, anthems were played and first pitches were thrown. Boasting hundreds of boys and girls in each league, Moraga Baseball Association (MBA), Orinda Baseball Association (OBA), and Lafayette Little League (LLL), started their seasons off with festivals, jamborees and thunderous applause.

... continued on page 21



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Lamorinda Community Moraga

Calendar

- Town Council 7:30pm**
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School
1010 Camino Pablo
Wednesday, March 25
- Planning Comm. 7:30pm**
Hacienda, La Sala Room
2100 Donald Drive
Monday, April 6
- Design Review 7:30pm**
Hacienda, La Sala Room
2100 Donald Drive
Monday, March 23
- Park & Rec 7:30pm**
Hacienda, Mosaic Room
2100 Donald Drive
Tuesday, April 21
- Liaison 8:00am**
Fire Station
1280 Moraga Way
Friday, April 10
- Town of Moraga online:**
<http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us>
- Chamber of Commerce:**
<http://www.moragachamber.org>



Possession of pot while driving, 3/08/09 The driver of a Toyota Avalon was pulled over for failing to signal on Moraga Road near Rheem Boulevard. Although the driver was sober, the car smelled of marijuana and alcohol. After consenting to a vehicle search, the officer found 7.54 grams of marijuana in her purse. The 18-year-old driver was cited for possession of pot while operating a motor vehicle, but released at the scene. Her pot was confiscated and booked into evidence at Moraga Police Department.

Walking with big beer, 3/06/09 At just after 10:00 p.m. officers observed a male who appeared to be under 21 walking behind Safeway with a half liter can of Heineken beer. When the subject saw the officer, he tossed the beer in the bushes. The 18-year-old male was contacted by police and his unopened, but still cold can of beer was found. He was cited for being in possession of alcoholic beverage. One might presume his intent was to drink it at some point.

Taxi girl, 3/05/09 A 13-year-old thought she'd be really smart and sneak out without her parent's permission from her Springfield Place home. She visited a friend in Sanders Ranch, and called a taxi for a ride home. The distance between the two homes is approximately one mile. Pro-active Orinda Taxi driver made contact with the police in the Safeway parking lot, who called the juvenile's mother. The young lady was released to the custody of her mom.

Counterfeit \$10 bill, 3/04/09 An unknown student passed a \$10 bill at the Campolindo cafeteria. The same bill was later given out to a different student as change. The second student informed school staff of the counterfeit bill; staff used a special ink pen on the surface of the bill, noting that it did not turn the correct color. Because of the hordes of hungry teens, there is no way to determine who the original passer was.

Ascot @ Moraga Road Will Finally See the Light:

PG&E is scheduled to turn on the new traffic signal, and test it, during the week of March 23. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held the morning of March 21 (tentatively 10:00am, but please check the Town website, www.moraga.ca.us or the marquee across from the Commons to confirm.)

Fire at the Hacienda de las Flores

At press time, the cause has not been determined

By Sophie Braccini



Fire damage to the Hacienda de las Flores Photo Dana Blatner

On the morning of March 9th heavy smoke started to seep through the roof of the Hacienda de las Flores, a Town-owned building that houses staff offices and space for community meetings and classes.

"The building was evacuated in very good order so no one was exposed to smoke," said Battalion Chief Randy Trompf, who arrived at the scene a few minutes later with his men. Since no flames were seen, the firefighters used thermal imaging cameras that had been donated by the Women's League, and were able to find the source inside the wall. The fire

was extinguished in a matter of minutes.

"The cause of the fire is still under investigation," said Trompf on March 12th. He was expecting a result within a week or two. "We need to find the reason for this fire," said Moraga Mayor Dave Trotter at the March 11th Town Council, "and act appropriately to prevent further occurrences."

According to Jill Mercurio, Moraga Town Engineer, the cost of repairs has not been determined and could range anywhere from \$10,000-\$50,000. The Town's insurance policy has a \$5,000 deductible.

Moraga Hires a Consultant to Help File its Housing Element

By Sophie Braccini

Like all other California jurisdictions Moraga has to file, in the coming months, a plan showing how its buildable land will be zoned to accommodate the development of low and moderate income housing. Failure to comply with the State requirements could mean the loss of an annual allocation from the Transportation Agency; about \$250,000 for Moraga, per year.

The deadline for filing the report is the end of June and at the March 11 Council meeting, town staff recommended hiring Baird and Driskell Consultants to help in the process.

"The Town lost many employees that have not been replaced and our current development projects are still taking a lot of time," said Planning Director Lori Salamack. At this time, she is working

on two major development projects with the help of only one part-time assistant. "We want to file our housing element as close as possible to the June deadline," said Mayor David Trotter. All the other Council Members agreed and voted unanimously to approve the contract.

The contract cost of \$67,000 includes discussion with the State agency that manages the process, public sessions, and the responses to both public and agency questions.

Salamack believes that this expense will save money on the development of the Moraga Center Specific Plan. The Planning Commission is expected to start working on this assignment in April. Salamack is working on a schedule that will allow multiple opportunities for public comment.

Spectacular Inauguration for Moraga's New Postmaster

By Sophie Braccini



Jerry DePoe, President of local NALC Branch 71, congratulates Cina Kreisel Photo Andy Scheck

As the voice of postal worker Stephen Pree rose with the notes of the "Star Spangled Banner" for the inauguration of Cina Kreisel, listeners could hear the young man's emotion. On March 6, the voice

echoing in the large postal facility at 460 Center St. in the Rheem Shopping Center was one of the touching elements that made the investiture of the new Postmaster a memorable ceremony. ... continued on page 11

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April 12th:

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-Pastor Brad, GodThoughts, Volume 1*



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-Tom & Nancy Keele, Members

COMING SOON: April 12th, Easter Sunday!
Children's Church (Kindergarten-5th Grade).....10:30am
Youth Service (Junior High and High School).....10:30am

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Lamorinda Community

Calendar, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, April 7	
Monday, March 23, 6PM: Planning Process Review Task Force. Joint Planning Commission/ City Council Workshop Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, March 24	
Finance Advisory Committee	
Gallery Room, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way 6pm Wednesday, March 25	
Mayor's Com. Liaison	8:30am
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Monday, April 6	
City of Orinda: http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us Chamber of Commerce: http://www.orindachamber.org • local businesses • upcoming events	



Drunk in public, 3/06/09 A 55-year-old white male was stumbling as he walked down the sidewalk at Theater Square using a tree limb for assistance. He had a bottle of red wine in his hand. The subject couldn't stand without swaying. Because of his .14% blood alcohol level and his obvious wooziness, he was arrested as a danger to himself and cited for public drunkenness. Perhaps just another really bad day in the stock market?

Mystery robbery, 3/05/09 A Muth Drive resident parked and locked his car in front of his residence at 6:00 p.m. At 8:00 a.m. the next morning he noticed the passenger door slightly open and that his iPod, digital camera and several tools were missing. According to the police report, "an unknown suspect came from an unknown direction, used an unknown object to open the vehicle and left in an unknown direction." Well that clears it up.

Home burglary, 3/05/09 An unknown suspect entered an Orchard Road home via the backyard, once inside two flat screen TVs were taken. No suspects or leads at this time. Perhaps the burglar just really wanted to be prepared for March Madness.

Phone Harassment 3/01/09 A Sleepy Hollow resident has complained to the police about an individual phoning his place of business and leaving "I am going to kick you f---ing ass" voice mail messages. The victim, a 26-year-old male had complained to the police about a similar incident in December of 2008. The message recipient has since taken out a restraining order, and is seeking prosecution if it happens again



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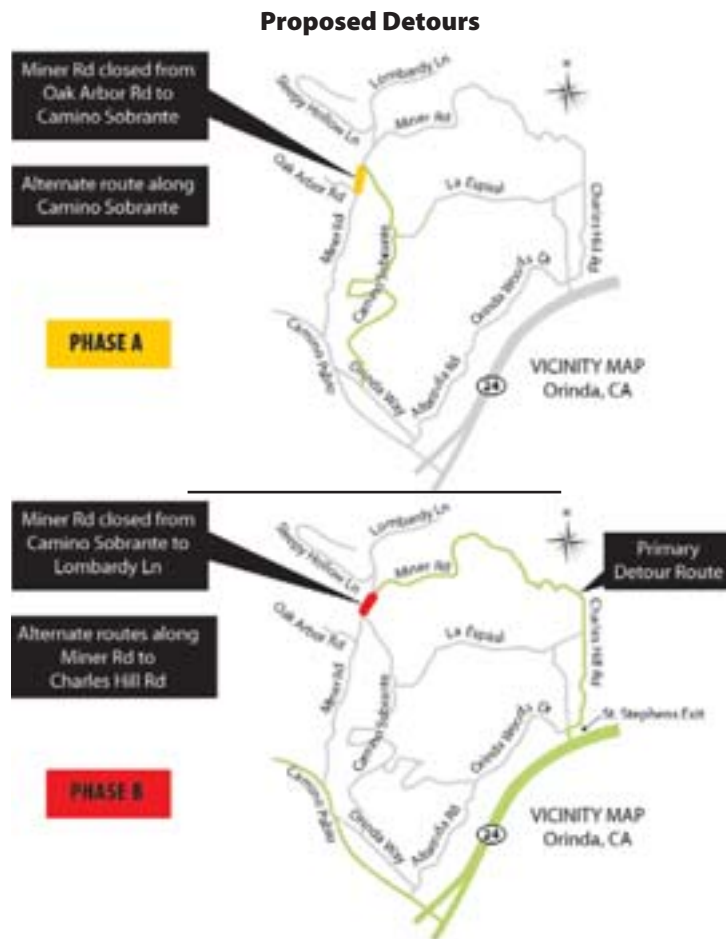


Miner Roadworks May Be Major Disruption

By Andrea A. Firth



Miner Road Pipeline Project Phase 1 Maps provided by EBMUD



Miner Road will getting a much needed facelift this summer with the installation of a new water pipeline, an improved sewer line, and ultimately a new surface. Residents who live on, around, or en route to or from Miner Road might want to start planning now for an early and extended vacation.

Both the East Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) and the Contra Costa County Sanitary District (CCCSD) have plans to be working on Miner Road starting in mid-June.

Single-lane passage, road closures, and detours will be necessary to navigate traffic throughout the project. Extensive planning and coordination has gone into the two projects to minimize the time that residents will be inconvenienced, but slower traffic and longer commute times in this part of the city is inevitable.

EBMUD Pipeline Improvement Project. Starting around June 15th, EBMUD will install 1,400 feet of new pipeline along Miner Road between Oak Arbor Road and

Lombardy Lane as part of a two-phase project to support the future water demands in the area. Phase 2, scheduled for 2012, will include the construction of a new pumping plant and an additional 3,900 feet of new pipeline.

Because Miner Road is narrow and has little or no shoulder, closing the road to all traffic is necessary for EBMUD to work in this section. Drivers will be redirected to detour routes on Camino Sobrante and then Charles Hill Road as the work progresses. The City has requested EBMUD to work extended hours between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. on weekdays to expedite the completion of the project. Outside of the weekday work hours (after 9 p.m. and up til 9 a.m.) and on weekends, Miner Road will be re-opened to two-way traffic. The project will move forward about 100 feet a day and is projected to take six weeks or possibly less to complete.

Sewer Renovation from Camino Pablo to Oak Arbor: The timing of CCCSD's trunk sewer renovation project on Miner Road will coincide with the EBMUD project. The majority of the CCCSD work will be completed underground without impacting the road surface. Intermittent single-lane closures on Miner between Camino Pablo and Oak Arbor Roads and smaller streets nearby [Camino Lenada, Bien Venida, Camino Don Miguel, and Oak Arbor] will be necessary. These single-lane closures will occur about one day a week outside of high-traffic times. The sewer improvement project will address the cracks, broken pipe, and extensive root infestation across 3,600 feet of the 58-year old clay sewer pipe.

... continued on page 6



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Police Services Study to Get Underway

By Andrea A. Firth

Orinda recently joined Lafayette and Danville to hire the Matrix Consulting Group to conduct a Police Services Study. Since the incorporation of Orinda, the City has contracted with the Costa County Sheriff's Office for police services. Lafayette and Danville also contract with the Sheriff for law enforcement.

Although Orinda has been very satisfied with the Sheriff's Office law enforcement coverage and emergency response, the costs for those services have increased over time and escalated recently due to the County's post-employment medical and pension obligations. "I have been im-

pressed by the commitment of the Sheriff's Office to provide quality law enforcement services to the City of Orinda," states Orinda City Manager Janet Keeter. "The intent of the study is to identify and evaluate options for law enforcement services and associated costs, including continuation of the contract with the Sheriff's Office. The study is being driven by the increasing costs of the contract and is no reflection on the quality of services being provided by the Sheriff's Office," she adds.

The study will take approximately four months to complete and the results will be presented at a future City Council meeting.

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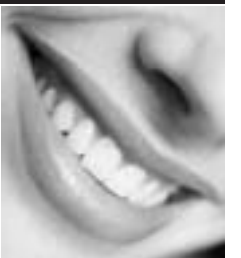
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Life in LAMORINDA

The Odd Couple: Female Version Opens March 26th at THT

By Andrea A. Firth



Town Hall Theater Artistic Director, Clive Worsley, surrounded by the leading ladies for the adult and teen versions of *The Odd Couple: Female Version* (from L to R) Sally Clawson (Olive), Louise Fisher (Teen Olive), Eleanor Mason Reinholdt (Florence) Rachel Cook (Teen Florence).

Town Hall Theater's (THT) Artistic Director Clive Worsley has had little time to bask in the tremendous reviews the company received for their recent production of *Rabbit Hole*. He is deep into rehearsals for Town Hall's next production, *The Odd Couple: Female Version*, for which he is directing both adult and teen cast versions. Despite his hectic two-play schedule, Worsley

reflected briefly on his time at THT so far. "I feel like the community is receiving me very well. I'm very happy with the comments in the lobby on show nights," he says.

For *The Odd Couple: Female Version*, Neil Simon's progesterone-driven update to the contemporary classic, Worsley has cast eight adult actors to perform in the mainstage production and

eight teen actors who will shadow their adult-actor counterparts through rehearsals and serve as understudies. Worsley, who has a long resume of theater education credentials to match his directing experience, has been looking for ways to bridge THT's teen acting program with the mainstage and saw this collaboration as a way to create that link.

The two casts rehearse to-

gether. The teens watch as Worsley gives direction to the adults, and the adults observe the teens at work as well. "The dialogue between the counterparts is tremendous," states Worsley. "I have observed a teen actor deliver a line a certain way that has led me to alter my direction to the adult actor," he explains. "Both casts are gaining something from each other."

In lieu of Oscar Madison's poker games from the original play, the *Female Version*, set in the 1980's, starts with friends gathered for a game of *Trivial Pursuit* at the messy apartment of Olive Madison. "We spent an entire rehearsal playing *Trivial Pursuit*," states Worsley. "The teens did not know how to play the game. They were not even born when the play was written," he adds with a laugh. The play progresses with the late arrival of the recently divorced Florence Unger. Despite their contrary personalities, Olive, the slob, and Florence, the

fussbudget, decide to live together leading to hilarious results.

The Odd Couple: Female Version will open on the mainstage at Town Hall Theater on March 26th and run through April 25th.

Teen cast performances will be on Wednesday, April 15th at 7 p.m. and Saturday, April 18th at 2 p.m. Tickets may be purchased online (www.thtc.org/tickets) or by calling 283-1557.

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Lamorinda Teen Center Makes Progress

Submitted by Beth Eliason

A meeting was held at the Orinda Community Center on a recent Tuesday night to update the community on the proposed Lamorinda Teen Center. Teens and adults on the Planning and Implementing Committees spoke to the attendees on a number of subjects starting with the announcement that the Center's non-profit status has been completed and 501(c)3 status is in progress.

The site originally proposed for the Center, the basement under Europa Restaurant, is still under negotiation with the building's owner. Concerns have been raised regarding parking and the loading dock behind the building. The Committee has proposed a front entrance. They are also looking into alternative sites for the center and would like to keep the center in downtown Orinda because of its central location, access to Bart and to bus routes.

The site decision will be finalized by April and may require al-

terations to the plans for the renovation. Residents who have suggestions for a site are encouraged to contact Steve Controulis at scontroulis@triu.com.

Once the site is finalized, fundraising will begin in earnest. The Committee would like to raise enough money for the renovation and for the first one to two years of operation, approximately \$500,000. The first fundraiser will be a Battle of the Bands being planned by teen volunteers on the Event Planning Committee. The tentative date for this event is May 30th.

For more information on the Teen Center or to donate raffle prizes to the fundraiser, please go to www.lamorindateencenter.org.

The next community meeting will be held May 12th at 7:00 PM at the Orinda Community Center. The fundraising committee's next meeting is March 24th at 7:00 PM in a private home. Please contact Beth Eliason at eliason4@pacbell.net if you are interested in attending.

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SPRING IS IN THE AIR



Jeff Joyce

Believe it or not, spring is almost here. And that means travel season is just around the corner. All of this welcomed rain will soon be replaced with an overabundance of sunshine and warm temperatures. Driving conditions will also change. With April being National Car Care Month, it's time to have the cars inspected, serviced and prepared for the season ahead. Getting the car in for service can be difficult and sometimes inconvenient, but just like going to the dentist, it's just something you have to do. Remember, "Maintenance will always be cheaper than repair".

Dear Jeff:
 My mechanic told me my tires are dry rotted. My tires aren't that old. What does

*all this mean?
 Signed: Dry Rotted in Danville*

Dear Dry Rotted:
 This is a common problem with tires that are inflated with standard compressed air. Shop air compressors can generate a lot of moisture which, when used to inflate your tires, can lead to drying out of the rubber. When tires are exposed to high temperatures and UV rays for long periods, the rubber can dry out and begin "rotting". Rotting is usually seen on the sidewalls and appear as cracks and splits in the rubber. This condition can become very dangerous if left untouched. The good news is there is a way to prevent dry rot. Inflate your tires with nitrogen. Nitrogen is a completely dry air that will not create this drying out process. Always choose a reputable tire shop that offers nitrogen inflation to inspect your tires for air pressure and condition monthly.

Dear Jeff:
 My vehicle uses synthetic oil, so I only have to change my oil every 7500 miles. Recently, my low oil level light came on, but I'm still not due for service. Why should this light be coming on?
 Signed: Low in Lafayette

Dear Low:
 Even though the manufacturers recommendation for oil change service is

Ask Jeff
 7500 miles, you still need to monitor your oil level and occasional top offs between service may be needed. Remember to check your car's vital fluids, check and adjust tire pressures and top off when needed at least every month.

Dear Jeff:
 One of my tires has been losing air for a while, so I took it to a tire shop for repair. When they took the tire off the wheel, they said the tire could not be repaired because I waited too long to have it fixed. What should I have done to prevent this?
 Signed: Flat in Fremont

Dear Flat:
 Due to the weight of cars, tires must be kept properly inflated or internal sidewall failures can occur. There is a tremendous amount of heat generated inside a tire, so when there is insufficient air pressure, the sidewalls can develop a friction related failure. This is very unsafe. Whenever you have a low tire, get air in it as soon as possible and take it to a trusted, competent shop for repair. Never settle for a quick "plug job" because the tire needs to be dismantled from the wheel and inspected then repaired from the inside out. Jeff Joyce has been the Manager of Express Oil Change & Tire Center since 2004. He can be reached at 925-254-8989 or jeff@orindamotors.com

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Clinic is open to all swim teams.

Swim team registration is Sunday, March 15th 12-2pm at Sun Valley Pool (1000 Leland Drive, Lafayette)

For more information, check out www.SwimSunValley.com or contact BVE parent Tracy Broback at GoRays@SwimSunValley.com.

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LAMORINDA Community

Moraga's Town Council and Park and Recreation Commission Hear from Sports and Pet Enthusiasts

By Dean Okamura
 A crowded room of sport enthusiasts and dog owners eagerly waited for their opportunity to address the Special Joint Meeting of the Moraga Town Council and Parks and Recreation Commission held on March 3rd at the Hacienda de las Flores. The most divisive topics on the agenda included an open discussion for the use of Measure WW funds and the status of Rancho Laguna Park as an off-leash area for dogs.

Measure WW was passed in November 2008 and allows the East Bay Parks District to disperse \$125 million from a bond issue for city park and recreation improvements. Moraga is projected to receive nearly \$735,000 after a specific project is identified.

When the floor opened, Colin Knightly, Director of Lamorinda Lacrosse, responded, "with nearly 400 players, a third of which comes from Moraga, it is becoming difficult to compete with the other sports for field space."

Joe Rosenbaum, President of Moraga Baseball and coach for Lamorinda Rugby, continued the sentiment by indicating that even

on sunny days the prospects of finding quality space for practice is remote. He described how poor weather days make practice on tennis courts or in gyms the only option.

After several more emotionally charged statements the Council closed the floor and made recommendations. Commissioner John Haffner summed up the support for more sport fields from Vice Chair Liz Faoro and Council Members Mike Metcalf and Howard Harpham by stating, "...we will move slow, but aggressively (in developing a plan)."

Mayor Dave Trotter indicated that a Joint Use Agreement between the Moraga School District and the town has not been finalized. This agreement would allow the Town of Moraga to improve school properties for public use provided upkeep is made by the town. Without this agreement, improvements to school property cannot occur.

When asked, Richard Schafer, Superintendent of the Moraga School District, indicated that a mutually vetted agreement

was presented to the town for approval late last year and the Town set a date in April for a response. After learning of the Council's openness to improve school property, Schafer indicated that the Moraga Sports Alliance (an advisory committee that was established in order to identify the best school property for sports field improvement) has already agreed that Camino Pablo is the best site for improvement.

Discussion of the vision for Rancho Laguna Park began with the room still crowded. Dog owners and frequent users of the park spoke about the park's rural feel and access to East Bay Park trails, its social value for pet owners, and poor suitability for sports field construction.

Residents expressed how a dog friendly area adds value to the experience of living in Moraga. Metcalf and Trotter followed with recommendations to the Commission focused on clearly identifying hours of use in the Moraga Municipal Code and studying if the farthest east portion of the park could be dedicated as a dog area.

OUSD Parcel Tax Passes

By Andrea A. Firth
 The Orinda Union School District (OUSD) Parcel Tax proposition passed with almost 71% of voter support and nearly 60% of voters participating in the March 3rd Special Election.

After what he describes as scary and thrilling ride down the campaign trail, OUSD Parcel Tax Committee Co-Chair (and City Council Member) Steve Glazer's dominant feeling the morning after the election was relief. "This was quickly followed by the utmost thanks that our Orinda community has shown again how much they greatly value our schools," he adds. Described as the campaign's key strategist by Co-Chair Riki

Sorenson (who also serves time as the OUSD Governing Board President), Glazer predicted the turnout and number of votes needed to pass the parcel tax within a percentage point and a few hundred votes.

Although the majority of ballots were cast by mail, the Parcel Tax Committee's third Co-Chair, Lynn Goodman Molloy, organized an army of 90 volunteers who went door to door on a very rainy Tuesday, where an inch and half of water poured down on the Orinda streets, to get out the remaining twenty percent of voters to ensure the parcel tax passed with the requisite 2/3 voter approval.

The new parcel tax will

cost Orinda residents \$525 annually and generate an additional \$870,000 in revenue for the School District each year. The parcel tax monies could start to accrue by July according to OUSD Superintendent Dr. Joe Jaconette. The Governing Board has begun preliminary discussions regarding how to allocate the parcel tax funds. "We want to be cautious and deliberate in spending the parcel tax," states Sorenson. "We are not likely to use all the parcel tax money at once to solve a problem. We are more likely to use it over a period of time. This is how it has been managed historically," she adds.

Positive Lafayette Bike Park Stakeholders Meeting

... continued from page 2
 "You could really pack in quite a few jumps. This site has a nice slope, great contours, when we look at a park, that's what we want, good flow and circulation," said Lopes.

He emphasized the importance of getting input from stakeholders at the ground level as to what specifically they would like to see at the Lafayette Bike Park. Attendees were handed a Design Development Survey with elevation lines to pencil in their preferred features and a Community Profile Survey, to gather information on the types of users and develop a list of possible future volunteers.

Bike Park users have asked to build and maintain the

jumps in the future bike park, allowing them the flexibility of adjustments over time, this also creates a sense of ownership and promotes volunteerism that will benefit others, and keeps costs down. Area parents will be pleased that there will be a "constructive" summer activity for their teens to engage in, that gets their kids off the couch. In addition, perhaps local merchants will be pleased that this is a potential destination for loitering students.

"We want this to be a model for other parks departments in the Bay Area who are in the same situation," said Lopes. Encouraging the youthful users, "This is your chance; please give detailed

descriptions of features you want." Possible options include: rollers, berms, table top jumps, gap jumps - very popular with this crowd, hip jumps, step ups, drop progression, rhythm jumps and more.

When asked if any of the meetings attendees has experience building jumps, quite a few hands went up (possibly the scowflaw creek-bed diggers.) After initial heavy equipment grading, a substantial number of volunteers will be needed to do jump construction. Potential users are highly encouraged to go online to fill out the Community Profile Survey along with the Design Development Survey. www.lafayettebikepark.com

Miner Roadworks May Be Major Disruption

... continued from page 4
 CCCSD will be working around the clock periodically throughout the project when the new pipe lining is cured; this will not result in additional road closures.

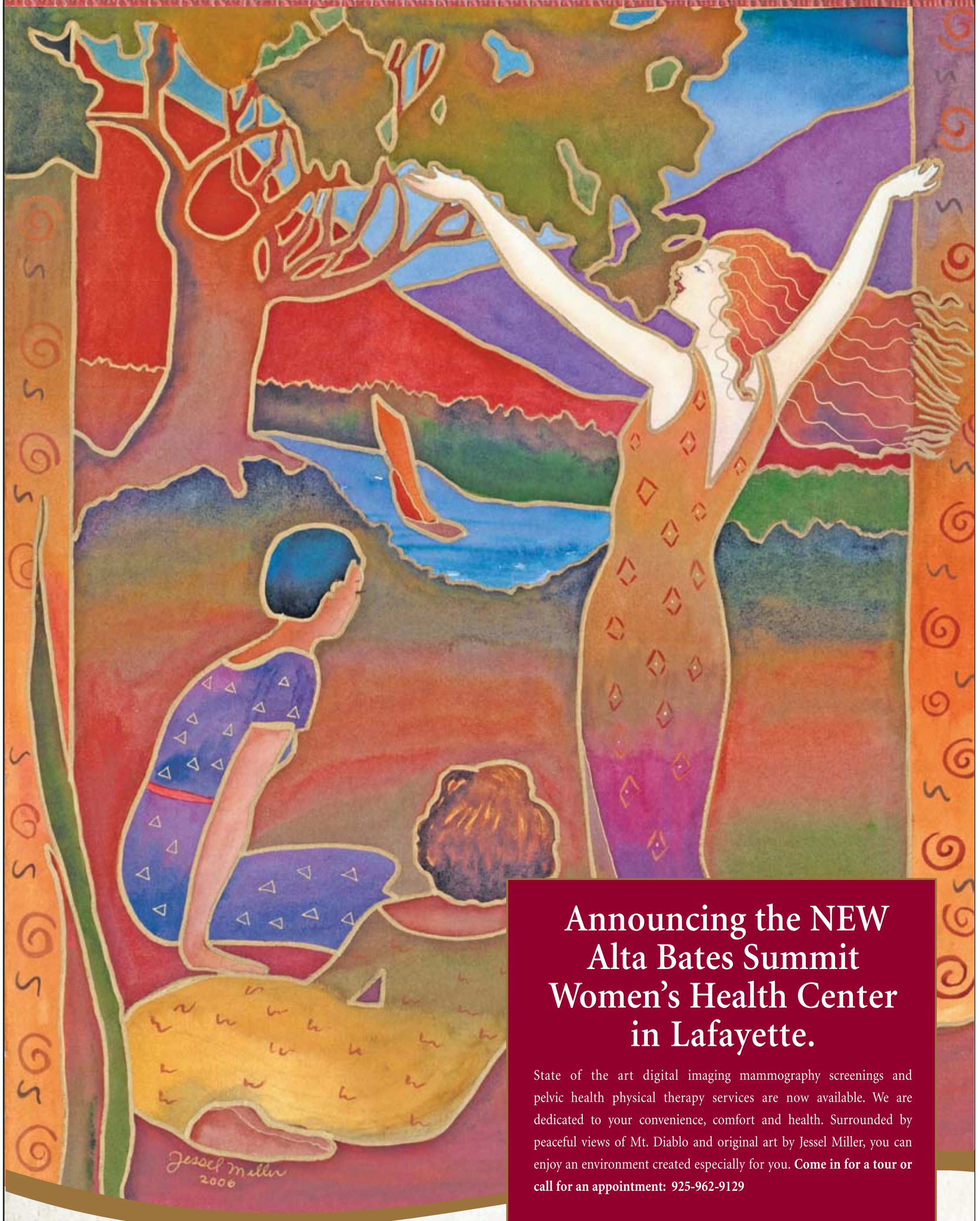
Anything Else? The City has planned an overlay project for Charles Hill Road—one of the detour routes—funded

through the newly available stimulus package infrastructure funds. The exact timing for the Charles Hill project is unknown but will not overlap with the EBMUD project according to Orinda's Public Works and Engineering Director Chuck Swanson.

Burying the overhead

PG&E utility lines along Miner Road has also been discussed along with the possibility of widening the road to allow the addition of a walkway and/or bike path. The City Council plans to address the PG&E plans and timing at an upcoming meeting.

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1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. 925-376-5770**Willow Spring Church****1675-1689 School Street, Moraga**
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(925) 376-3550**Sunday Service Times:**
Prayer @ 8am, Traditional @ 9am,
Contemporary @ 10:30am**Weekly Activities:**Wednesday Community Bible Study @ 10am
REVERB (youth) @ 7pm
Friday Night BLAST! Kids Club @ 6pm
Saturday Night Catalyst (Young Adults) @ 7:30pm**CHRISTIAN SCIENCE**Church Services and Sunday School (up to age 20); 10 - 11 AM
Informal Testimony Meeting, Wed 7:30 - 8:30 PM
24 Orinda Way www.christianscienceorinda.org**Free public lecture March 20 at 7:30 p.m.**

"The Healing Power of the Golden Rule." See our website for details.

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, Orinda, 254-34228:15 a.m. Traditions Worship Service
9:15 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
9:40 a.m. Education for all ages
10:45 a.m. Celebrations Worship Service
Childcare available for ages 5 and younger
433 Moraga Way**HOLY WEEK SERVICES**Palm Sunday, April 5, Regular Worship Schedule
Maundy Thursday, April 9, Worship Service 7:00 p.m.
Good Friday, April 10, Services 12 noon and 7:00 p.m.
(Childcare for ages 5 and younger at 7:00 p.m.)
Easter Sunday, April 12, Services 8:15, 9:30 and 10:45 a.m.
(Childcare for ages 5 and younger from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon)
Easter Breakfast 8:30 - 11:00 a.m.**Our Savior's Lutheran (ELCA)**
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283-3722 • www.oslc.net**Sunday mornings at OSLC:**
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Education Hour, 9:30-10:20 am
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www.bayareadrainage.com**Letters to the Editor**Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writers and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and town (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only), and should be 350 words or less. Letters may be edited for length or legal considerations.
email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: **Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570**

Dear Editor,

Lafayette Comes Through AgainDown that Lafayette hill those telltale markers flow.
To the busy traffic's edge we've watched them grow.
Row after row of shining white crosses,
Intermingled with white stars for Sons of David losses.It is quite fitting and proper that this Memorial be placed here,
In a beautiful quiet town, named for a man we all hold dear.
One who didn't turn his back when we badly needed a strong hand,
To help us fight for our freedom in this far distant land.A Patriot whose name we will never forget,
From far-away France, The Marquis De Lafayette.
And now I am sure he looks down in total assent
Of how we have handled this entire, trying event.We, too, are all saddened by the price they had to pay,
But when diplomacy had failed, there was no other way.
So, Shine on you Crosses and Shine on you Stars!!
They paid their full last Devotion for a similar Noble Cause!!Samuel N. Etheredge M.D.
World War II Veteran
Orinda

Dear Editor:

We would like to express our appreciation to Orinda Voters for their strong support for Measure B in last Tuesday's election. Measure B will provide much needed resources to lessen the burden of significant state budget cut to our schools. It will protect quality academic programs that have provided our children with an excellent education. More than 70% of Orinda voters have agreed to pay higher taxes despite the difficult economic conditions. We are sincerely grateful.

Riki Sorenson, Lynne Molloy, Steven Glazer
Co-Chairs, Yes on Measure B

Dear Editor:

I am a naturalized citizen of Chinese descent who has lived in Orinda for nearly 2 decades. I've found most people in Orinda (and Moraga) extremely friendly, helpful and tolerant. Therefore, I have a hard time understanding Bob and Kim Larsen's complaint expressed in their letter of March 4. Are they saying that residents of Orinda are not tolerant enough because most voted for Prop 8 and/or because blacks and Hispanics represent less than 2% of the city's population? If they want to live in a city which strongly supports Prop 8 and has a very "diverse" population, maybe San Francisco is more suitable for them. (By the way, if my recollection is correct, most blacks, Hispanics and Asians voted for Prop 8 according to polls.) It is my belief that people who are truly tolerant and inclusive are color blind. In addition, they do not impose their values on other people around them. Sincerely,

Suzanne Yeh Feinberg
Orinda

Editor:

In response to your article on the February "Tri Agency" (Moraga; Orinda; MOFD) meeting, specifically regarding the allocation of costs between Orinda and Moraga vs. the benefits each city receives. As stated in your article, Orinda pays about 65% of the total property tax going to the district (\$11M out of \$17M). However with 80% of the districts costs being personnel costs; and with 58% of the firefighters (11 of 19) being in Orinda; and assuming the administration for the two equal sized cities are split 50-50 (52% of the district's calls are from Orinda); Orinda should accrue 57% of the total cost. With Moraga's \$6M in tax fixed by Proposition 13, this means Orinda should be paying only \$8M, not \$11M. However, MOFD contends that since 675 homes in south Orinda are served by the Moraga stations, Orinda should pay a higher percentage of the total. These 675

homes produce about 90 priority calls annually and 50 non-priority calls. Even if all calls "cost" the same, that would mean these 140 calls would cost Orinda over \$20,000 each if this extra service is, in fact, worth \$3,000,000. In a letter that Chief Nowicki sent to the Orinda City Council in January, he pointed to a similar situation where San Pablo paid Richmond for calls the Richmond Fire Department made into San Pablo. The charge was \$500 per call. I believe there is an equitability disconnect here.

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Dear Editor,



Brian Luke carries cookies to a waiting car

Early in December of 2008, we embarked on a new adventure and new commitment to the Girl Scouts of the Orinda/Moraga Service Unit (60 to 70 troops with 900 girls) by managing the 2009, yearly Cookie Sale. We want to thank the Orinda/Moraga Fire Department for their assistance in accomplishing our goal of distributing over 3500 cases of cookies to the troops one rainy, blustery day, February 22, 2009.

Station #42, located at 555 Moraga Road in Moraga, CA was kind enough to once again open their doors (literally) to us. The crew at that station was so helpful, beginning before 6:30 AM that morning with the acceptance of the sky-high pallettes with the cases of cookies. With the rainy weather, Fire Captain Felipe Barreto made the decision to have parents drive through the station to help keep everyone and everything dry. Over 30 volunteers showed up with eager attitudes and a generous spirit to help load the cookies.

We want to thank those volunteers and the Moraga/Orinda Fire Station men who helped us: Captain Felipe Barreto; Firefighter Ken Mannshardt; Engineer Steve Campisi; and Firefighter Reserve Brian Luke. Special kudos and thanks to Brian, who enthusiastically helped disassemble pallettes of cookies only to reassemble them into individual troop orders and load them into waiting cars, staying engaged the whole time we were there. Also, thanks to Ken for taking pictures documenting the incredible day and to Grace Santos who facilitated the process.

Often times we know how thankful we would be for such a wonderful crew in times of an emergency such as a natural disaster, fire or other calamity, but we also know how thankful we are to have their cooperation and enthusiasm to support our community in many other ways. Three cheers for our Moraga/Orinda Fire Department!

For more information on Girl Scouts or to find a local cookie sale booth, go to www.girlscoutsnorcal.org.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Gustafson
Jeanette Fritzky
Co-Managers of the Orinda/Moraga Service Unit
Girls Scouts of Northern California**Public Forum****JOIN IT**

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section.

Just send your letter to **letters@lamorindaweekly.com** and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.**Green and Greener Where the Wild Things Are**

By Dave Rochlin and Katy Foreman

Dave: Thinking green also applies to co-existing with the animals that we share our Lamorinda community with. The Lindsay Wildlife Museum in Walnut Creek just sent me an email reminder that we are entering the spring "baby animal" season. According to the Lindsay Staff, six squirrels are already in care because their nests fell out of palm trees. Apparently many wild animals find palm trees attractive as nest sites, but palms don't hold nests securely. Every year, many baby animals—squirrels, barn owls and others—fall from palm tree nests.**Katy:** We're really lucky in this area to have the Lindsay, which not only provides education about coexisting with wildlife, but also runs one of the country's most sophisticated wildlife hospitals. In addition to those six squirrels from the palm trees, we've just gotten four more whose nests were destroyed by tree trimmers. Trees and bushes should be trimmed only during October through December, when very few animals are attempting to nest. Hummingbirds and squirrels start their nests very early, and it's often difficult to see a nest until you've already cut it down. If you do find a baby squirrel or a nest of them, there

are various options. It's best to call Lindsay to find out which one will work in your situation. Their number is (925) 935-1978.

Dave: Well what if I do find a nest on the ground with baby birds in it?
Katy: Again, it's best to call Lindsay to be sure - but generally they will ask if you are able to replace the nest back where it came from or in a nearby tree. The parents are far better caregivers for those babies than any human can be. If the nest is damaged or won't sit tightly in the tree, you can place it in a margarine tub and wire that to a branch of the tree. Be sure to add some drainage holes in case it rains, but don't use a mesh type berry basket, or anything that a baby might get its leg caught in. Watch to see that the parents return and begin feeding the babies. You have to watch carefully though, because they make very quick feeding stops and fly away again to gather more food. If none of this is possible, or if you are concerned the birds were injured in the fall, call Lindsay to see what to do next.**Dave:** No margarine in our house...but we do have a few Cool Whip containers lying around. Mmmmm...Cool Whip. So I've heard that if you touch a baby bird, the parents will smell human on itand abandon it.
Katy: That is right up there with stolen kidneys as an urban legend; most birds don't have a highly developed sense of smell. It's amazing how determined the parents are to continue to care for their babies. They will definitely not abandon them just because you helped get them off the ground. (Not that you should go poking around in birds' nests...)**Dave:** What if I see an orphaned baby deer?**Katy:** Baby deer are often mistaken for "abandoned" because the parents leave them alone during the day to eat. Do not bother a baby deer or any deer in that situation.
Dave: I have seen more than a few deer on the side of our busier roads (especially both Moraga Way and Moraga Rd) that have clearly been hit by cars. Often times it seem like drivers don't know what to do and just drive on...apparently the deer in headlights look is reciprocal.**Katy:** I've never actually seen a deer get that look, though I've had it on plenty a Monday morning. If you are positive a deer is injured, in Lamorinda you can call Animal Services at (925) 335-8300. Deer are incredibly nervous and aren't easy to handle on your own - I

wouldn't try.

Dave: Dr. Nancy Anderson at Lindsay also mentioned that it is grub season, which attracts raccoons and skunks to your lawn. Raccoons have been peeling back my lawn for years to get at their favorite snack...it drives me crazy! But she recommends avoiding pesticides, and says to use natural, beneficial nematodes which will get rid of the grubs but not poison other wildlife or pollute our streams. The folks at Orchard or one of the other nurseries should be able to help you find the right thing.
Katy: I'm all for any way to discourage pesticide use. Raccoons are also more likely to tear up an over-watered lawn, so cutting back on watering should help, and is a good idea this year anyway. There is a lot more great information on living with wildlife on Lindsay's website at www.lindsaywildlife.org.

Katy Foreman is a committed environmentalist who lives in Lafayette, and Dave Rochlin is a lazy environmentalist who lives in Moraga. Together they operate ClimatePath, a website helping individuals and businesses reduce their carbon footprints by offsetting and conserving in the ways that are right for them. ClimatePath is on the web at www.climatepath.org

Life in LAMORINDA

Quest for Stories Leads Local Resident to Uncover the Past

By Jennifer Wake



Dale Turner Photos provided

Most people might define genealogy as a detailed family tree. For Lafayette architect Dale Turner, however, it is much more; genealogy is about the stories those ancestors tell.

In 1977, after Turner's grandfather died, she heard that there was a Turner genealogy. When she asked to see it, her father replied, "It's in a box somewhere; I'll look for it." Ten years later - after continually asking her father, aunts and uncles about the document - Turner was shown a bound copy chronicling a long list of descendants, with birthdates and names, but no cities where they were born - and it wasn't even from the Turner-side of the family.

Thus began her quest for the Turner clan, which has led her to sleepy towns in Vermont, grassy graveyards in Illinois, message boards on the Internet, and one-on-one conversations with great aunts, and distant cousins.

Through the course of her research over the past 20 years, Turner has found gems such as a land grant signed by Ulysses S. Grant, items purchased at the Chicago World's Fair, and even documents from the Civil War. "Most people's genealogies are just a list of names," Turner said. "The stories are what make them interesting."

For example, Turner's mother was a war bride and came to the United States by herself at the age of 17, crossing the seas on a ship from the Philippines to San Francisco, before boarding a train alone to the Midwest.

"I have the first letter she

sent home telling about the trip and how terrible it was, being seasick for two weeks," Turner said.

Turner visited relatives in Illinois, and came home with a box filled with photographs and old documents. The result of her efforts is a 627-page volume (the first of ten) that includes relative's stories, photographs, census information and even historic facts from different periods, such as the use of the rotary dial phone. Turner even found a patent of her great-great-grandmother's, who liked to invent things, and included a picture of the invention (a contraption used to lift long skirts out of the mud).

Turner started her research before she had a computer or Internet access, and

structional videos on the New England Historical and Genealogy Society Web site (www.newenglandancestors.org/services/30.asp/), or reading "getting started" guides on sites like Ancestry.com (<http://learn.ancestry.com/home/hmind.aspx>) and Family Search Resources (www.familysearch.org/eng/Home/Welcome/frameset_information.asp).

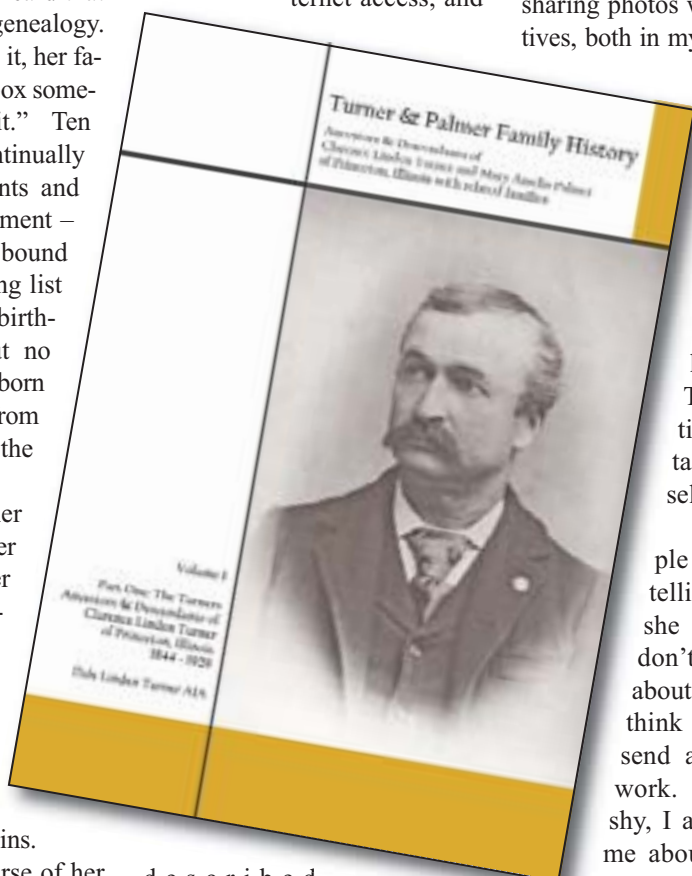
She has also found great information from genealogy message boards, which are organized by surnames, locality, and topic. "I most enjoy getting stories and sharing photos with living relatives, both in my immediate extended family and also very distant relatives, some of whom I've 'met' on message boards." One challenge, says Turner, is getting people to talk about themselves.

"A lot of people are shy about telling their story," she said. "People don't like to talk about themselves and think they have to send a great literary work. If they're too shy, I ask them to tell me about someone, or ask one question at a time. I asked my dad, 'Tell me about the war?' Then he got all excited."

In her book, Turner quoted a great aunt as saying, "Getting people to talk about themselves is like pulling hen's teeth."

Turner recently spoke to her local Rotary club about her genealogy research. Her talk, entitled "Genealogy: Get 'Em While They're Hot," focused on asking your family questions while they are still around.

"See these four people listed as sources?" Turner said, pointing to a page in her book. "They're all gone, now."



described spending countless hours scanning microfilm page by page, taking handwritten notes, and culling through 50th wedding anniversary announcements or obituaries.

"Everything has changed with computers, the Internet, scanners and digital cameras," she said. "It is easier to obtain information through genealogy Web sites and even through Google. If I had access to the Internet in 1988, what took me 20 years to discover could have been found within a few."

For novice genealogists, Turner recommends watching in-

Cut it back so the Trucks Can Get Through

... continued from page 1

He also notes overhanging limbs and shrubs can break off the emergency lights on the MOFD vehicles which requires the vehicle to be out of service until the lights can be repaired.

The MOFD guideline for the maintenance of vegetation on or near roads is the provision of a three-foot clearance

from the shoulder extending upward to a 15-foot clearance off the ground. Property owners are responsible for maintaining vegetation, trees, and shrubbery on their property and in the public right-of-way abutting their property.

"With the narrow roads we have, keeping the vegetation trimmed back extends the

usable roadway," he explains. This extra road space can be critical in a number of emergency scenarios, for example, if two vehicles need to pass or in the event an evacuation is necessary. "Trimming back vegetation is an effective way to ensure access to your property in case of an emergency," states Mentink.

Good Samaritan Mailman Strikes Again

By Cathy Tyson



Futures Explored Community Service Class shows off a few of the collected coats Photo Cathy Tyson

After experiencing how great it felt to give, I came up with the idea to start a local fund within the Lafayette Post Office to collect winter clothes," said Jeovani Abenoja. Readers may recall that a few months ago he gave first aid to an injured older gentleman on

his route. His plan was to collect winter clothing, especially coats, from Postal employees, encouraging them to clean out closets, and donate them to Futures Explored Incorporated, a program for adults with developmental disabilities. The

consumers (participants) in instructor Cindy Redinger's Community Service Class washed and sorted the donations and passed them on to Nifty Thrift, the thrift store the organization has run for over 35 years. Not only does revenue from sales go back to Futures Explored programs, but the shop serves as a "living classroom" for participants in their vocational programs.

If some of the adults look familiar, you may have seen these hard workers on sidewalk crew in downtown Lafayette or at the Moraga Commons on park crew.

"Oldies but goodies" used men's women's and children's clothing is always welcome at Nifty Thrift, 3467 Golden Gate Way. For more information on other programs, go to www.futures-explored.org.

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Local Residents Offer Perspective, Advice from the Great Depression

By Jennifer Wake



Farm Security Administration: farmers whose topsoil blew away joined the sod caravans of "Okies" on Route 66 to California. (Circa 1935) Photograph from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.



Rossmoor resident Frank Wilking, 96 Lafayette United Methodist Church members Bruce and Martha Gerringer Moraga resident Ed Jones, 89 Photos Jennifer Wake

With stories of tent cities being erected in towns across the country (some as close as Sacramento), hundreds lining up to apply for a single job, and Feed the Children trucking food for 3,600 families to northern Indiana last week, our current recession seems dire. Local residents who lived through the Great Depression, however, underscore that it could be a lot worse.

In addition to economic woes, by May 1934, one of the most severe droughts in U.S. history covered more than 75 percent of the country and severely affected 27 states. In 1935, experts in Pueblo, Colo., estimated that 850 million tons of topsoil had blown

off the Southern Plains.

Lafayette United Methodist Church member Bruce Gerringer, 82, lived in the small town of Buckeye Hill in southeast Colorado during the Depression and remembers the huge winds that kicked up these dust storms.

"We just barely made it," Gerringer said. "During the wind storms, it was so bad that my mother used to scoop the dirt with a shovel to sweep the house. All the windows were stuffed, all the doors were stuffed. If we went outside, we needed ropes to walk from one building to the next. The storms were so high, you could see them coming for miles."

During 1939, Gerringer said

his family farm lost 110 cows and horses to suffocation.

Long-time Moraga resident John McCormick was also born in Colorado, but says Denver was spared the devastation of the Dust Bowl, but not of the economy. He was ten years old when the stock market crashed in 1929. Although his family had bought a house in 1925 and his father still had a job during the Depression, by 1933 his family could no longer make the payments and they lost their house. At the same time, their car broke down and they lost that, too.

"My parents finally separated due to their financial problems," said McCormick. At age 15, he worked 40 hours a week. "I slept at high school," he said. "You had to sleep somewhere."

Ed Jones — who is recuperating at a care home in Moraga — was nine years old in 1929. He remembers stuffing pieces of cardboard in his shoes to get by. His family lived in a three bedroom house in Oakland, and family members would come to stay while they looked for work, or took training courses.

"All the boys (including uncles) would sleep in one room, all the girls in another, and my parents would get the third. That was the rule," he said. When Jones was 13, his father became ill and wasn't able to work. Jones worked two jobs — one behind a soda counter, the other making deliveries on foot for a local pharmacy — while his 17-year-old older brother went to work at PG&E to help support his parents and three other siblings.

Lafayette United Methodist Church organist Ken Mansfield's family also struggled. Mansfield was about four years old when his family lived in a cabin on a hillside above the Salinas Valley. "There was no water, no electricity and we cooked on a woodstove," he said. "We felt very lucky if we were able to shoot a

quail or deer to eat. It affected my life. I always finish what's on my plate."

Gerringer, McCormick, and Jones all served in the military. According to the book, "Families, History and Social Change," more than 70 percent of boys in nearby Berkeley eventually served in the armed forces following the Depression. By 1943 there were more than 40,000 victory gardens on vacant plots in the East Bay.

Moraga Retreat Care resident Margaret Steiner, 93, said, "You learned a lot of ways to extend your food budget with omelets, hash and casseroles. If you had anything like an apple tree, you canned all your fruit. You didn't buy frozen food or strange canned food."

In the 1930s, while attending college, Steiner's big treat was to stop and get a sticky bun and a cup of coffee, costing 15 cents — not incredibly cheap, considering it cost the same for a day at the movies. "We had to ration our outings, and try to find other things to do that didn't cost money."

For those going through hard times today, Steiner says, "Don't spend it 'til you have it, unless it's an emergency." As for the stimulus package, she says to give the President a chance. "He has so many things in the works. Let's encourage him."

McCormick thinks people shouldn't worry about the stock market, either. "Forget about it. In time, the stocks will come back up," he said. "The scary thing is that my Depression lasted from 1929 to 1941. Keep your fingers crossed; this could be a long time."

Rossmoor resident Frank Wilking, 96, says that although the Great Depression was a devastating time for our country and its citizens, "we got through it."

"This is a deep recession, not a depression," Wilking noted. "But it's awful damn close to it."

LYNN'S TOP FIVE

--- New Tax Laws from a Planner's Perspective

By Lynn Ballou, CFP, EA

You've read and will be reading much in the coming weeks about how the newest Federal tax bill signed February 13th of this year by President Obama will change your lives. Entitled the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, it is the first in what promises to be a very busy year in Washington of tax impact-ful laws.

So, I'm going to skip the obvious and more popular provisions that you've heard all about, and focus on a few of the lesser knowns, but those that might be of particular interest to Lamorindans. I was fortunate to be able to tap into my long-time friend and colleague, Linda LaHonta, CPA, who has her practice in Lafayette. If you have any specific tax questions, she's available at 925/385-0714.

1) \$1500 Energy Credit: I don't know about you, but my home could certainly use a newer more energy efficient air and heating system. I've procrastinated a LONG time now! Thankfully I'm married to an electrical engineer who is able to fix just about anything. But even my ever patient husband might be ready to kiss our old system good-bye this year because of the new Energy Credit. You can receive a credit of 30% up to \$1500 on your federal taxes for property such as this that you put into service AFTER 2/17/09. As Linda LaHonta pointed out to me the "energy credit also applies to certain types of insulation, energy efficient exterior doors, windows and skylights." A FAVORITE part of this new law? No income limitation! So highly compensated folks can benefit too! And, if you used up your lifetime energy credit in prior years, such as 2007, no worries, you are now still eligible for this credit.

2) Unemployment Income — a tax break finally! With unemployment rising in these very difficult times, not only has the government raised the amount of unemployment you can receive weekly, but they have temporarily suspended the taxation on unemployment benefits up to \$2400, which will go a LONG way towards having these dollars be truly beneficial to your family. Also it's good to know that the state does not tax ANY unemployment benefits at all. Now if we could JUST get the feds to stop taxing our Social Security income, THAT would be progress!!!

3) 529 Plans and Computer Costs: One of the main frustrations clients of ours have had over the years are the strict use limits for 529 plan withdrawals. Finally we are seeing a bit of relief: the government says we can use the funds in 529 plans for tax free withdrawals to pay for computers and internet fees. Yeah! Now if we can just get those accounts to go back up in value.....

4) AMT - the Latest Patch: Wouldn't it be great to see someone drive a stake in the heart of the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT)? This tax is aptly named the stealth tax. It's like the alligator in the lake that the cute little kid who just got in to swim doesn't realize is in the water... you can already hear the music ---du, du, du..... So, I would dearly love to be the one to tell you that the wicked witch is dead, but as I'm sure you've guessed, were that the case, the whole COLUMN would be dedicated to that! Nonetheless, they did toss us a bone. Here's what Linda had to say about the AMT patch: "The current AMT

patch increases the AMT exemption amount by \$1,000 for married filing jointly and \$500 for all others. AMT exemption amount means a certain amount of your income that is not subject to the AMT. My feeling is that if you are in AMT currently, this exemption increase is nominal and the majority of people subject to AMT will continue to be in this situation. This patch is only good for 2009 so the whole process starts over again for 2010 if nothing else is done." Sigh. I guess we'll take what we can get!

5) For the College Bound: Expansion of the Hope Credit: Many in this community are not able to use the college tuition income tax credits due to high income, or let's just say "high income" as defined by Congress! Anyway, a few more of you may now qualify: they expanded the credit to \$2500 and expanded it for four years. I doubt it will make or break your college budget planning, though --- so, another big "sigh!" However, in the later years of college, if your child is working enough to no longer be your dependent, perhaps they can use this credit by filing their own return and not being claimed as your dependent? Be careful, though --- if you are providing their medical coverage as a dependent on your medical plan, that could undo an important benefit that probably is better than the tax credit.

And, even though this column is entitled LYNN'S TOP FIVE, here's another good one to know about: As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the federal government will subsidize 65 percent of the COBRA costs for employees who are involuntarily terminated from employment between September 1st, 2008, and December 31st, 2009. The former employee would be responsible for the remaining 35 percent of premium. Check with the human resources department of your former employer if you feel you may be eligible.

So what's coming down the plank from Washington next? Well that will be a lot of good fodder for future columns. One or two initiatives that seem to have a bit of bi-partisan worry and concern are the proposals to limit home mortgage interest and charitable contribution deductions for higher bracket taxpayers. Additionally the idea of increasing the tax on capital gains is emerging as an early favorite. That said, if you didn't do any tax loss harvesting last year, you might want to nudge this up a bit on your "to do" list!



Lynn Ballou is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and co-owner of Ballou Plum Wealth Advisors, LLC, a Registered Investment Advisory (RIA) firm in Lafayette. Lynn is also a Registered Principal and Branch Manager with LPL Financial (LPL). As such, she is required by securities regulations to add the following information to this column: The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and not intended to provide specific advice or recommendation for any individual. Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC. Reach Lynn Ballou at lynn@ballouplum.com

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Un, Deux, Trois—Voilà!

By Linda U. Foley



Philippe Chevalier

Photos Linda U. Foley

A squall of small tables, ambient lighting, a glowing Cherry wood bar, and French waiter greet us on a recent Wednesday night. ‘Duo Gadgo,’ a French American couple from Moraga, plays traditional chansons. A sense of de ja vu makes me feel as though I’m in a bistro at the Rive Gauche... minus the smoke and the Seine beyond the windows.

This is Chef Philippe Chevalier’s first foray into running his own restaurant. His route to this point is layered with impressive haute cuisine experiences.

Born into a fishing family in the Vendee Region of France, Chevalier entered the culinary world in his early teens and by age 27 had earned the distinction of Executive Chef. His career path wound

through the Michelin-studded venues of Paris (Maison Prunier), St. Tropez, St. Berthelemy, and the French West Indies. In 2002, he was ready to tickle the palettes across the ocean as Executive Chef at Le Salamandre in Danville. Just a year later, Diablo Magazine recognized him as the Best Chef of Bay Area restaurants. In 2004, his “chefing” at prestigious Chez Papa in San Francisco, resulted in the recognition of the Best French/European Restaurant in San Francisco by the Examiner.

Chevalier Restaurant is barely seven months old and is getting its legs. Though the restaurant is small and prone to being noisy, it feels comfortable and the wait staff is efficient and pleasant.

Eric Lacombe, from Montpellier in the south of France, is one of

just two waiters tending to a full house. While Eric allows me to sample one wine, the other waiter notices my camera and offers to take a picture mid-stride.

I choose a glass of Stone Street Chardonnay at \$14 from an extensive wine list and it is good once it has “warmed up” a bit.

The menu—nearly as large as our table—brims with largely Provençal-inspired classics such as onion soup, oysters, escargot, foie gras, mussels, charcuterie and coq au vin. For something less French, there is pork from Iowa, Hawaiian Ahi tuna, Colorado lamb and homemade gnocci.

There are daily specials such as Bouillabaisse and traditional Casoulet.

We decide on escargot, salad

with mustard dressing, Sole Almandine and Rabbit in Cream Sauce, followed by warm apple tart. The rabbit was velvety like a young happy chicken, the vegetables fresh and cooked to a light crunch and the tart apples were perfect on the light and crispy tart.

Chevalier—which translates into Knight—is more like a king in his narrow galley-style kitchen as well as the perfect host as he checks on his guests to assure that they are happy.

Though Chevalier is on the pricey side, the food and ambience make it worth to enjoying a small and perfect piece of France right in our backyard.

Bon appetit and au revoir!

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MOFD Rejects LAFCO Report Findings

By Andrea A. Firth

“I am very proud of our accomplishments with our revenue stream,” stated Fire Chief Pete Nowicki when addressing the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Board at their meeting on March 4th. “We have pre-eminent service abilities and capabilities as compared to other Districts in the area.” While Nowicki was very pleased with the MOFD’s level of fire service, he was less than pleased with the characterizations of the District and the recommendations outlined in the Municipal Service Review (MSR) recently issued by Contra Costa County’s Local Agency Formation Commission, known as LAFCO.

What are LAFCO, MSR, and SOI?

LAFCO is a regulatory agency charged with discouraging urban sprawl and encouraging the orderly formation and development of local agencies, such as fire districts. About every five years, LAFCO compiles a Municipal Service Review (MSR)—a comprehensive study designed to better inform LAFCO, local agencies, and the community about their municipal services and how effectively they are being delivered. The MSR provides a detailed overview and history of the agency and evaluates a number of aspects of service delivery including growth and population projections for the area, facility capacity, and the financial stability of the agency. LAFCO is also responsible to determine and update the agency’s Sphere of Influence (SOI)—the physical boundaries and service area of a local agency.

Nowicki’s Problems with the MSR.

Nowicki found the report to be riddled with inaccuracies, discrepancies and unfair representa-

tions. As an example, he explained that the MSR, which was prepared by the Los Angeles-based Burr Consulting firm, referred to the MOFD as an urban area (the categorization is based on population density).

He would challenge that much of the MOFD coverage area is suburban or even rural, as in the case with Canyon, a significant factor when evaluating fire service delivery.

Nowicki strongly objected to the report’s statement “the District did not identify cost-savings measures to economize on expenses.” He pointed out that the MOFD regularly reviews their financial position, conducts audits, and generates an annual report. He indicated that he planned to ask LAFCO remove this statement.

What the Others Had to Say.

Gordon Nathan, a former Moraga Fire Commissioner and a member of the MOFD Board from 1997-2006, was troubled by the presentation of the report. “The whole thing kind of bothers me. It sounds like somebody got to [the consultant] and outlined what was important to them.” He questioned how the consultant came to the conclusions and recommendations outlined, and encouraged the Fire Chief to point to the District’s strategic plan in his response to LAFCO. Specifically, Gordon challenged the report’s SOI options that suggested the possible detachment of the City of Orinda from the District or annexation of the MOFD to ConFire. “This is diametrically opposed to what the voters in Orinda and Moraga chose in 1997,” stated Gordon.

Richard Olsen, a former Moraga Fire Commissioner for 12 years

who was a strong advocate for the creation of the MOFD, outlined his problems with the MSR to the Board. Olsen had attended the LAFCO meeting when the consulting firm presented the MSR. He was not impressed with the consultant’s report or presentation and felt that fire service was not her area of expertise. Olsen particularly found fault with the use of cost per capita when evaluating and comparing fire service finances and believes there were many flaws in the methodology utilized in the MSR. “When people try to use that metric [cost per capita] they do not understand fire service,” stated Olsen.

Art Haigh, an Orinda resident and a former member of Orinda’s Revenue Enhancement Task Force (the Task Force submitted its final report to the Orinda City Council in December) also addressed the Board. He acknowledged that the per capita comparison had been disputed in the Task Force’s report as well, but he challenged the Board to investigate whether the District can do its work more efficiently and get the costs down. “The question is are we getting our money’s worth for the services given,” stated Haigh.

What Next? The MOFD Board members unanimously agreed that the MSR did not accurately characterize the District and that the recommendations were problematic. Nowicki and the Board plan to file a written response to LAFCO specifically outlining the areas of the MSR that they feel require revision. Director John Wyro will present an ad hoc committee report regarding LAFCO at the March 18th Board meeting.

Spectacular Inauguration for Moraga’s New Postmaster

... continued from page 3

The US Marine Corp was there for the Presentation of the Colors, five local Girl Scouts led the Pledge of Allegiance and representatives from the Town joined the Post Office administration in welcoming Kreisel.

The crowd of about 100 people was composed of Moraga residents, Postmasters from about 20 other jurisdictions, employees, union members, friends and family. Moraga postal employees had prepared everything, from the decorations in

the hall to the generous buffet.

The most interesting aspect of the event might have been the testimony of the Post Office employees themselves. Kreisel has been serving as Postmaster for a few months already, and staff representative Perilita Gray said, “Since Cina arrived, we have felt a flow of renewal. Her energy and commitment have revitalized our office.”

“We are working under a lot of pressure,” said Kreisel, “some

employees have retired and won’t be replaced, so motivation and excellence is what I need to focus on.” She explained that since she doesn’t have funds to reward her hard working staff she sometimes comes on Saturday mornings to cook pancakes for them.

This appreciative attitude and the fact that she does not hesitate to work any station herself whenever needed, make the new Postmaster both popular and efficient.

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Lamorinda Home Sales continued



LAFAYETTE	Last reported: 4
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$750,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$3,050,000
MORAGA	Last reported: 3
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$358,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$2,200,000
ORINDA	Last reported: 2
LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$700,000
HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,080,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at dose of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

- 42 Knox Drive, \$805,000, 3 Bdrms, 1657 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 2-25-09
- 4 Lincolnshire Court, \$910,000, 4 Bdrms, 2694 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 2-26-09
- 1306 Masterson Lane, \$750,000, 5 Bdrms, 2040 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 2-25-09
- 1266 Panorama Drive, \$3,050,000, 6 Bdrms, 3825 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 2-6-09

MORAGA

- 2135 Ascot Drive #12, \$358,000, 2 Bdrms, 1539 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 2-18-09
- 473 Fernwood Drive, \$1,055,000, 4 Bdrms, 2204 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 2-18-09
- 30 Quail Crossing, \$2,200,000, 2-20-09

ORINDA

- 16 Daryl Drive, \$1,080,000, 3 Bdrms, 2044 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 2-12-09
- 23 Oak Road, \$700,000, 3 Bdrms, 2308 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 2-19-09



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Playing Fair

The "extras" in home construction and who should pay for them

By William Marquand, AIA
 (Part one of a three part series)

Building or remodeling a home is a high wire act for most home owners; challenging but rewarding. Construction is new to most homeowners, and difficult to budget. "Extras" that normally add up can, these days, be dangerous. As loans become stringent and easy credit dries up, it is difficult to expand a budget to accommodate unforeseen needs. On the other hand, building is exhilarating. Every day you can see your daily environment become what feels right for you and not a home for a previous generation. And today's prices are the best in years.

Still, new home construction is costly. There is the pressure of limited time. Some owners have had to sell the homes that they built because invoices mounted, while they felt helpless to control them.

Building takes lots of moving parts: there are many people, forces of nature, complexities of construction, or tantalizing new ideas and products involved. Your project team can help you successfully manage this process, but only if you are principled in controlling it.

EXPECTATIONS
 When an owner first gets an estimate from a builder, there is usually a 'fixed' price for the project. This often is a total of 'line items' on a spreadsheet. However, this fixed price is often just a 'base price,' subject to changes, foreseen or unforeseen, in the building process. Many contractors' agree-

ments can be very informal. Don't be afraid of asking for more detail. Form realistic expectations by signing a serious agreement. For remodels I recommend forms by the American Institute of Architects. Whatever contract is used, make sure your base price is for a complete house, built to code. Include provisions for when you must add work to the project and a methodical process for agreeing upon extra work. **FOR EXAMPLE**
 Let's say you break ground and your contractor mentions in passing that he needs to charge you for extra work on your foundation that no one anticipated.

First, what exactly is the extra charge for? It should be described in writing. No one needs a legal brief, but the contractor should describe it enough so that you can hold him to what was, or will be, provided. If you give a verbal 'go-ahead' to keep the project moving, that is okay, but make sure it is based on an all-inclusive amount, and is documented in writing. **STRIKING A BALANCE**
 Next is the difficult part: Who pays for it? You must think it through. Is it really an extra or is it part of the contractor's agreed-upon scope of work under the fixed price? Or was it something no one could foresee or control?

If it is the latter, the contractor deserves reimbursement for it. If you are using a premium contractor, he may offer to absorb such costs. If there is a competitive price for the project, changes will need to be justified and handled item-by-item. Everyone wants to be on good terms with their contractor, but resist the temptation to be Mr. and Mrs. Magnanimous - or Scrooge, for that matter. You must strike a balance from the outset. Reach William Marquand by email: 925architect@gmail.com. Bill is an architect and 2008 Chairman of the City of Lafayette Design Review Commission.



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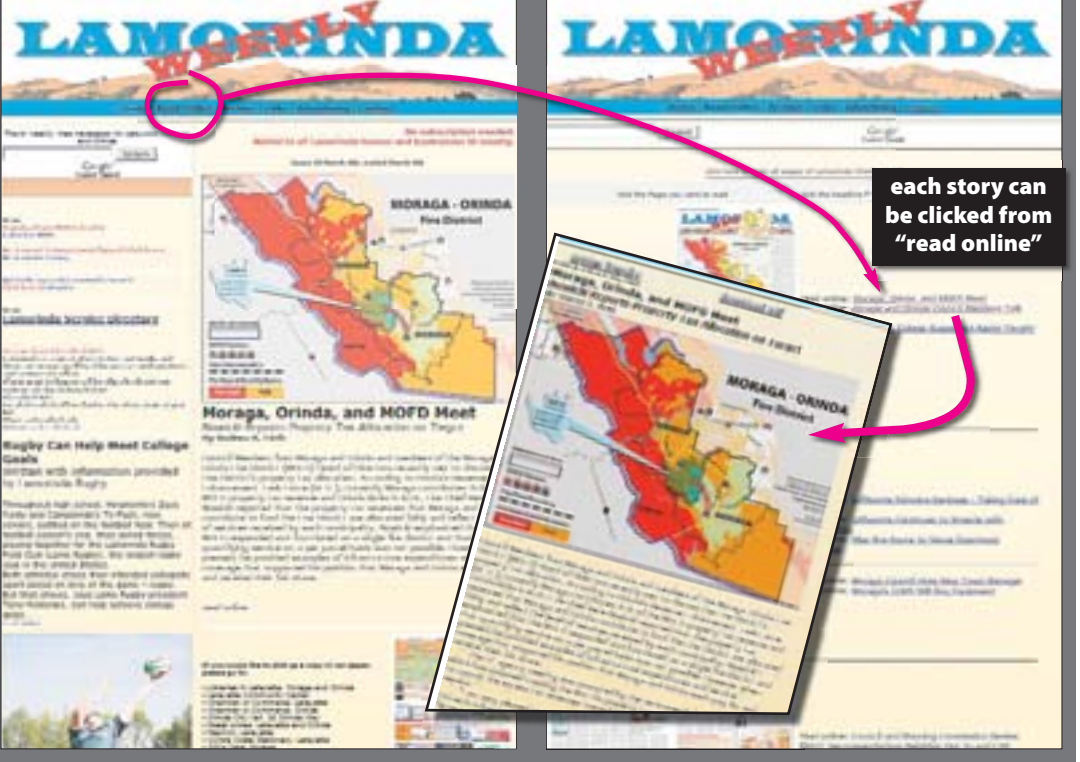
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business briefs

Powell's Celebrates its First Anniversary
3591 Mount Diablo Blvd. Lafayette, 299-9866
 Powell's Sweet Shoppe celebrated its first birthday on Saturday, March 14. A year after they opened, they continue to cater to Lamorinda's collective sweet tooth. On Saturday, the store gave away 1,000 Wonka Bars and five people received a Golden Ticket giveaway reminiscent of Road Dahl's classic children's tale, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Each Golden Ticket entitles the winner to \$50.00 in gift certificates. Adding to the fun was face painting, live music, and the visiting guest of honor Mike Tee Vee, of Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory fame, who signed photographs.



1,000 free Wonka Bars were given out last Saturday at Powell's Photo Andy Scheck

The Independent Speech Pathology Network ISPN moves to Moraga
1030 Country Club Drive, 247-0363

ISPN, the Independent Speech Pathology Network (also known as The Independent Therapists Network), was founded and directed by Speech and Language Pathologist Monique Eurich. For the first five years the therapist managed her business from her home office. "But as the business expanded there came a time when I needed to move to a real professional space." Eurich works as a therapist and has constructed a large network of other professional who can offer pediatric speech and language services all over the Bay Area. Eurich is one of few leading experts providing specialized intervention for children with mild to profound Apraxia of Speech (AOS) and Autistic Spectrum Disorders (presently occurring at the rate of 1 in 150 children, 80% of which present with Apraxia of Speech). She prides herself on supporting and promoting early detection and Early Intervention, which is critical for the most successful outcomes, via outreach with pediatricians and pre-schools/private schools. "One of the unique features of this practice is its network of independent therapists, many of whom provide in-home treatments," says Eurich, "the in-home model is the best modality for expedited and successful treatment. I make every effort to connect families with therapists that have the specialized skills needed for their child as well for the individual needs of the family." But no two families are alike and sometimes therapists, including Eurich, may visit with children at their pre-school or private school as needs dictate.

E-Waste Recycling Event in Moraga

Moraga Hardware and Lumber, 1409 Moraga Way, Moraga Shopping Center. 376-3600
 Moraga Hardware will hold an e-waste collection day on March 22nd from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. E-Waste will be collected in the back of the building.

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Manager Honored Among Top Managing Brokers in Nation



Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage announced that Valerie Cook-Watkins, Managing Broker of the company's Orinda office, has earned the coveted President's Council awards for her office's success in 2008. "I am thrilled that Valerie has been honored with this distinction, especially in light of today's trying economic conditions," said Joe Brown, President of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage.

David Pierce, Prudential's 2008 Top Producer



David Pierce, Broker-Realtor with the Orinda Office of Prudential CA Realty, has earned that office's title of Top Producer for the Year 2008. Pierce, who joined Prudential in 1994, has over 20 years' experience in the Real Estate industry. His 2008 performance earned him a place among Prudential's Top Ten, a ranking encompassing 40 offices and more than 1,500 agents throughout Northern California. In addition to his accomplishments with Prudential, Pierce's pet project reflects his passion for music and he serves as a Director of the Friends of Big Band Jazz as well as delivering community service through the Orinda Rotary Club. Pierce has served, among other involvement, as President and Director of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce and is a State of CA Superior Court Special Master for Real Estate.

News from the Three Chambers of Commerce

Tri-Chamber Meeting: The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce invited its neighbors from Orinda and Pleasant Hill for a networking session on March 11th. The meeting took place at the Absolute Center (which was also celebrating its 6th anniversary.) "We have a crowd of about 200 people," said Jay Lifson CEO of the Lafayette Chamber, "people are eager to reach out and love the opportunity to meet new people and invent new synergies." "I always come to these meetings," added Steve Snyder, mortgage consultant with RPM, "there are always cross-marketing opportunities."



Tri-Chamber Meeting Photo Sophie Braccini

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

Seminar on Tuesday March 24 at 5:30 p.m., "How to Survive in Today's Economy." Mechanics Bank and the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce present a free Business Forum featuring Brian Pretti and Rauly Butler from Mechanics Bank and Keith Blakeney, local representative from SCORE. The event will be held at Mechanics Bank, 3640 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Lafayette. Reservations can be made by calling 925-962-6900 or at lafayetteevents@mechbank.com.

Business Issues Meeting, Friday, March 27 at 8 a.m. in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

Chamber meeting, Hacienda de las Flores, Fireside Room, Friday, March 27, starting at 7:30 a.m. The meeting speaker will be John Harper, who will talk about efficient websites for small businesses. Many small businesses have nice websites, but very little new business is generated from them. Can anything be done to correct the situation? Learn how you can beat the competition by changing your Internet marketing with Harper, who has worked in the field of Internet marketing for years. He is a partner with HarperMees & Associates, a top producing team at Keller Williams Realty in Danville. He is director of Internet marketing and technology for the team. Last month, their website-www.harperMees.com received over 8300 visits.

The Community Faire will be held on Saturday May 9 from 11 to 4 p.m. It is a perfect opportunity for Moraga businesses, both retail and professional, as well as our non-profits and service clubs, to market and showcase their products and services. But the registration deadline is approaching, so don't delay. Get your registration forms on the Chamber website, www.moragachamber.org. Forms due by April 1.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce

Special Roundtable Coffee Business Idea Sharing Event Thursday, March 26 8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. Village Pizza, 19 AB Orinda Way, Orinda. Come hear what fellow Chamber members are doing differently in today's market and share what you are doing, as well. Enjoy coffee & pastries, too. Mark your calendar for this informative event. \$5.00 per person (paid at door).

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com or call our office at 925-377-0977.



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The Green Buddha: A Mother and Daughter Share The Attitude of Gratitude
 By Sophie Braccini



Dana Windatt and Jeannie Dowell discuss strategy

Photo Sophie Braccini

As Dana Dowell Windatt sits across the table from her mother, Jeanne Dowell, in her Moraga home there is a flow of excitement between the two women. Their strong bond and shared values explain why they are in business together. The pair recently launched an online retail store, The Green Buddha.

"For me it all started after I went to a grief workshop, Jacquelyn Aldana's 'The 15 Minute Miracle,' explains Dowell, a popular local yoga instructor, "she recommended that everyday we write about something we are grateful for and what it does in our lives, and I quickly felt the positive power of this attitude of gratitude."

Windatt quickly took on the same writing habit and the two started to brainstorm ideas for sharing their new attitude with others. Dowell asked her daughter to illustrate the concept. Windatt, who is an actress, yoga teacher and artist, drew the jolly green Buddha that has become their messenger.

They worked with their friend Michele Houston, of Insight Resources in Orinda, to have the drawing printed on commercial products. The two women didn't want to use just any fabric or material. The idea was to choose a sustainable and beautiful medium for their message.

The two feel that The Green Buddha has become their way of sharing their gratefulness. "Cultivating gratitude boosts your well being and helps you sleep better," says Dowell, "it energizes, inspires and transforms." The two hope that every time one of their customers wears one of their shirts or uses any of their other products, they are re-

mindful to be grateful.

The Green Buddha's most popular item has been the signature tee-shirt. The women's version is made of bamboo fiber, a fabric that feels like silk, is naturally thermal regulating to keep users warm in winter and cool in summer, and it wicks away moisture. "One of my friends bought five of them and she wears them every night," says Dowell.

"We buy our plain men's t-shirts from EDUN," Windatt explained, "a fair trade non-profit

clothing company created by U2 leader Bono to foster trade in Africa through the wholesale of blank cotton t-shirts, one hundred percent African from grower to sewer."

Other products include hoodies, tote bags, socks, water bottles and stationery; there are more ideas on the drawing board. A percentage of the proceeds go to SEEDS, a non-profit organization that provides grassroots relief to Nepal's poorest villages. For more information go to www.thegreenbuddha.net



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Moraga Rotary Is Hosting An Open House!

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- Our History
- Our Local Projects
- Our International Projects
- How to Become a Member



Please join us for a hosted lunch at our open house on:
Tuesday, April 14th, 2009 at Noon
 at ... **Saint Mary's College, in the Soda Center**

Please RSVP: Let us know if you will be attending the Open House by phone, Day: (925) 376-2244 Night: (925) 631-0725 or by email, Mike@MikeIsThere.com (Limited Space Available)

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

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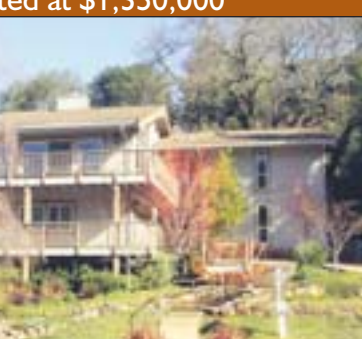
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How Six Figure Income Families Get Thousands of Dollars in Free Money For College

Local man teaches free workshops to help parents save thousands in process

Moraga—East Bay parents that are planning on sending a child to college in the next few years, but aren't quite sure how to pay for it can now rest a little easier. Gerna Benz of Bay Area College Planners has been educating families in the community for over 15 years.

"It's really sad, but most parents that we talk to have done real well financially, but never found the time to save for college, and now they're facing a bill of \$18,000-\$45,000 a year, and they don't know who to turn to," he says. "Further, most of the time, all they hear is to not even bother applying for any aid because they make too much money. However, most of the time, that is simply not true even if they make a six-figure income."

Gerna would know, because his group has worked with over 1400 families in the last 10 years ranging from single moms to corporate CEO's, and they say they can help anyone get through the process and save a bundle...no matter how good of a student they have or how much money they make.

"I got started in this because I was a very good student, but no one told us anything about how to access money for college, or even how to pick a career...so I didn't go right away. But, I vowed that I would learn the process and devote my time to helping families not fall into the same trap that we did. 'Simply put, we show parents the truth that they aren't hearing anywhere else about how the college process really works and save thousands of dollars in the process.' Lamorinda parents will have a couple opportunities to hear Gerna speak. He is

teaching his class 'How to Give Your Kid a 4-Year College Education Without Going Broke!' on Wednesday March 18th at the Orinda community Center located at 26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563 from 7:00 PM -8:30 PM, and Thursday March 26th at Round Table Pizza located at 361 Rheem BLVD, Moraga, CA 94556 from 7:15 PM - 8:45 PM.

"We'll discuss everything from the greatest myths about the college process, to how to send your student to a fancy private school for less than the cost of a junior college...it'll be like learning how to get a brand new Lexus for the price of a used pick up truck," he grins.

Topics will also include why private scholarships and 529 plans are a waste of time, how to double or even triple the amount of free money you receive from each school, and how to avoid the one mistake that will kill your chances of getting any money at all that almost every other parent will make this coming January, and much, much more.

"They will learn a ton, and I do my best to make the class fun," he says. "It's like I'm giving them a super bright flash light to navigate a pitch black cave, while all the other parents continue to stumble around blindly! 'Don't forget: the class is totally free, but seats are limited. Also, we are not sure when we will be teaching these classes in the East Bay again since my April and May calendar is already filling up, so come on out and see me.' You can reserve a seat online at PayForCollegeNow.com/LAM or by calling our 24 hour reservation line at (800) 676-0496 ext. 503

Miramonte's "Grease" is Electrifyin'!

Submitted by Terri Anderson



Photo courtesy of Terri Anderson

Fifty Miramonte High School performers, tech crew and band members transport you to Rydell High School where the T-Birds and Pink Ladies bring the toe tapping music, and energetic dance numbers of "Grease" to the Miramonte Theater. Watch Danny (Maxwell Tzannes) and Sandy (Sarah Ames) work through their high school romance, while the cast performs this revival version. Fea-

tured songs include "Grease is the Word," "Summer Nights," "Greased Lightning," "Hopelessly Devoted to You," "Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee," "Beauty School Dropout," and "You're the One that I Want." Other cast members include Katie Behnke as Rizzo, Kelsey Bergman as Marty, Daniel Coleman as Roger, Max Coleman as Doody, Suvi Gluskin as Frenchy, David Horstman as Teen Angel,

Ted Kizor as Johnny Casino, and Tommy Miers as Kenickie. Remaining show dates include: Thursday, Friday and Saturday March 19 - 21 at 7:30pm. Discount tickets are available online (\$10 for students; \$15 for adults), but must be purchased no later than 4 p.m. on the day of the show at www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte. Tickets at the door are \$15 per student; \$20 per adult.

Del Oro Named Model Continuation High School

By Andrea A. Firth



Del Oro students (L to R) Katherine Hernandez, John Barron, Chelsey Dorsett, and Che Da Silva

Photo A. Firth

"One size just doesn't fit all," explains Rae Eckholm, the principal of Del Oro High School. Del Oro was one of 14 schools in California to be recognized as a Model Continuation High School in 2009 for their program designed to help struggling students stay in school on a path to graduation and opportunities in college and the work world.

"Our goal is for each student to be successful in whatever path they choose," she says.

Students come to Del Oro because of a lack of success in one of the traditional high schools. A firm believer in second chances, Eckholm, who has served as the principal at Del Oro for the past six years, has fostered a safe, caring environment that takes every opportunity to acknowledge the student achievements.

Part of the Acalanes Union High School District, Del Oro is set upon a hill off Tice Valley Boulevard and shares a campus with the Adult Education Center. Students navigate their way from one of the school's four main classrooms to a central hallway, and spill out into a sunny courtyard with picnic tables and landscaped planter boxes to have lunch. The setting feels relaxed and comfortable.

"It's really friendly here," states John Barron, a senior, who identifies the one-on-one academic help available at Del Oro as a very positive aspect of the school. "The help is here if you need it."

Del Oro has a cross section of students, most of which switch to the continuation high school because they have fallen behind in academic credits and are at risk of not graduating. (Del Oro requires 205

credits to graduate versus the 240 required at AUHSD's traditional high schools.) Approximately 40 percent of Del Oro's 70 students transfer from Miramonte, Campolindo, and Acalanes High Schools.

Although behavior problems may be the reason some students land at Del Oro, Eckholm says students with more serious offenses are often required to meet a set of predetermined expectations, or live by a contract, in order to attend. However, Eckholm adds that the students' credit deficiencies are due to variety of factors such as family issues, social challenges, and stress that lead to increased absences and falling behind.

The school's small size allows students to get a lot of attention and early intervention. "Kids don't get lost here," states Eckholm. And she keeps careful track of her students. "We pay close attention to attendance."

Eckholm will personally call a student's cell phone if needed. "With a school this size, we know when a student is gone, and we are sure to acknowledge their return."

In addition to recognition from State educators, Del Oro's pragmatic approach and individualized attention yields positive feedback from the students as well. "I like it a lot better here. The smaller school allows teachers to give you more time," explains junior Chelsey Dorsett. "And you know everyone," she adds with a confident smile.

Education, Equity, Parity and Partner Organizations

By Jean Follmer (Andrea Firth contributed to this story)

Whether it's an annual fund drive or a black tie auction, parents from certain Lamorinda school districts traditionally have more fundraising success than others.

Although they may have the ability to fill more site needs or wants than another school in the same district, the concepts of equity and parity (no favoritism and overall equality) are being applied in many districts to provide equivalent opportunities to all students within the district.

Sticking with this guideline, however, is not always easy. In some cases, the equitable concepts can become more of a challenge for a school district to maintain.

"We had a school that was capable and willing to hire a certificated employee," said Moraga School Superintendent Rick Schafer. However, funds were not available to hire the same type of certificated employee for the other Moraga elementary schools. As a result, Moraga developed the Supplemental Instructional Resources Fund (SIRF) - a fund that all of the Moraga PTAs contribute to that is dispersed to the schools equally.

Since all of the Moraga elementary schools funnel to Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JM), the district decided that all students entering JM should arrive from an equitable playing field. Schafer said the District decided, "We would live and die together."

To date, Moraga has only re-

quired parity in the area of personnel. "Our next area of concern that's been brought up is 'things,'" said Schafer. While the district currently allows its school communities to purchase things like whiteboards, computers and other materials, he said the district is likely to step in to level that playing field as well.

Like Moraga, all Lafayette elementary schools funnel to one middle school: Stanley. The Lafayette School District's equity policy applies to both personnel and to "big ticket" items.

For instance, Springhill recently gained approval from the district to complete its garden. Although the garden was paid for by the Parent Faculty Club and grant money, the district approval process was lengthy. While the Board did not dispute the perceived value of having a garden on site or the fact that other Lafayette elementary schools have gardens, there were many questions raised regarding equity and potential costs to the District.

When the Lafayette School District receives a request from a school site, Superintendent Fred Brill said the district essentially considers five questions: Is it a strategic priority for the District? Is it equitable? How many potential stakeholders are there (is 90% of the school requesting this or is it three parents)? Is it a one-time payout or are there ongoing costs for the District? And, has it been ap-

proved by the Board and all Principals?

"It gets really challenging when we have an expense reduction plan," noted Brill. In these times, it's even more about priorities and making sure the students have the basics first. Brill said the District seeks to "serve meat and potatoes before dessert."

"We don't take all parent dollars and redistribute them. We're careful to give some autonomy to the sites," Brill explained. In short, the District recognizes that each school has its own culture and seeks to support that.

Contributions from partner organizations are vital in Orinda as well. About six years ago, the Orinda Unified School District (OUSD) addressed the equity issue to determine if all students were getting their fair share.

"We wanted to ensure an equitable school experience for all students as they moved on to OIS [Orinda Intermediate School]," states OUSD Governing Board President Riki Sorenson. Parents across the District worked together to establish priority needs and then agreed to fund these "equity items" with fundraising monies from Parents Clubs and other sources first.

"We try to maintain equity across the schools for anything that will affect the instructional program," states Orinda Union School District Superintendent (OUSD) Dr. Joe Jaconette, "and it is fairly well-balanced."

Rotary Club of Lafayette Scholarship Applications Due

Submitted by Geoff Zimmerman

For those interested in studying abroad, applications for the 2010-11 Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships are due March 31, with both Academic-Year and Multi-Year Ambassadorial Scholarships available.

The scholarship for one academic year abroad is a flat grant of \$23,000, or its equivalent. The Multi-year Ambassadorial Scholarships are flat grants of \$11,500 per year for two years toward the cost of a degree program in another country. Also available are Cultural Ambassadorial Scholarships that provide funding for three or six months of intensive language study and cultural immersion in another country and



are flat grants of \$10,000 and \$15,000, respectively.

Scholars represent their homelands and work to further international understanding through appearances before Rotary clubs and districts, schools, civic organizations, and other forums in their host countries.

Applicant interviews will be conducted between March 31 and April 14, and club nominations will be sent to the district where addition interviews will be conducted. The final, formal scholarship offers will be made by Rotary International in November.

To receive an application or request further information, please contact Geoffrey Zimmerman of the Rotary Club of Lafayette at either geoffreyzimmerman@hotmail.com or (925) 698-3683. Information is also available at the Rotary International website <http://www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/EducationalPrograms/AmbassadorialScholarships/>

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Lamorinda Schools

Lafayette Elementary • Los Perales • Miramonte • Orinda Academy • Orinda Intermediate • Saklan Valley School • Sleepy Hollow • Springhill • Stanley Middle • St. Perpetua School • Wagner Ranch

Orindans Come Out in Support of the Wagner Ranch Nature Center, Again

By Andrea A Firth



The 5th grade Cub Scout Den 7 (Senior Webelos), Pack 212 from Wagner Ranch Elementary School recently completed our conservation project of building Mason Bee nesting boxes around the Wagner Ranch Nature Area in an effort to help reverse the decline of the bee population. Pictured are the Cub Scouts along with naturalist Toris Jaeger and Friends of Wagner Ranch Nature Area president Steve Gentry.

It was déjà vu at the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) Governing Board meeting on Monday, March 9.

Over twenty individuals, including parents, teachers and students, addressed the Board over the course of almost an hour of public comment to express their avid support for the outdoor environmental education program at the Wagner Ranch Nature Center and their dismay that that the District Naturalist position is among one of the top budget reductions slated for the next school year.

At the previous regular Board meeting held in early February, over 25 individuals had addressed the Board strongly encouraging them to reconsider the placement of

the Naturalist position so high on the cut list.

Several parents passionately expressed the profound impact the Nature Center experience had on their children. One father, who took time off work to attend the meeting, eloquently described the sense of inquiry, wonderment, and inspiration about science, nature, and the outdoors that the environmental education program had instilled in his child.

Support for the program was paralleled by the support for OUSD's longtime and well-loved District Naturalist, Toris Jaeger.

"She is environmental education in Orinda," stated one parent.

An environmental science teacher from Miramonte High

School expressed her amazement at the number of her high school students who shared stories about the Nature Center program and Jaeger. And a few Orinda natives recalled their own positive memories of going to the Nature Center and being taught by Jaeger and expressed their desire to have the same experience for their own children.

Parent Christy Blackie-Taylor also presented the Board with a plan to generate funds to help support the Nature Center.

When the votes were counted, however, the Naturalist position remained on the A-list for OUSD budget reductions, and continuing the Nature Center environmental education program as currently delivered remained in

jeopardy.

In following up with OUSD Board President Riki Sorenson after the meeting, she noted that the District's Leadership Team (comprised of the Superintendent, Curriculum Director, and principals) and staff prioritized three areas for reduction in the budgeting process – computers, libraries and the environmental education program.

"The Board is committed to keeping libraries open, computers working, and the Nature Center open to students," stated Sorenson. "How we will do that is not yet known, but we have to make some changes. We are going to continue to look at all three programs to see how we can deliver them more cost-effectively."

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In Other News...



A theater full of lucky elementary school students was treated to a special morning performance of Campolindo High School's Beauty and the Beast on Monday. Julie Rudolph's 5th grade class from Los Perales is pictured with performers Jackson Bengtsson (Beast), Hillary Foss (Belle), Ben Rudolph (Gaston), John Cogswell (LeFou) and Bronwyn Warzeniak (Madame de la Grande Bouche). Remaining performances are sold out. Photo Lee Borrowman



Springhill Elementary 5th graders rehearse Willy Wonka, Jr. Pictured are Mimi White, Lia White and Gabe Guthrie

4th Annual OIS "World Premiere" Concert



The instrumental music students of Orinda Intermediate School (OIS) under the direction of Mr. Greg Mazmanian will be performing pieces they have composed themselves at the 4th annual "World Premiere" Concert at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 20 in the OIS multi-purpose hall (80 Ivy Drive in Orinda). Admission is free! In the photo, musicians rehearse their original composition (from left to right): Colleen McCullough, Claire Restrepo, Heidi Maupin and Katherine Wolffe.

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SCHOOL CALENDAR

School Governing Board Meetings
Acalanes Union
 High School District
 Board Room AUHSD Office
 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
 Wednesday, March 18, 2009 at 7:30
 Wednesday, April 15, 2009 at 7:30

Lafayette School District
 LAFSD Office
 3477 School Street, Lafayette
 Wednesday, March 18 at 7:00
 Wednesday, April 15, 2009 at 7:00

Moraga School District
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
 School Auditorium
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
 Tuesday, April 14 at 7:30

Orinda Union School District
 OUSD Office
 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
 Monday, April 13 at 4:00

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*Through April 30th

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Budget Cuts Prompt Pink Slip Protests

... continued from page 1

"I am not comfortable budgeting for a revenue source that could be unreliable," stated Chris Learned, AUHSD Assistant Superintendent of Business Services. "We are going to have to be very careful moving forward."

Learned fully expects the numbers will change by the time the budget is adopted in the summer. In addition to the State budget's reliance on the outcome of the May election, the State's dreary economic picture and flagging revenues may yield further school funding reductions at the May Budget Revise, ironically scheduled for June 2.

Although the financial picture is likely to continue to change, Lamorinda school administrators now have a much clearer idea of the challenges they face. After managing their district budgets without a state budget for the first eight months of the current school fiscal year (which runs from July 1 through June 30), the budget analysts for AUHSD, MSD, and Orinda Union School District (OUSD) each presented a three-year fiscal projection at their early March Governing Board meetings.

The three-year budget report for the Lafayette School District (LAFSD) will be presented at their upcoming meeting on March 18.

Breakdown by District

AUHSD.

Reduced State funds for the current school year created a \$1.4 million problem for the high school district, which they can manage with reserves. "Having those reserves enabled us to survive midyear cuts of this magnitude," reported Learned. The District is facing a shortfall of \$3.9 million for the 2009-2010 school year. Although over 57 personnel will receive layoffs notices, Learned anticipates that number will drop when the contributions of the education foundations and parent clubs are factored in. AUHSD's current parcel tax, which contributes \$7 million to the general fund, will expire in June, 2011. The AUHSD Governing Board decided not to place a parcel tax proposition on the June, 2009 ballot; discussions regarding renewing the parcel tax are ongoing.

MSD.

Increased flexibility in the use of categorical funds from the State will enable MSD to offset about \$500,000 in funding reductions in the current school year reported Superintendent Rick Schafer. However, given the size of the State funding reductions going forward, Schafer said, "If we keep spending at the same level, we'll be in the hole in two years." To avoid depleting reserves and deficit spending, the MSD Board approved a list of recommended budget reductions, enhancements, and transfers along with the use of up to \$300,000 in reserves for the 2009-10 school year.

OUSD.

Orinda's K-8 district will use reserves to address the \$708,000 deficit facing the District this year. The Governing Board has approved a prioritized list of personnel and program cuts to go into effect in the next school year. A recently passed parcel tax will bring an additional \$870,000 in to the District coffers each year, but these revenues have yet to be accumulated or allocated.

LAFSD.

According to Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill, the LAFSD was able to weather the 2008-09 State funding shortfall due to a variety of factors. The District had budgeted for increased employee health care costs, and remarkably their rates were not raised. While enrollment was projected to decline, the District actually grew by 35 students. In addition, the District received a generous contribution from the parents' clubs and the education foundation. The Governing Board has approved an expense reduction plan for the 2009-10 school year. Dr. Brill noted that five retirements have enabled the District to avoid some layoffs.

Family Focus

Parent Regrets

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

Thanks for writing to share your regrets about your parenting experiences. It can be helpful to hear how others have handled their problems and how they would do things differently. As much as we might like to be perfect parents, we all make our share of judgments and mistakes.

I went through a very ugly divorce, and my deepest regret is that I did not shield my children from it in the way I should have. I believed that honesty was the best policy, and I answered all of their questions as truthfully as I could. I did not tell them everything, of course, but now I know that I told them too much (especially the older one). We all try to do what we think is best, and sometimes even our best doesn't seem to be good enough. Circumstances can evolve beyond our control. I had an older brother who told me, as I was beginning to think about divorce and worrying about how it would affect my kids, "A kid's got to play the hand he's dealt," and that I had to do what I needed to do. As it turned out, although he didn't know it at the time, my brother would die of cancer a couple of years later, leaving a young son behind. I hold on to this advice at those times when I'm forced to accept that which I can't change, but I see that my children were deeply affected by the divorce trauma and probably will be for a very long time.

Anonymous

One regret I have is that I didn't make my daughter stick with her piano lessons. She took lessons for five years and did very well. But during the fifth year she started complaining about having to practice, and my husband

and I decided to let her take a break. She never went back to it and recently told me how she wishes she had kept it up.

Kathy Grant

I have three wonderful children, but I regret having them so close together, all within five years. We can't enjoy our children as much as we'd like because life is such a constant whirlwind of activity. I feel stressed and overwhelmed much of the time, and I worry about not being a good wife and mother. If we had spaced our children better we could have more time to give to each child and ourselves.

Anonymous

I have one regret as a parent of three boys: not teaching them how to cook! Now that they are in college and two have a kitchen, this would have been very helpful to them.

Frances Montalvo Palacios

My biggest regret is that I have to work full-time while we are raising our kids. I didn't expect this would be the case when we moved to California several years ago. Unfortunately the nature of my job requires a full work week, and we need my additional income to live in this area so that our kids can go to good schools and grow up in a safe environment. But it breaks my heart sometimes when I can't participate in their activities during the day or have enough energy for them at night.

Anonymous

Margie Ryerson, MFT, is a marriage and family therapist in Orinda and Walnut Creek. She can be reached at 925-376-9323 or margierye@yahoo.com

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Lamorinda Schools

Acalanes Students Send Books to Prisoners

By Jean Follmer



Acalanes Junior Rachel Whittom stops to read a letter from a prisoner who requested a book from the Prisoner Literature Project in Berkeley. Photo provided

A number of Acalanes juniors recently filled some of their required community service hours reading letters from and sending books to prisoners incarcerated throughout the United States. The students engaged in the volunteer activity at the Prisoner Literature Project (PLP) in Berkeley, which began as a grassroots organization in Bound Together Books on Haight Street in San Francisco in the early 1980s. It still operates

entirely as a volunteer organization.

Many prisoners throughout the United States do not have access to books beyond those that are available in the prison libraries. They are only able to receive books from pre-approved sources. PLP is one of them.

Gina Shepard of PLP said, "Some prisons don't allow books at all." She indicated that getting books often involves a power struggle

with the prison guards.

Acalanes Junior Class Secretary Rachel Whittom learned about PLP and got in touch with Shepard. Junior Lindsay Cope said, "We wanted to find an organization that would provide a unique opportunity for community service."

Whittom said the experience was very rewarding for the students. "I really enjoyed this program. I thought it was really beneficial because the prisoners are trying to get better and improve their life when they get out of prison," she said. "I thought about it after we were done and I really think we did something that made a difference."

Cope agreed with Whittom. "I think, overall, it was really eye-opening to read such personal accounts from the letters, and by sending books to each recipient we actually made a huge difference," she said. "It's amazing to know that the books and letters you send will bring hope to people who need it the most."

Shepard said the prisoners generally learn about PLP through advertisements in prison publications and flyers. The prisoners send letters to PLP requesting books that are not available at their detention facility. Some request specific books and others request books on a specific topic. PLP has recently become a popular community service venue for high school students. "Lately we've mostly been having student volunteers," said Shepard.

For more information, visit <http://www.prisonersliteratureproject.com/>.

Schools Celebrate Reading Seuss Style

By T.R. Audley



Sleepy Hollow School second graders ready to read

Photo Trina Audley

For elementary students in Lamorinda, the first week of March brought a birthday celebration. Instead of cake, however, students devoured books. Party favors came in the form of funny words and fond memories.

Special guest readers and other once-a-year events marked the National Education Association's (NEA) twelfth annual Read Across America Day celebrated on or near March 2, the birthday of Theodor Seuss Geisel. Better known as "Dr. Seuss," Geisel revolutionized the early reader experience with colorful illustrations and rhythmic, rhyming stories.

Designed to foster reading enthusiasm, the NEA calls for "every child in America to be reading in the company of a caring adult." Many Lamorinda elementary schools chose community and educational leaders to visit classrooms and read. Other schools celebrated with pajama days, read-a-thons, parent-child book club meetings, special assemblies and, of course, green eggs and ham for breakfast.

At Burton Valley and Springhill Schools in Lafayette, guest readers included Superintendent of Schools, Fred Brill, and other school board members. Two superior court judges, Police Chief Mike Hubbard, and veterinarian Dr. Pam Wittenberg visited Burton Valley, said Reading Specialist Mette Thallaugh, as well as cheerleaders and athletes from UC Berkeley and

Saint Mary's College, and Clifford the Big Red Dog. Springhill's Reading Specialist Jill Tarkoff included Congressman George Miller and local fire fighters to their reader roster.

Principals, librarians and reading specialists also topped guest reader lists at many schools; two of Lafayette School reader annual favorites are Music Director Susan Comber and Head Custodian Dave D'Angelo. "You have to hear Dave pour on his New Jersey accent when he reads *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*," reported Reading Specialist Carol Harris.

Stanley Middle School Principal David Shrag read to Lafayette School fifth graders to help calm middle school transition jitters, while other fifth graders and parents culminated their study of Christopher Paul Curtis' Newberry award winner *Bud, Not Buddy* at the annual parent/child book club meeting hosted by teacher Scott Moe.

Some schools simplified celebrations, focusing on early readers in lower grades. At Los Perales and Rheem in Moraga, kindergartners enjoyed Seuss books such as *Cat in the Hat* which employs only 220 site words that they can read. Camino Pablo third grade classes also enjoyed reading Seuss for the day. At many schools, upper grade students became special readers as well, visiting their school "buddies" in the lower grades to present personalized book choices.

Traditional school-wide cele-

brations also served to make the week memorable. At Sleepy Hollow School, teacher Kay Aacker helped guide second graders who, in handmade trademark Seuss hats, led a school assembly to teach "Who Was Seuss?" Also in Orinda, Del Rey School Librarian Lisa Michaels posted an eight-foot-long list of Seuss books where students could mark their favorite. Colorful graphs displayed results at the week's end.

As a finale, Lafayette School PTA board members prepared their annual Green Eggs and Ham breakfast for over 400 parents and students. The Cat in the Hat came to life at breakfast to greet families.

(Rumor is he cleaned his plate.)



Cat in the Hat with kindergartener Lena Johnson. Photo Trina Audley

LAMORINDA Seniors

◆ Not to be missed ◆
Senior events are listed on page 19

Bocce Ball Players Caught Between Growth and Regulations

By Sophie Braccini



Moraga Commons Bocce Ball court

Photo Andy Scheck

When it comes to Bocce Ball, Dom Sidari cannot help but speak with great passion. The retired Moraga resident has been playing the game for many years and was at the origin of the Moraga Bocce Ball Club, now in its twelfth year. Since the 90's the Club has grown and the two bocce courts that were originally built at the Moraga Commons are no

longer enough for a club that boasts 120 members, organized into twenty teams, that compete on a regional level in which more than 5000 players participate regularly.

It did not seem unreasonable to Sidari to request the building of two new courts for which residents were willing to pay. But since the first courts were built, regulations have changed and Sidari has been

caught for months in a sticky web.

Bocce ball is an Italian game belonging to the "boules" precision sport family; cousin to pétanque (played in Lafayette), the sport has its origin in the games played in the Roman Empire. It is played from Europe to Australia, to North and South America. Bocce is traditionally played on an oyster shell court, but has also been played on decomposed granite, soil, or asphalt courts approximately 65-88 feet in length and 8-13 feet wide, sometimes with wooden boards of approximately 1/2 foot in height surrounding the court.

"The game is great fun and many of our members are playing it," says George Fisher, President of the Moraga Movers, an organization of active seniors in Lamorinda. Fisher has been an advocate for Sidari's cause.

"We have to expand," explains Sidari, "our twenty teams play five nights a week, we compete in the County Leagues and

right now we have sixty people on the waiting list."

Sidari has played bocce ball in surrounding communities and seen the many courts that are available to seniors. "Martinez has sixteen courts, Antioch has ten, Rossmoor has three, why wouldn't the Town let us build two additional courts?" asks a distressed Sidari.

The Club offered to pay for the whole construction and submitted drawings to the Town Engineer.

The response was not the enthusiastic "yes" he was expecting. Sidari received a letter from Town staff that listed all the technical requirements for the project.

"The rules of the game have changed in twelve years," explains Public Works Director Jill Mercurio, "for example, the courts have an impact on the adjacent creek and

runtoffs have to be mitigated, the simple sketches that we received are not sufficient for an approval."

Furthermore, the Department Fish and Game (DFG) Code, Section 1602, requires an entity to notify DFG of any proposed activity that may substantially modify a river, stream, or lake. Environmental Scientist Suzanne Gilmore of the DFG confirmed, "Development projects near creeks are advised to submit a 1600 notification to the Department."

In addition, the Moraga Commons Park suffers from an endemic parking problem. "The Town Council asked us to produce a plan for the development of the Commons," explains Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram, "at this time there is no

budget to draft such a plan." He adds that he is doubtful that the 2 new courts could be accepted if a general plan that includes parking has not been approved. "There are different projects for the Park, each with potential parking impacts; we cannot approve each of them separately without a vision for the park."

Ingram is sensitive to Sidari's plea and says he is planning to meet with stakeholders to try to mediate a solution. That's what Fisher is hoping for: "Since we do have members playing, we would like to see improvement," he says, adding, "The rules are hard for Dom to work around; the staff should facilitate the process, rather than just reading the rules, and help guide him through the system."

Health Alternatives: The Alexander Technique

By Kay Hogan, M.Ed.



Kay working with a patient

Photo provided

Recently an 81 year old friend of mine had a set of symptoms that might have sent her to the doctor. Before calling for an appointment, however, she consulted the patient handbook that she received from her medical provider. For her symptoms, the handbook recommended that she see a Feldenkrais Practitioner, Alexander Teacher or Rolfer. Because she does not have a computer or know much about health alternatives, she called me -- I am an Alexander Teacher.

Although The Alexander Technique is often mistaken for body work, it is actually an educational process that teaches movement and improves posture.

If you watch, in profile, a person move from a sitting posi-

tion to standing, you might observe that they look down while pulling the head back into the body, pulling the shoulders up around their ears, arching both the low back and the neck and then putting their hands on their thighs as they pull down into their body and then struggle under the weight of that downward movement as they get up.

Over time, this will create neck and lower back problems. Instead, one should look into the horizon, releasing the head forward and up and letting the spine follow the movement which takes the weight out of the body and allows it to float up.

F.M. Alexander (1869-1955), the founder of the Alexander Technique, developed and taught his work at the end of the

eighteenth century in London. His important discoveries were, "conscious use of self," meaning that you could bring movement to a conscious level and "direct" muscles to "lengthen and widen" instead of "shortening and tightening" which over time causes pain and wears out joints. Alexander also found that we have poor "habits" which, when we become aware of them, can be eradicated.

Because we have what Alexander referred to as "false sensory awareness," one needs the feedback from the hands of a trained professional in order to change.

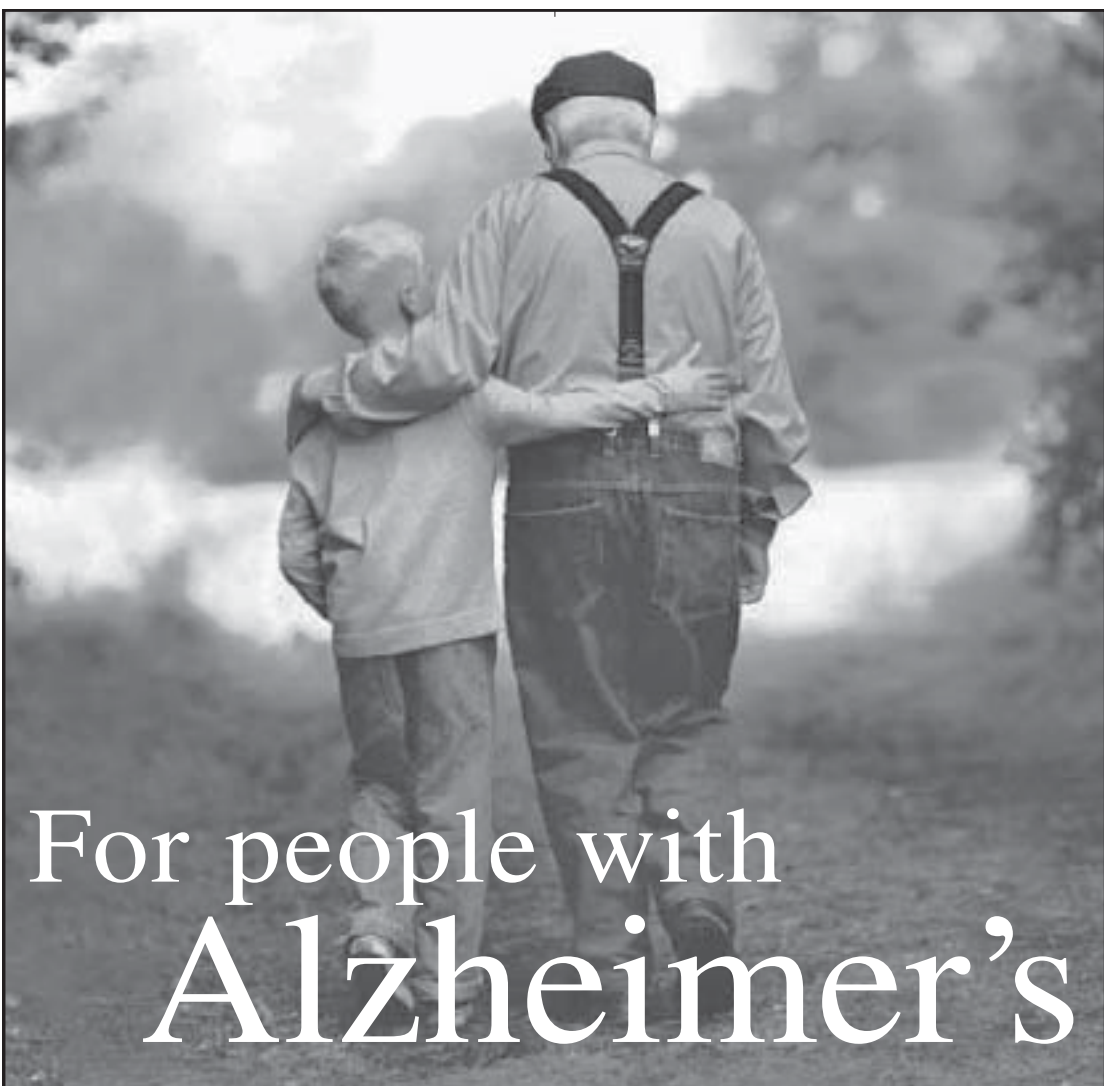
Alexander Teachers attend a three-year course and are certified by a school that is approved by The American Society of Alexander Teachers.

An Alexander lesson is forty-five minutes to an hour and is designed to improve posture and movement. Often musicians, singers, actors and athletes take lessons for better performance, but many people come to a lesson in pain and want to avoid joint replacements and the use of debilitating drugs.

A recent study published by the British Medical Journal (BMJ) determined that back pain can be reduced by 85% through the study of the Alexander Technique. This research is online at: http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/337/aug19_2/a884.

For more information go to www.alexandertech.org.

Reach Kay Hogan at 925-676-3696, yakten12@sbcglobal.net, www.kayhogan.com



For people with Alzheimer's there's no time to lose.

Alzheimer's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder—a disorder in which brain cells are lost. It is characterized by progressive loss of memory and cognitive function, such as movement control and decision-making ability. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia in the elderly and affects about 18 million people worldwide—5 million in the U.S. alone. Although there's currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, research is under way to find a new investigational treatment aimed at slowing the progression of the disease. The current medications are mostly aimed at maximizing the remaining brain activity. That's why the ICARA study was created—to explore a new investigational treatment option.

Throughout the 83-week study, participants may receive the investigational drug, study-related physical exams and laboratory services at no charge. All participants will be monitored by a medical team, including a nurse or study coordinator and a physician.

Ask your doctor if the ICARA study is right for you. For more information,

Dr. Kathleen Toups
Bay Area Research Institute
3736 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite #204
Lafayette, CA 94549
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If you are 50 to 88 years of age and have a diagnosis of probable Alzheimer's disease, you may be eligible to participate in the ICARA study.

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MUSIC

WomenSing, a 50 voice chorus, will perform Sunday, April 5 at 4:00pm, Saint Mary's Chapel, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga: "Stars" by Dublanc and Randall Thompson, contemporary Norwegian music, music in celebration of Mendelssohn's 200 birth anniversary, and the mystical Holst's Choral Hymns from the Rig-Veda. Ticket prices are: \$25 reserved \$20 general \$18 Seniors/students \$10 youth 18 and under. Tickets may be purchased online at www.womensing.org, at the door, or by calling (925) 974-9169.

THEATER

"Serenity In Central Park", by Lafayette Residents Leora Lubliner, is an original one-act play about two friends who share an imaginary world where anything is possible. Come remember what it was like when an afternoon walk in the park could become one of your greatest adventures. This is a limited engagement, for one weekend only. Performances will take place March 27-29th at the Leshler Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek. Tickets: (925) 943-SHOW or online at www.LeshlerARTScenter.org. All proceeds will be donated to charitable organizations in the community.

ONSTAGE THEATRE concludes its 31st season with "The Subject was Roses", the Pulitzer Prize winning play by Frank D Gilroy running through March 29 at Diablo Actors Ensemble Theatre: 1345 Locust Street in Walnut Creek.; Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday Matinees; \$18 general and \$14 seniors. For tickets, call 925 944-9006 or visit the web at onstage theatre.org. Midsummer Night's Dream will be presented by the award-winning Diablo Valley College Drama Department; opening March 20th and running every Fri-Sun. thru April 5th. Tickets range from \$5-15, with special community-outreach matinees during the week for school-aged children and their classes. (If you are an educator, and would like to arrange to have your students attend, please contact Marsha Fulk at (925) 687-4445 for details and booking.) General Public performances will be held Friday and Saturday Evenings at 8pm and Sundays at 2:30pm. Tickets can be purchased by calling (925) 687-4445 or by emailing- mfulk@dvc.edu.

Lafayette Town Hall Theatre Company presents *The Odd Couple (Female Version)* March 28 - April 25.

Not to be missed

The Female Version Adds a Twist to Neil Simon's Superbly Written Comedy (Rating - PG-13) Contact the Town Hall Theatre Company Box Office for exact dates and times. For Tickets: 925-283-1557. Town Hall Theatre Company; 3535 School Street, Lafayette. See story page 5.

ART

The **Moraga Art Gallery's** new group show "Inner Spirit" opened March 17th and is featuring the work of Nancy Robinson. The public is invited to the Opening Reception on Saturday, March 24, from 3-5 pm at the Moraga Art Gallery, 570 Center St, Rheem Valley Shopping Center- next to Longs Drugs. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 12-5 pm. 925.376.5407.

The **Lafayette Gallery** invites you to join us for our new show, "Food, Glorious Food" through May 9th. Gallery artists show work in mediums including printmaking, oil and acrylic paintings, jewelry, collage, ceramics, photography, and more. Lafayette Gallery, 50 Lafayette Circle, 925-284-2788. Gallery Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 11am to 5pm. Bring canned goods to the Gallery and when you make a purchase you will be automatically entered in our raffle.

"Faberge Tiffany Lalique" March 25 -2:00pm, Moraga Library A Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco docent lecture based on the current exhibit at the Legion of Honor running through May 31. The exhibit provides first comparative study of three great jewelry and decorative arts designers: Peter Carl Faberge, Louis Comfort tiffany, and Rene Lalique.

Martinez Gallery will host an **Artists Reception** on Friday, April 3, from 6pm to 9pm for a new exhibit of artwork, "Camevale", which will run through May 29th. The open hours of the gallery are: 11-3, Wed. Thurs. and Fridays. And 9 to 1 on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays. The artwork in the gallery includes watercolor, oil, and acrylic paintings; photographs, prints and cards; metal sculpture and clay ceramics, glass work, jewelry, textiles and whimsical items. Martinez Gallery 630 Court Street, Martinez. (925)370-6270.

Not to be missed

available at OR at Mt. Diablo Peace & Justice Center 925-933-7850. Wheel chair accessible A book sale and signing will follow the presentation.

Dr. Catherine Murphy, Associate Professor of New Testament at Santa Clara University, will present a fresh perspective on the Jesus of history. She has traveled frequently to Israel, Greece, Turkey and Europe and written three books the latest being *The Historical Jesus for Dummies* (2008.) The event is open to the community and takes place Saturday April 4th 7:00 - 9:30. Bring a bottle of wine or a small plate of tapas to share. Book sales will be coordinated by the Lafayette book store and childcare will be provided. Our Saviors Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette (behind the car wash.) www.oslc.net.

The Commonwealth Club- Jim Lehrer -Sunday, April 5, 5:30pm. Anchor of one the most respected news programs in America, Lehrer has dedicated his life to reporting informative and unbiased news coverage of the nation's most pressing issues. Though his journalistic accomplishments are numerous, Lehrer is most proud of his success as a novelist. Join us as he talks writing, reporting and telling America's story. 5 p.m. check-in, 5:30 p.m. program, 6:30 p.m. book signing. Cost: \$12 members, \$18 non-members. Premium \$30 members, \$45 non-member. S7 students (with valid ID). Veterans Memorial Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.

SATURDAY BOOK SALE - Friends of Orinda Library - March 28, 10 a.m. - 1p.m., Sorting Room and Bookshop (Bookshop open until 4 p.m.) Sale offers quality books for all interests and ages. Past monthly book sales have been on Thursday - this sale is scheduled on Saturday to make books available to people who cannot attend weekday events. All funds raised are used for books, computers, other library materials and library programs. Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, 925-254-1358.

The Lafayette Rotary Club's "Annual Egg Hunt" will take place on Saturday, April 11, at 10:00 am. This

event is open to all children ages 2-10 and takes place at Plaza Park (corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Moraga Rd) The park lawn will be covered with candy for the kids to put in their baskets. The youngest are always given extra time to get their share! The Bunny will be there to take pictures with the kids. Please arrive on time. We start promptly at 10:00am. Join us for the fun.

Moraga's annual Spring Egg Hunt will be held Saturday, April 11, at the Moraga Commons Park located at corner of Moraga Road and St. Mary's Road. Two egg hunts will take place: one beginning at 10:00 a.m. and another at 11:00 a.m. The cost for the egg hunt is \$5 per child and each participant should bring a basket for collecting the eggs. Tickets are available for purchase in advance at the Moraga Parks and Recreation Department, Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga, (925) 888-7045 or online at www.moragajuniors.org. Tickets will not be sold at the event. Children can also enjoy a toy walk, face painting, arts and crafts, jumpy house fun, and other games. The fun and games begin at 9:00 a.m. Co-sponsored by the Moraga Junior Women's Club and the Moraga Parks and Recreation Department.

Chef Lynda Rexroat of Let's Get Kids Cooking is starting spring cooking classes for preschoolers-13 years at local park and recreation departments and in after school enrichment programs. Children are taught, in hands-on classes, what sustainable foods are and how to make slow foods fast. Her nutritionally balanced cookbooks contain recipes that are easy to follow. You can sign up for spring cooking classes at the Lafayette Parks & Recreation Department, at Orinda's Wagner Ranch Elementary, Glorietta Elementary and many, more locations. Check our web site www.letsgetkidscooking.com. Or email cheflyndak@aol.com, or call (925) 932-1114.

Need Money For College? Contra Costa Association of Realtors Scholarship Foundation is offering scholarships to residents of Contra Costa County that have completed one year of full-time college, com-



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Not to be missed



pleted courses with emphasis on real estate, finance and/or business and have a GPA of 3.0 or higher. If you qualify, scholarship awards can range from \$1,500 to \$2,500. Further information and applications may be found on line at www.ccaarscholarship.com. Deadline is April 24th.

Vigil- Iraq War Year Six -March 19th at 7:00pm corner of Deer Hill and Oak Hill Road, across from the Lafayette BART station. Sponsored by: The Crosses of Lafayette, Mt. Diablo Peace & Justice Center Lamorinda Peace & Justice Group, Buddhist Peace Fellowship .

The Princess Project is a 100 percent volunteer-run effort that provides free prom dresses and accessories to high school girls who could not otherwise afford them. East Bay Dress Giveaway: Saturday, March 21, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Location: 2201 Broadway, Oakland, CA

and San Francisco Dress Giveaway: Saturday March 28, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Location: Embarcadero 4 (Front Street at Sacramento Street) in downtown San Francisco. No proof of financial need is required, just a valid high school I.D. Each girl will be able to shop and choose one accessory and one gown from thousands of gowns of all different colors, sizes, fabrics and designers. They may bring one female companion to help them shop for a dress.

Sex After 50: Keep the Fires Burning. Have you ever wondered why your sex drive may change with menopause and aging? Have you wondered if there is anything that can be done about these changes? Join us for a conversation with Risa Kagan, MD to learn more. Thursday, March 26, 6:30 to 8:00 pm, Women's Health Center in Lafayette, 3595 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 350. RSVP: 510-869-6137.

Not to be missed



SENIOR

The Contra Costa Jewish Community Center (CCJCC) has announced the grand opening of The Millman Respite Center Dementia Caregivers Resource Library. The library is open to the public and free of charge. Visitors will find almost 100 books and DVDs available for checkout, as well as videos, brochures and newsletters. Subjects include early memory loss, Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, grief and loss, homecare and therapeutic activities. The Millman Respite Center provides an Adult Day Program and Caregiver Support Group and is located at 2071 Tice Blvd. in Walnut Creek; (925) 938-7800 ext. 257.

The Widowed Persons Support Group meetings: Saturdays, April 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, and 23. 10 a.m. to Noon at St. Stephen's Church, 66 St. Stephen's Drive, in Orinda. The meetings are free informal discussions of the emotional and practical needs and concerns of the bereaving widowed person. For information, please call 925/032-3448.

Las Trampas Pool, a club with a main pool, kiddie pool, lawn area, picnic and BBQ areas, swim team and recreational swimming, is now accepting membership applications. Stop by the pool and pick up an application or download an application on the web at www.lastrampaspool.com Contact Membership Director, Krista McGuire at 256-8349 or krista_mcguire@earthlink.net.

Earth Hour at Chabot- Saturday, March 28 (8:30pm) Millions around the world will turn off their lights from 8:30pm-9:30pm to demonstrate the power of the people to conserve energy. Chabot will join the world's largest global climate change event and so can you. Visit earthhour.org for more information about getting involved. We will be shutting off most of our lights at 8:30pm. Join us on our observatory deck to watch the Bay Area go dark! Box Office (510) 336-7373, Online tickets www.chabot.space.org.

Digital photography - Are your pictures still in your digital camera and you are unsure how to proceed? Do you need to print them? Email them?? Put them on a website to share with others??? Fred Winslow is offering a course through the Lafayette Recreation Department in the upcoming spring term specifically aimed at people who want more information about how to proceed and do basic tasks in the digital environment. Call Lafayette Recreation at 925-284-2232.

Ygnacio Valley Republican Women Federated presents its annual Spring Fling on Saturday, March 28—11:00 AM - 2:00 PM—at Oakhurst Country Club. Enjoy a delicious luncheon, clothing from Coldwater Creek being modeled by our own Republican Ladies, exciting Boutiques and Keynote Speaker Lynne Leach as well as a special guest speaker from John Muir's Women's Health Center speaking on "setting boundaries and handling stress". \$35 RSVP with luncheon your selection—Chicken Picatta; Pasta Primavera; Chicken Caesar Salad or Cobb Salad - Call: Barbara Allen 925/672-5061 or jngcabot@pacbell.net or visit our website: www.yrvwf.org Please help our Hospitality Ladies with check or exact amount whenever possible.

Wright Canyon Hike Saturday, March 28, 9am. Join leader Dick Heron, a member of SMD's Stewardship Committee, for interesting history and spectacular Diablo peak views on this moderate two mile walk up a riparian canyon to "the Gathering Place" a Wright family monument. SMD preserved Wright Canyon with the help of the Wright family in 2001. This property is not open to the public so this is a special opportunity. Heavy Rain Cancels. Meet at Wright Canyon, west side Morgan Territory Road, 4 miles south of Marsh Creek Rd. a half mile before Morgan Red Corral. Website: www.savemountdiablo.org.

A Performance of Mary Betten's "People of the Passion." A dramatic reading of Jesus's death from the viewpoints of nine eyewitnesses to the crucifixion. 7pm on April 5 at 66 St. Stephen's Drive, Orinda. Free. Childcare is available by reservation. 925-254-3770, office@ststephensorinda.org, www.ststephensorinda.org.

Lamorinda emergency preparedness committees will hold a workshop the evening of April 29th. Keynote speakers are Tanya Hoover, Assistant California State Fire Marshall, and Rob Van Wormer, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief. They will be joined by representatives from local fire and police services and local emergency preparedness groups. We will cover current threat assessments for Lamorinda, evacuation planning, fire resistant construction and landscaping, family and neighborhood emergency plans, other actions to reduce the risks to your home, business and community, and resources available to assist you in your efforts. 7-9pm at the Orinda Library Auditorium (26 Orinda Way). Registration 6:30pm in the Atrium Lobby (2d floor).

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Mondays: March 23 & April 6, 1:30 - 2:30pm
Bi-Monthly Caregiver Support Group with Companion Care

Wednesdays: March 25 & April 1, 8, 25: 12:30 - 3:00pm
Dance lesson and live DJ services, playing your favorites and taking requests. \$2

Thursdays: March 26 & April 9, 1:00 - 2:30pm
Embracing Aging with Story and Movement

Thursday April 9, 10:30am - noon
Positive Living Forum- Open Lecture and Discussion Series

Fridays: March 27 & April 10, 1:00 - 2:30pm
Self-Discovery and Aging - Creative Writing Workshop

Friday March 27, 1:30 - 2:30pm
Harp Concert by the Windsong Harp Ensemble

Friday March 27, 11:30am - 12:30pm
Pain Management - Learn how improving posture and muscle strength can reduce or eliminate pain altogether.

Friday March 27, 12:30 pm
Free Blood Pressure Screening - John Muir Senior Services

Friday March 27, 12:30, 12:50, and 1:10pm
Free Memory Screening - Caring Solutions. (By appointment-call 284-5050)

Saint Mary's College

Campus Happenings



Photo by Ken C. Young, Moraga; www.kcyoungfineartimages.com

Creative Writing Reading Series at St. Mary's College

Wednesday, March 25, 7:30 p.m., Soda Activity Center. Leslie Carol Roberts is the author of *The Entire Earth and Sky: Views on Antarctica*. She was a Fulbright Fellow in Antarctic Studies and holds an M.F.A. in nonfiction writing from the University of Iowa and an M.A. from the University of Canterbury. She lives in San Francisco and teaches at the California College of the Arts. She is currently working on a book about San Francisco's Presidio neighborhood, and this spring she is Distinguished Visiting Writer at Saint Mary's College of California.

Keynote Speaker Jo Gusman

St. Mary's College's Kalmanovitz School of Education will have keynote speaker, Jo Gusman, national consultant and author, at its Distinguished Speaker Event on Saturday, March 21, from 8:30am-1:00pm. Contact Lydia Wiley at (925) 631-8124 or email at lwiley@stmarys-ca.edu for information.

Hearst Gallery

Bert Monroy, Master Artist Tribute VIII: A Digital Artist Paints With Light through April 5. The Hearst Art Gallery of Saint Mary's College is pleased to present a major survey of the preeminent digital master Bert Monroy, a world-renowned Photoshop artist and teacher, known for pioneering and innovative digital painting technique. The exhibition opened in January and continues through Sunday, April 5. A Photoshop Demonstration with Bert Monroy will take place on March 19th at the Moraga Room of the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College. 7-8 pm - demonstration, with an exhibition walk through with artist from 8-8:30pm. Free to the Public. Call (925) 631-4379 for more information.

Exhibition hours: Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 am until 4:30 pm
Admission: \$3 adult; children 12 and under free; free parking
Web site: <http://gallery.stmarys-ca.edu>.
Telephone: 925-631-4379
For more information about upcoming events at Saint Mary's College, visit the college website at <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/news-and-events/events.html>.

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Natural Food

By Susie Iventosch



Open Sesame Natural Foods in Lafayette

Photo Susie Iventosch

About 15 years ago, a good friend of mine served a mixed-grain mushroom pilaf to us at a dinner gathering. She'd found it in a 1990-something Martha Stewart Living magazine and saved it in her recipe file. It was absolutely delicious and every once in a while, I come upon the recipe (now in my file) and remember to serve it again.

Since I've been on a flax kick lately, I decided to change it up a little using an even wider variety of grains than the original recipe called for, plus the addition of porcini, otherwise known as God's gift to humanity!

I started looking for other interesting and healthy grains to add to the flax seeds I'd purchased earlier

at Open Sesame Natural Foods in Lafayette. One of my favorite past-times, perusing market shelves to see what's new and interesting, produced a new item I'd not heard of before – purple prairie barley. Naturally, I bought it and took it home.

Some time passed before trying the new purple barley and by then I'd already forgotten where I'd bought it in the first place. So, I phoned Timeless Seeds, the grower of this particular grain, and the CEO, David Oien, answered the phone. Chief among my questions was where I could possibly buy it again. He helped me out and also offered some very good information about this kind of barley. And, as a result, Open Sesame now carries this majestic wonder grain.

"We re-introduced this hullless heirloom grain about six or eight years ago," he said. "Hullless barley originated in the Nile River Valley and the purple hullless barley can be traced back for at least many centuries to the mountainous areas of Tibet, as well. Barley is an adaptive crop and can grow in both high heat and cool mountainous regions. It's been our observation that the purple pigmentation occurs due to fertile soil and adequate levels of rainfall."

The purple color, he says, is caused by anthocyanins, water soluble vacuolar pigments that serve as antioxidants, like those found in

blueberries, purple cabbage and beets. Purple barley is 15 percent protein and is the highest source he's seen for healthful, cholesterol-fighting beta glucans, immune response potentiators known to promote health in a number of ways.

He went on to inform me that pearl barley has an indigestible husk that must be removed before human consumption, and in the process many of the nutrients are lost. Flax seeds also promote good health, and according to Sue Jun, owner of Open Sesame, flax is good for fiber and is an excellent source of Omega 3-6-9 essential fatty acids, which can help to reduce cholesterol and inflammation, and fight heart disease.

After all that searching, and researching, Martha's good old mixed-grain pilaf evolved into a regular health-nut dish. The purple barley gives a rich earthy flavor, and when combined with flax seeds, wild rice, wheat berries, onions and porcini, it is good enough for a main course!

And, if you felt like adding toasted pecans before serving that would be very tasty too.

Open Sesame has served the Lamorinda area for 30 years and carries a wide variety of grains, including the purple prairie barley, many gluten-free products and several cookbooks containing wonderful, healthy recipes.

Open Sesame Natural Foods

983 Moraga Road, Lafayette, CA. 925.283.2207
Open Monday thru Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sources for nutritional information:

- <http://www.timelessfood.com/purple-prairie-barley.html>
- http://www.foodproductdesign.com/articles/463/463_651nutrnotes.html
- <http://www.mind1st.co.uk/omega-3-6-9.asp>
- <http://www.healingdaily.com/detoxification-diet/flaxseed.htm>
- <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/omega-3-000316.htm>

These recipe is available on our web site.

Go to: www.lamorindaweekly.com

Susie can be reached at suziven@gmail.com

Dining

Mixed-Grain Pilaf with Porcini mushrooms

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 cups cremini or brown mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 4 ounces dried porcini, reconstituted (use fresh if available) and chopped
- 1/4 cup flax seed
- 1/4 cup soft winter wheat berries
- 1/4 cup pearl barley
- 1/2 cup brown rice
- 1/2 cup purple prairie barley (or pearl barley if purple is not available)
- 1/2 cup wild rice
- 4 1/2 cups chicken broth
- Salt and pepper to taste



Five grains used in this dish: from center front left clockwise: pearl barley, wild rice, brown rice, dried porcini and cremini mushrooms, purple prairie barley, flax. Pilaf in center. Photo Susie Iventosch

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

On the stovetop, melt the butter in a large oven-proof pot (with a tight-fitting lid) over low heat. Add oil, garlic and onion and sauté until translucent. Add mushrooms and increase heat to medium-high. Cook until mushrooms are soft and both onions and mushrooms begin to brown slightly. Add all of the grains, and stir well to coat them with the oil and onion-mushroom mixture. (You may need to add one more tablespoon olive oil at this point.) Cook over medium-high heat, stirring often for about five minutes. Add the chicken stock to the pot and bring to a boil. Remove pot from stove, cover immediately, and bake in oven for about 1 hour or until grains are cooked, but al dente. Season with fresh ground sea salt and ground pepper.

You can substitute these grains with your favorites, or something new you happen to find on a market shelf, but keep the total quantity of grains the same – 2 1/4 cups. Also, toasted pecans and/or freshly grated Parmesan cheese are both nice additions to this dish.



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LAMORINDA's Restaurants

... updated March 18, 2009 ...

<p>American</p> <p>Bistro, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-7108</p> <p>Chow Restaurant, 53 Lafayette Cir, Laf, 962-2469</p> <p>Quinzos, 3651 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-0200</p> <p>Ranch House, 1012 School St, Mor, 376-5127</p> <p>Terzetto Cuisine, 1419 Moraga Way, Mor, 376-3832</p> <p>The Cheese Steak Shop, 3455 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-1234</p> <p>BBQ</p> <p>Bo's Barbecue, 3422 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-7133</p> <p>Burger Joint</p> <p>Flippers, 960 Moraga Rd, Laf, 284-1567</p> <p>Nation's Giant Hamburgers, 400 Park, Mor, 376-8888</p> <p>Nation's Giant Hamburgers, 76 Moraga Way, Ori, 254-8888</p> <p>Cafe</p> <p>Express Cafe, 3732 Mt. Diablo Blvd # 170, Laf, 283-7170</p> <p>Ferrari- Lucca Delicatessens, 23 Lafayette Cir, Laf, 299-8040</p> <p>Geppetto's cafe, 87 Orinda Way, Ori, 253-9894</p> <p>Rising Roast, 3643 Mt. Diablo Blvd Ste B, Laf, 284-8816</p> <p>Susan Foord Catering & Cafe, 965 Mt. View Dr., Laf, 299-2469</p> <p>California Cuisine</p> <p>Metro Lafayette, 3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-4422</p> <p>Shelby's, 2 Theatre Sq, Ori, 254-9687</p> <p>Chinese</p> <p>Asia Palace Restaurant, 1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor, 376-0809</p> <p>Chef Chao Restaurant, 343 Rheem Blvd, Mor, 376-1740</p> <p>China Moon Restaurant, 380 Park St, Mor, 376-1828</p> <p>The Great Wall Restaurant, 3500 Golden Gate Way, Laf, 284-3500</p> <p>Hsiangs Mandarin Cuisine, 1 Orinda Way # 1, Ori, 253-9852</p> <p>Lily's House, 3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #A, Laf, 284-7569</p> <p>Mandarin Flower, 581 Moraga Rd, Mor, 376-7839</p> <p>Panda Express, 3608 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-0288</p> <p>Szechwan Chinese Restaurant, 79 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2020</p> <p>Uncle Yu's Szechuan, 999 Oak Hill Rd, Laf, 283-1688</p> <p>Yan's Restaurant, 3444 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-2228</p> <p>Coffee Shop</p> <p>Millie's Kitchen, 1018 Oak Hill Rd #A, Laf, 283-2397</p> <p>Squirrel's Coffee Shop, 998 Moraga Rd, Laf, 284-7830</p> <p>Village Inn Cafe, 204 Village Square, Ori, 254-6080</p> <p>Continental</p> <p>Petar's Restaurant, 32 Lafayette Cir, Laf, 284-7117</p> <p>Vino Restaurant, 3531 Plaza Way, Laf, 284-1330</p> <p>Duck Club Restaurant, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-7108</p> <p>French</p> <p>Chevalier Restaurant, 960 Moraga Road, Laf, 385-0793</p> <p>Hawaiian Grill</p> <p>Lava Pit, 2 Theatre Square, St. 142, Ori, 253-1338</p> <p>Indian</p> <p>Swad Indian Cuisine, 3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9575</p> <p>Italian</p> <p>Giardino, 3406 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-3869</p> <p>Knnox Restaurant, Lounge, 3576 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-5225</p> <p>La Finestra Ristorante, 100 Lafayette Cir, #101, Laf, 284-5282</p> <p>La Piazza, 15 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-9191</p> <p>Mangia Ristorante Pizzeria, 975 Moraga Rd, Laf, 284-3081</p> <p>Michael's, 1375 Moraga Way, Mor, 376-4300</p> <p>Mondello's, 337 Rheem Blvd, Mor, 376-2533</p> <p>Pizza Antica, 3600 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-0500</p> <p>Postino, 3565 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-8700</p> <p>Ristorante Amroma, 360 Park St, Mor, 377-7662</p> <p>Japanese</p> <p>Asia Palace Sushi Bar, 1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor, 376-0809</p> <p>Blue Ginko, 3518-A Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 962-9020</p> <p>Kane Sushi, 3474 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-9709</p> <p>Niwa Restaurant, 1 Camino Sobrante # 6, Ori, 254-1606</p> <p>Serika Restaurant, 2 Theatre Sq # 118, Ori, 254-7088</p> <p>Yu Sushi, 19 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-8399</p> <p>Jazz Dinner Club</p> <p>Joe's of Lafayette, 3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Laf, 299-8807</p> <p>Mediterranean</p> <p>Petra Cafe, 2 Theatre Sq # 105, Ori, 254-5290</p> <p>Oasis Cafe, 3594 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-8822</p> <p>Turquoise Mediterranean Grill, 70 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-2004</p> <p>Mexican</p> <p>360 Gourmet Burrito, 3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-1270</p> <p>El Charo Mexican Dining, 3339 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-2345</p> <p>El Jaro Mexican Cafe, 3563 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-6639</p> <p>La Cocina Mexicana, 23 Orinda Way, Ori, 258-9987</p> <p>Mucho wraps, 1375-B Moraga Way, Mor, 377-1203</p> <p>Baja Fresh Mexican Grill, 3596 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-8740</p> <p>Celia's Restaurant, 3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-8288</p> <p>El Balazo, 3518D Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 284-8700</p> <p>Maya Mexican Grill, 74 Moraga Way, Ori, 258-9049</p> <p>Munero Uno Taqueria, 3616 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-1333</p> <p>Pizza</p> <p>Mountain Mike's Pizza, 3614 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-6363</p> <p>Mountain Mike's Pizza, 504 Center St, Mor, 377-6453</p> <p>Pennini's, 1375 Moraga Rd, Mor, 376-1515</p> <p>Round Table Pizza, 361 Rheem Blvd, Mor, 376-1411</p> <p>Round Table Pizza, 3637 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-0404</p> <p>Village Pizza, 19 Orinda Way # Ab, Ori, 254-1200</p> <p>Zamboni's Pizza, 1 Camino Sobrante # 4, Ori, 254-2800</p> <p>Sandwiches/Deli</p> <p>Bianca's Deli, 1480 Moraga Rd # A, Mor, 376-4400</p> <p>Europa Hofbrau Deli & Pub, 64 Moraga Way, Ori, 254-7202</p> <p>Kasper's Hot Dogs, 103 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-0766</p> <p>Noah's Bagels, 3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-0716</p> <p>Orinda Deli, 19 F Orinda Way, Ori, 254-1990</p> <p>Subway, 396 Park St., Mor, 376-2959</p> <p>Subway, 3322 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf, 284-2627</p> <p>Subway, Theatre Square, Ori, 258-0470</p> <p>Seafood</p> <p>Yankee Pier, 3593 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-4100</p> <p>Singaporean/Malaysian</p> <p>Kopitiam, 3647 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 299-1653</p> <p>Steak</p> <p>Casa Orinda, 20 Bryant Way, Ori, 254-2981</p> <p>Tea</p> <p>Patisserie Lafayette, 71 Lafayette Cir, Laf, 283-2226</p> <p>Tea Party by Appointment, 107 Orinda Way, Ori, 254-2206</p> <p>Thai</p> <p>Amarin Thai Cuisine, 3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf, 283-8883</p> <p>Baan Thai, 99 Orinda Way, Ori, 253-0989</p> <p>Royal Siam, 512 Center Street, Mor, 377-0420</p> <p>Siam Orchid, 23 Orinda Way # F, Ori, 253-1975</p> <p>Vietnamese</p> <p>Little Hearty Noodle, Pho & Pasta, 578 Center St., Mor, 376-7600</p>	<p>download our Restaurant Guide from our web site at www.lamorindaweekly.com</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">The Lamorinda Weekly (LW) Restaurant Guide is not paid advertising; our intent is to provide a useful reference guide. We hope that we have included all Lamorinda restaurants on this page, except those that told us they did not wish to be listed. LW is not liable for errors or omissions. In the event that we have inadvertently printed misinformation or excluded a restaurant please let us know (info@lamorindaweekly.com) so that we may correct our list for the next issue.</p>
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SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Lamorinda's Youth Baseball Season Begins

... continued from page 1



Campolindo varsity baseball team at the Moraga Opening Day Photo Andy Scheck



OBA's 25th anniversary Photo Andy Scheck



One of many Lafayette Little League Opening Day Jamboree Games Photo Robin Fox

Moraga Baseball Association: The Tradition Continues

The teams raced into the Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JM) gym, each with its own theme song blasting from the speakers. Literally sliding into their position on the gym floor, the players were raring to go even if wet field conditions

meant no games that day.

"They (the kids) always have a wonderful time at Opening Day," said Joe Rosenbaum, president of MBA. "We want them to have fun. We want these kids to learn how to play baseball the right way, but also learn sportsmanship and teamwork as well."

Speeches, first pitches and raffles filled the agenda for the morning. The Campolindo varsity baseball team was introduced with their coach, Max Luckhurst, who spoke of the importance of education first, sports next. There was even some good-natured ribbing when each Campo player introduced themselves and where they played as a kid. When a few mentioned they played in Lafayette, boo's intermingled with laughter and applause.

Eleven-year-old Caleb Whalen was just looking forward to playing ball. "The best part is that you get to be competitive against other people," he said. "That, and when you get a hit."

Orinda Baseball Association: Celebrating 25 Years

Balloons, commemorative baseball hats, and a host of past OBA board members were on hand to celebrate OBA's 25th anniversary. Before the ceremonies even began, a festive atmosphere filled the Wagner Ranch campus with team photos, pitching challenges, whistle ball home-run contests, carnival games and food. When the teams filed into Wagner Ranch's gym they passed through a gauntlet of Miramonte Varsity Baseball players, raking in the high-fives before they took their place on the gym floor.

From the welcome by OBA president Greg Anderson, to the impressive list of awards, including the Curtis Bottomley and Will Newton awards, and finally, the "first pitch" thrown by event sponsor Orinda Motors, it was all baseball, all the time. "Our mission is to serve the community of Orinda and provide a quality baseball program for our kids," said Anderson. To celebrate the 25 years of OBA, Bob Hegarty, known locally as "The Father of Orinda Baseball," was given special

recognition for his tireless efforts on behalf of Orinda Baseball.

"There is nothing better than a young man playing baseball," said Hegarty. "All you have to do is go to Opening Day and look at those kids with their uniforms on and the smiles on their faces. There is nothing more rewarding in this world."

Lafayette Little League: Play Ball!

Buckeye and Chaney Fields were open early, hosting a Jamboree play schedule, with limited blocks of time to ensure each team had a chance to play in the two-day opening celebration. Varsity players from the Acalanes baseball team were on hand, illustrating what being a role model is really about. Members of the high school team helped out both days of the event, getting the young players warmed up, assisting pitchers and catchers during the games and even raking and prepping the fields between games.

At noon on Saturday, play stopped and "Unplugged," a rock band featuring Lafayette Little League players, took the stage and performed several songs. After a welcome by LLL president Dan Ventrelle, an a'capella choir, the "Rocktets," comprised of Joaquin Moraga eighth graders, sang the national anthem and then, as most players appreciated, it was back to baseball for the rest of the afternoon.

"Our goal is to provide every kid of every level with the best baseball experience that we can," said Ventrelle. "We are fortunate to have so many positive adult role models to teach them about the game."

That sentiment showed in nine-year-old Ryan Regan of the AAA Division's Angels when asked about his favorite part of baseball. "There's no arguing," Regan said. "It's nice to play baseball. And it's a good team."

Cougar Football



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INSTRUCTOR: KEVIN MACY, HEAD FOOTBALL COACH AT CAMPOLINDO HIGH SCHOOL

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FEES: \$270 (T-shirt included)

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Congratulations 2009

LMYA Champions

Submitted by Gint Federas

- | | |
|--|---|
| 3rd Grade Boys – Kentucky Wildcats
Coaches:
Rob Middleton and Jeff Merken | 6th Grade Girls - Duke Blue Devils
Coach: Jeff Mitchell |
| 4th Grade Girls – Duke Blue Devils
Coaches:
Alex Malinovsky and Chris Easter | 6th Grade Boys - Boston College
Coaches: Rick Larson, Scott Rickman |
| 4th Grade Boys – Kentucky Wildcats
Coaches: Stuart Park and Eric Flett. | 7/8 Girls – U Conn Huskies
Coaches:
Karen Elliott and Stig Svedberg |
| 5th Grade Girls - Cal Bears
Coaches:
Kevin Porep and John Fellner | 7/8 Boys – U Conn Huskies
beat Indiana 46 to 40
Coaches:
Mike Inserra, Darrell Christian |
| 5th Grade Boys - Kentucky Wildcats
Coach: Brent Bird | |



7th/8th grade girls LMYA champions U-Conn Huskies: Back row (left to right) Coach Stig Svedberg, Lauren Mitchell, Georgia Jansky, Julia Elliott, Madison Maderious, Head Coach Karen Elliott. Front row (L-R) Melia Green, Claire Svedberg, Megan McMillan, Ruth Shaffer Photo Colin Elliot

Local Youth Collection Used Baseball Equipment

Written with information provided by Phil Hoffman and Laura Traxler



OBA players (left to right) Will Richardson and the Shepherd brothers, Kevin and Steven Photo Laura Traxler



Campo varsity baseball player Michael Hoffman with equipment collected at MBA's Opening Day Photo Phil Hoffman

MBA and OBA families came to Opening Day ceremonies with gently used baseball gear that will soon hit new fields of play beyond Lamorinda.

Campo varsity baseball player Michael Hoffman spearheaded the equipment drive at MBA's Opening Day. Those equipment donations, with an estimated (if new) value of \$10,000,

are bound for Richmond, Oakland and Rodeo athletic programs. Enough to uniform and equip 3 teams with baseball shirts, pants, cleats, mitts, bats and more, including some catcher safety gear. An idea Hoffman had when remembering playing summer youth baseball against those leagues, including one team whose players wore t-shirts with

numbers hand-written in Sharpie.

Meanwhile, at the OBA 25th anniversary opening day festivities, three OBA players – Kevin and Steven Shepard, and their friend, Will Richardson, prepared for spring break in a slightly unconventional manner. They collected used equipment and sold baked goods to buy game-day balls, things they will

pack for their spring break vacation to Puerto Vallarta. A gift for Puerto Vallarta's Little League, in its inaugural season this spring. The boys' families have been working with Bob Cohen, a sports reporter for the Banderas News in Puerto Vallarta, who is the "go to" guy for the new Little League there. Laura Traxler, Kevin and Steven's Mom, made the initial contact with Cohen while looking for a charity to help support while they were on vacation. The boys made a great start on Opening Day, but there's room for more. "We welcome all donations of gently used mitts and bats for 9-14 year old boys," says Traxler. "I can assure you they will be delivered to the Puerto Vallarta Little League children in late March." Contact Laura Traxler at lauratrax@comcast.RSFox

MBA Box Scores for February 28 to March 14, 2009

Submitted by Donald DePaolo

Moraga Baseball Association

Pony Division

March 7, 2009

Rodeo 5 - A's 3
A's Highlights: Havel 1-2, SB; Nichols 2 RS, SB, 1 IP, 3 K, 0 R's; Hofmann SB, 1 RS, Gong 1-2, 2 RBI; Rochlin 2 2/3IP, 7 K's, 2 R; Kiriaze 1 1/3IP, 3 K's, 1 R; Armen 1 IP, 3 K's, 2 R.

Moraga Baseball Association

Bronco Division

February 28, 2009

Orinda Fire 5, Moraga Mariners 4
Mariners Highlights Sean Smith 2-3, 3 RBI, 2 IP, 2K; Damien Stoner 2-3, 1 RS; Will Coates 1-2, 1 RS, 1RBI; Matt Koelzer 1-1, 1 RS.
Moraga Nationals 15,
Moraga Giants 14
Nationals Highlights: Andrew Willmore 1 IP, 1 ER, 1K, 2-for-4, 1 RBI, 3 RS; Matt Zurnacian 2-for-3, 1 RBI, 1 RS; Jacob Molloy 2 IP, 1 ER, 3K, 1-for-3, 1 RBI, 1 RS
Giants Highlights: Peter Goshorkhi 2-for-4, 1 RBI, 4 RS; Sam Phillips 2-for-4, 3B, 2 RBI, 2 RS; Brendan Gordon 2 IP, 0 ER, 3 K, 1-for-4, 1 RS; Eric Dunning 2-for-4, 1 RBI, 2 RS
Moraga Rays 3, Orinda Outlaws 5
Rays Highlights: Jack Stephens 4 IP, 1 ER, 2-for-3, 2SB, RBI; Scott Smoot 2 for 3, SB, 1RS; Neil Kelley 2 for 3,

SB, 1RS; Jake Rider 1 for 3, RBI.
March 7, 2009:
Pleasant Hill 6, Moraga Rays 4
Rays highlights: Ben Skinner 2 for 3, 1 R, 1 SB; Jake Rider 1 for 2, 2 RBI; Neil Kelley 2B, 2 RBI.
Moraga Nationals 13,
Piedmont Bears 3
Nationals Highlights: Matthew Tuan 3 for 4, HR, 2 RS, 7 RBI, 2 SB, 3 IP, 1 ER, 4 Ks; Matthew Zurnacian 2 for 3, 1 RS, 2 RBI, 1 SB, 2 IP, 1 ER, 3 Ks; Brian Lyle 2 IP, 0H, 0W, 6Ks; Michael Wright 2 for 4, 2B, 2 RS.
March 8, 2009:
Moraga Rays 14, San Ramon 2
Rays highlights: Ryan Geisreiter 3 IP, 1R, 5k; Ben Skinner 3 for 4, 2b, 2 RBI; Nick Fafoutis 2 for 3, 3 runs, 2B, 2 RBI
San Ramon 7, Moraga Rays 2
Rays highlights: Scott Chen 1 RBI, 2B; Neil Kelley 2 for 2, 1 R; Patrick Ratchford sac fly RBI
March 14, 2009
Moraga Nationals 8, Orinda Fire 5
Nationals Highlights: Andrew Willmore 1 for 2, 2 R, 1 RBI, 2 SB, 2 BB, 2 IP, 0 ER, 3 Ks; Matthew Zurnacian 3 IP, 2 ER, 4 Ks; Marty Cunnane 1 for 2, 1 RBI; Michael Wright 1 for 2, 1 R, 2 RBI, 2 SB, 1 BB.
Moraga Giants 11,
Piedmont Wildcats 7

Wildcats Highlights: Dylan 2-for-4, 2 2B, 2 RS; Bennett 1-for-4, 1 RS; Cameron 1-for-4, 1 RS
Giants Highlights: Patrick Duryea 2-for-5, 1 RS; Jack Gordon 2-for-4, 1 RS; Brendan Gordon 4 IP, 1 ER, 6 K, 2-for-5, 1 RS; Eric Dunning 3-for-5, 2B, 2 RS

Moraga Baseball Association

Mustang Division

March 10, 2009

Angels 7, Yankees 2
Angels Highlights: Sterling Strother 2-for-3, HR, 2 RBIs; Ryan McNally 1-for-3, BB, 2 IP, 4 K's; Kyle Hinds 1-for-3, RBI, 2 IP, 5 K's.
Yankees Highlights: Harry Finnerty 2-for-2; Nick Bishop 1-for-2, RBI, 1 IP, 0 ER; Michael Hooper 1-for-2, 2B, BB.
March 14, 2009
Moraga A's 9, Moraga Orioles 7
A's Highlights: Westphal 2 IP, 2K's, 1ER, 4-for-4, 3RBI's, 3SB, 2RS; Kronenburg 2IP, 2K's, 4BB, 3ER, W, 2-for-4, 1RBI, 1RS; Gabrielson 1-for-3, 1RBI; Lawrence 2 IP, 3K's, 2BB, 1ER, 0-for-2, 1RBI, 1RS.
Orioles Highlights: Caro 2IP, 2K's, 1BB, 0ER, 1-for-3, 1 2B; Lyon 1IP, 3K's, 2BB, 0ER, 1-for-2, 1 2B, 2 SB, 2RS; Hillhouse 1-for-1, 1RBI, 1RS; Erickson 1IP, 1K, 1ER, 1-for-3,

2RBI's, 1RS.
White Sox 13, Yankees 12
White Sox highlights: Tommie Vega 3-for-4, 2 RBIs, 2 RS; David Cushing 2-for-4, 3 RS; Jackson Reneau 2-for-3, 4 RBIs.
Yankees highlights: Michael Hooper 2-for-3, 3B, RBI, 2 RS; Casey Kiriaze 1-for-2, 2 RBIs, RS; Trevin Kroichick RBI, unassisted DP; Jacob Pappa 2 BBs, 3 RS.
Mustang Angels 10, Mariners 0
Angels Highlights: Aaron DePaolo 2-for-3, 2 Runs; Nick Morgan 1 IP, 2 Ks, 1-for-4, 1 Run, 2 RBIs, 1 BB; Richard Gong 3 AB, 2 Runs, 2 BB.
Mariners Highlights: Jason Rodriguez 2 IP, 5 Ks, 1-for-2; Greg Wenning 2 IP, 3 Ks, 1-for-2; Connor Peterson 1-for-2.

Moraga Baseball Association

Pinto Division

March 14, 2009

Moraga A's 10, Moraga Cubs 6
A's highlights: Jeremy Gunderson 2 for 3, 1B, 2B, 2RS; Bryan Kikugawa 3 for 3, 3 1B, 2RS; Dominic Gillibert 2 for 3, 1B, 2RS; Casey Chambers 1 for 2, 2RS.
Cubs Highlights: Grant Harper 2 for 3, 2 1B, 2RS; Peter O'Donnell 2 for 3, 2 1B, 1RS; Connor Gregg 3 for 3, 1B, 1RS; Keoni Vuong 2 for 3, 2RS.



4th grade girls LMYA champions, Duke: Front row (left to right) Emilie Malinovsky, Dante Bamont, Lindsay Easter. Middle row: Jaime Brown, Gwen Kessenich, Josie Cole, Heidi Stanford, Melissa Elliott. Back row: Coach Alex Malinovsky, Coach Chris Easter Photo Karen Elliot



4th grade boys LMYA champions, Kentucky Wildcats: Back row (left to right) Coach Stuart Park, Jason West, Justin Plummer, Jake Oxendine. Front row: Isaac Thomas (Park), Julian Scoglio, Avery Novick and Kyle Flett. Not pictured: Ryan Levy and Coach Eric Flett Photo submitted by Gint Federas

Lafayette Little League Scores, March 9 – March 14

Submitted by Todd Bequette

Majors Division

Dodgers 7 Giants 1
Cardinals 2 Yankees 1
Cubs 13 Redsox 6
Angels 3 A's 0
Angels 13 Yankees 6
Dodgers 5 Cubs 1
Cardinals 6 Yankees 6
A's 4 Redsox 2

AAA Division

Redsox 6 Marlins 4
Cubs 4 Giants 3
Dodgers 8 A's 6
Angels 7 Yankees 4
Cardinals 16 Mets 8
Mets 12 Giants 11
Yankees 8 Cubs 6
Redsox 10 Angels 9
Marlins 13 A's 13
Dodgers 16 Cardinals 10



Mills' Return Fails to Convince NCAA

By Mikaela Cowles



Patrick Mills (13)

Snubbed by the NCAA, the Gael's have to settle for postseason play in the National Invitational Tournament (NIT). It's a disappointment, but everyone knew that something changed on that fated January road trip to Washington.

On January 29th Gael's fans held their breath as Patrick Mills winced in pain at half time of the Gonzaga game. Mills was sidelined for 5 weeks due to two metacarpal fractures in his right hand that resulted in a successful surgery on February 4. Suffering the loss of their star Olympian, the Gael's fell to the Zags 62-69 and continued to lose four of their next five games.

Finalizing their starting line up with fresh faces Lucas Walker, Mickey McConnel and Wayne Hunter, the Gael's gelled as a unit and on February 19th fully found their rhythm against San Diego, winning 61-65. Saint Mary's went on to win the remainder of their conference games, finishing the regular season 24-5. On March 8th in the semi-finals of the West Coast Conference tournament, Mills' reinstatement to the Saint Mary's roster failed to live up to Saint Mary's hope for a positive effect.

Mills' 5 weeks off were spent practicing hesitation and inside out moves with his left hand around

cones, finishing his moves with left handed running jumpers and over the rim finger roles. After only one day of full contact practice Mills entered the game against Portland with a swollen hand, a tentative attitude and a lot of energy.

Mills' performance against Portland was less than desired by the Gael's and it didn't pick up much from there as they faced Gonzaga in the finals of the WCC tournament. Saint Mary's fell to the Zags 58-83 and lost the automatic bid to the NCAA tournament.

The Gael's scheduled an extra game against Eastern Washington on March 13, to allow the team to re-gel with Mills and prove to the selection committee they deserved an at-large bid. Mills' play definitely improved. Not only did his shooting percentage rise but the quality of his misses was noticeably better as the Gael's won handily 85-65. Commenting on his hand, Mills told reporters that by Friday night "the swelling had gone down tremendously. The motion and feeling in my fingers and wrist as well was pretty much 100%."

Saint Mary's proved themselves a strong team even without Mills as they beat highly ranked Utah State on February 21. With the return of Mills the Gael's held on to the hope of an at-large bid, however the selection committee had other things in mind.

With a low strength of schedule, Saint Mary's suffered the Mid Major curse and lost the chance at playing in March Madness. However, Saint Mary's will still be playing in the post season, and the nature of the NIT means the Gael's opened the tournament with home court advantage for their first game against Washington State last night (results not available at press time).

On Your Mark, Get Set... Register to Swim

Written with information provided by Gint Federas (LMYA) and Jane Daniel (MSC)



Looking for spring swim clinics, swim lessons or a summer swim team program? Local public options include LMYA Dolphins and Miramonte Swim Club programs:

LMYA Dolphins, based at the Acalanes High School pool, offers April preseason stroke clinics open to all swimmers, regardless of summer team affiliation. Conducted by Acalanes High School head swim team coaches Marc Cavallero and Jeff Miller, these clinics begin on April 6 and run for 4 weeks with Mon/Wed or Tues/Thurs sessions available.

The LMYA Dolphins summer community swim team, open to swimmers age 4-18, is also coached by Cavallero and Miller who subscribe to the SWIM SMART Program which promises "success and fun." Pre-season practices start May 4th. Regular season morning age group practices begin June 15 and evening practices start June 16. Register for the pre-season clinics and swim team online at www.lmyaswim.com or in person on Thursday, March 26, from 6-

9pm, in the Acalanes High School cafeteria. Please bring your checkbook and calendar.

LMYA Swim Team also offers a "Gutter Guppy" introductory program for water-safe 4-6 year olds. Evaluation and registration will be held at Acalanes High School pool on May 19 and June 1.

For more information about LMYA's swim programs go to www.lmyaswim.com, send an email to registration@lmyaswim.com, or contact Kristi Buck, Dolphins Team Director, at 925-284-4822.

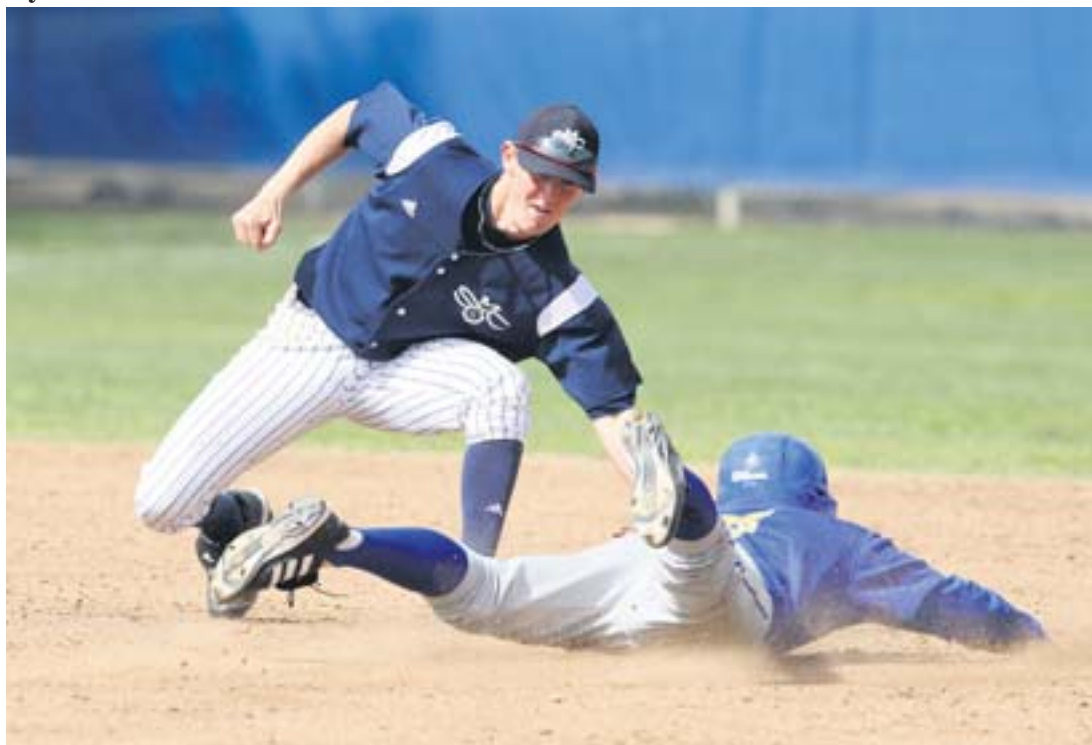
Miramonte Swim Club (MSC), the only public swim team in the OMPA swim league, holds its programs at the Miramonte High School pool. MSC is currently accepting registration for its upcoming swim lessons and stroke clinics, as well as for the summer swim team program. The swim and stroke program runs on four weekends, a total of 8 classes, between April 11 and May 10. The swim team starts May 11 with preseason workouts, and the summer season runs from mid-June to the OMPA championship in early August. There are

SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Gaels Fall Twice Saturday at the Guisto

By Alex Crook



SMC's Chris Murphy catches UCSB opponent trying to steal

Photo Tod Fierner

Expectations are running high around St Mary's College Luis Guisto Field this year. Although being picked second to last in the West Coast Conference is not necessarily a good thing, the Saint Mary's baseball team is used to handling that sort of hype. Armed with some incredible talent like freshman infielder Troy Channing and preseason All-American utility Kyle Jensen, the Gael's are proving that they can play anyone.

On Friday, SMC started the 4-game weekend series against UC Santa Barbara by posting a win. But on Saturday the Gael's stumbled twice. Saint Mary's didn't make it easy, but UC Santa Barbara took

both games anyway, 9-2 and 7-5.

In the later Saturday game, the Gael's and Gauchos were practically being picked second to last in the West Coast Conference is not necessarily a good thing, the Saint Mary's baseball team is used to handling that sort of hype. Armed with some incredible talent like freshman infielder Troy Channing and preseason All-American utility Kyle Jensen, the Gael's are proving that they can play anyone.

Santa Barbara scored 4 runs on 4 hits in the one inning alone, including a 2-run shot from infielder Robby Cummings to put his Gauchos ahead 3-2.

The Gael's made a little magic of their own in the fourth, tallying up 2 runs on 2 hits. In the inning, infielder Troy Channing doubled, bringing home fellow infielder Daniel Alcaine and pulling the Gael's within one, 5-4.

In the bottom of the sixth, the Gael's threatened with runners on the

corners, hanging onto a 6-5 one run deficit. Outfielder Justin Fazio's lineout ended the inning, and the Gauchos caught their breath back, clinging to their narrow lead. From there, the Gauchos kept their pace. Final score, 7-5.

With the Saturday losses, the Gael's ended the disappointing day with a 10-6 record, while the Gauchos improved to 11-4 and keep their #25 ranking.

SMC closed out the 4-game series, 1 win to 3 losses, losing Sunday afternoon's game, 25-11.

This week, Saint Mary's hosts 2 games against Cornell before heading to Corvallis, to play both Utah Valley State and Oregon State.

St. Perpetua wins Tournament

Submitted by Dawn Brightbill



Pictured are (top row, L-R) Tim Fogarty, Connor Smith, Keith Vaisnor; (middle row) Nathan Edwards, Brendan Supple, Gino Frument; (bottom row) Colin Fogarty, Nico Brightbill, Ian Franklin, Chris Vaisnor

Photo Kim Fogerty

The St. Perpetua 5th Grade Boys National League basketball team, coached by Tim Fogarty and Keith Vaisnor, won the 2009 CYO National Invitational Tournament of Champions in Brentwood in early March. The team had previously won the West Diablo 5th Grade National League Regular Season Championship and the MVP Flight Turkey Shoot-Out. They ended their season with a record of 18 - 0.

Lamorinda Weekly is an independent publication, produced by and for the residents of Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda, CA

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SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Lamorinda Dominates CYO Diocese Championship Play

By Robin Schoettler Fox

In box scores of Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) results, Lamorinda did well in basketball this year, sending more than a dozen teams to the 2009 Oakland Diocese play-offs and taking home five championship titles, girls and boys combined. Teams representing grades 4 through 8 earned berths to the single-elimination Oakland Diocese bracket championship playoffs by winning local league and/or tournament play.

"With over 1200 basketball teams in CYO this year, to have five diocese champions (from Lamorinda) is an accomplishment," says Bill Ford, CYO Director for the Diocese of Oakland.

St. Perpetua's (St. P) 6th grade Panthers, coached by Rob O'Reilly and Ed Saribay, avenged last year's 5th grade double-over time championship game loss to Christ the King (Pleasant Hill) by beating essentially the same players in this year's final game, 42-40. "They're league rivals and they've had our number all season long," said Coach O'Reilly. "We needed our best performance of the season to beat them and we got it today. Coming into this game, I had a good feeling about our chances because each one of our players improved over the season, and things were really coming together for us in our playoff run."

The 7th grade championship games looked like a local contest, as Lamorinda teams faced each other in the final girls and boys games. Santa Maria's 7th grade girls beat St. Perpetua, 42-27. On the boys' side, St. Perpetua took the title, beating St. Monica's, 56-42. Panther Coach Mike Cassidy said their Moraga rival was tough competition, had been throughout league play. "Saint Monica's was the only team that beat us all season," said Cassidy.



St. P's 6th grade Champions: Seated: Casey Harrington. Standing (left to right): Coach Ed Saribay, Zach Stromberg, Tyler Petite, Joey Hewitt, Matt O'Reilly, Kevin Hull, Scotty Fox, Head Coach Rob O'Reilly, Sam de Roque, and Calvin Saribay. Not Pictured: Kian Simpson Photo Teresa Saribay



St. Perpetua and St. Monica 7th grade players share post championship game smiles. Front row (left to right, St. P's in black; St. Monica in white) Andrew Zolintakis, Andrew Cassidy, Isaac Christian, John Lauth, Justin Dunn, Matt Thomas. Middle row: Walter Brennan, Zach Kisner, Alec Weber, Luke Hoyle, Mathew Gong, Even Raff, David Ortego, Jr., Denis Karas. Back Row: Coach Eric Smith (St. Mo), Ryan Smith, Grand Sivesind, Daniel Zur, Head Coach David Ortega (St. Mo) and Coach Mike Cassidy (St. P). Not pictured: Coach Steve Lauth (St. P) Photo Ken Kisner

The Panthers, though, were particularly motivated to repeat the team's 2008 diocese championship because they'd dedicated the 2009 season to their former coach, the late Ken Nelson, who succumbed to cancer just prior to the season's start.

Two other local CYO teams also now hold 2009 diocese championship titles: Santa

Maria's 4th grade girls team, coached by Kelly Sopak and Sue Ellen Thomas, won the girl's East Diocese championship by beating Holy Rosary (Union City), 28-16, in the final game. St. Perpetua's 5th grade Lady Panthers, coached by Alan Ikeya and Bret Asterlind, beat St. Catherine (Martinez), 32-30.

St. Monica 2nd Grade Boys Win Championship

Submitted by John Kronenberg



Photo Chun-hong Gon

On February 1, the St. Monica (St. Mo) 3rd grade boys' blue division national basketball team concluded its season by winning the CYO West Diablo League Championship. While the team, coached by John Kronenberg and Jim Buckley, was comprised of 2nd graders from Los Perales, Camino Pablo and Rheem Elementary schools, they "played up" into the

3rd grade league and then qualified for the playoffs against the Red Division by going undefeated in league play.

In the first playoff game, St. Mo rallied for a 44-26 victory against St. Catherine's. The Championship game against Christ the King was a hard fought contest that went down to the final seconds with St. Mo winning by a 35-31 score to

cap a great season.

Pictured are (front row, L-R) Keoni Vuong, Tommy Raftis, Aidan Lyon; (middle row) Jonathan Gong, Luka Brown, Jake Chan, Nick Kronenberg, Lucas Allen, Paddo Buckley; and (back row) Coach John Kronenberg. (Not pictured: Coach Jim Buckley)

Mats End Season in Redding



Senior Eric Obeysekere was named 2009 DFAL Most Valuable Player Photo Jordan Fong

Miramonte Matadors, the undefeated DFAL league champions, ended their 2008-2009 boys basketball season on the road last week, losing in the first round of the NorCal play-offs, 52-51, to Enterprise High School (Redding). But the team wasn't going to dwell on the negative.

"We had an amazing season," said Coach Dave Brown. "We won the DFAL title, had a 16 game winning streak and played for the NCS championship. And although we finished with a pair of tough losses, I'm really proud of our guys and what they accomplished — both on and off the court. They're an extraordinary group of young men, and I feel quite fortunate to be their coach."

No surprise, the Matadors are well represented in the DFAL All League boys basketball teams. Senior Eric Obeysekere earned Most Valuable Player. Chris Hatfield was named First Team DFAL, while both Davis Louie and Jared O'Leary made Second Team DFAL. Spenser McDonald was given Honorable Mention. While the Mats will graduate Obeysekere and O'Leary, they'll have a solid start on next year's team with Hatfield, Louie and McDonald all returning. RSFox

Lamorinda Cougars Win USSSA Winter Nationals in Phoenix

Submitted by Anne McNally



Submitted by Anne McNally

The Lamorinda Cougars punched their return ticket to the Elite World Series by capturing the USSSA Winter Nationals in Phoenix, Arizona in January. The Cougars will be looking to defend their 2008 travel ball national championship at this year's Elite World Series (12 and under) to be

held at the Disney Wide World of Sports Complex in Florida this summer.

At the Winter Nationals, the Cougars defeated the Arizona state champion and previously undefeated Arizona Desert Blaze 1-0, behind the combined pitching of Joe DeMers (Pleasant Hill) and

Matt Bicker (Los Altos). In the championship game, the Cougars defeated southern California powerhouse SGV Cobras 7-3 behind the complete game pitching performance of Daniel Slominski (Livermore).

Joe DeMers was selected tournament MVP both for his contributions on the mound, at the plate, and for his outstanding defensive work at catcher. DeMers hit .562, with 12 RBI's and 7 extra base hits to pace the offense. Other Cougars who hit over .400 for the tournament included: Mitch Hart .733 (Granite Bay), Daniel Slominski .500 (Livermore), Conner McNally .461 (Moraga), Ryan Weisenberg .428 (Alamo), Jake Rider .400 (Moraga). The Cougars will return to Arizona for the Spring Nationals in late March.

VARSITY HOME GAME Calendar ••• High School Varsity @ Home •••

Wednesday, March 18

Baseball
Washington High @ Campolindo, 3:30pm
Boys Volleyball
Campolindo @ Miramonte, 6pm

Thursday, March 19

Softball
Dublin @ Campolindo, 4pm
Boys Tennis
Dougherty Valley @ Acalanes, 3:30pm
Boys Golf
Campolindo v. Dougherty Valley @ Moraga CC, 3:30pm

Friday, March 20

Baseball
Albany @ Acalanes, 3:30pm
Boys Lacrosse
Miramonte @ Acalanes, 7pm
Girls Lacrosse
Acalanes @ Miramonte, 7pm
Swimming
Dougherty Valley @ Acalanes, 3:45pm

Alhambra @ Campolindo, 3:45pm

Boys Volleyball
Miramonte @ Acalanes, 6pm
Lowell @ Campolindo, 5:30pm

Tuesday, March 24

Baseball
Las Lomas @ Acalanes, 4pm
Dougherty Valley @ Campolindo, 4pm
Softball
Las Lomas @ Acalanes, 4pm
Dougherty Valley @ Campolindo, 4pm
Girls Lacrosse
Alhambra @ Acalanes, 7pm
Dougherty Valley @ Campolindo, 7pm
Boys Tennis
Dublin @ Miramonte, 7pm
Boys Golf
Dublin @ Acalanes, 3:30pm
Alhambra @ Campolindo, 3:30pm
Boys Golf
Campolindo v. Alhambra @ Moraga CC, 3:30pm

Wednesday, March 25

Track
Las Lomas @ Acalanes, 3:45pm
Dublin/Alhambra @ Campolindo, 3:45pm

Thursday, March 26

Baseball
Dougherty Valley @ Miramonte, 3:45pm
Boys Golf
Campolindo v. Las Lomas @ Moraga CC, 3:30pm
Softball
Campolindo v. Las Lomas @ Moraga CC, 3:30pm
Thursday, March 26
Baseball
Dublin @ Miramonte, 4pm
Softball
Dublin @ Miramonte, 4pm
Swimming/Diving
Alhambra @ Miramonte, 4pm
Boys Tennis
Acalanes @ Campolindo, 3:30pm
Alhambra @ Miramonte, 3:30pm
Boys Golf
Acalanes v. Miramonte @ Orinda CC, 3pm

Friday, March 27

Boys Lacrosse
Las Lomas @ Campolindo, 7pm
Dougherty Valley @ Miramonte, 7pm
Boys Volleyball
Northgate @ Acalanes, 6pm
Las Lomas @ Campolindo, 6pm
Dougherty Valley @ Miramonte, 6pm

Tuesday, March 31

Baseball
Alhambra @ Acalanes, 4pm
Miramonte @ Campolindo, 4pm
Softball
Alhambra @ Acalanes, 4pm
Miramonte @ Campolindo, 4pm

Thursday, April 2

Baseball
Acalanes @ Miramonte, 4pm
Dublin @ Campolindo, 4pm
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