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8:00am Downtown Lafayette
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www.lafayettechamber.org



Jake Berry



Sutter Lindberg



Madison Young

Photos Gint Federas

Lamorinda Football's Unbeaten Streaks Loom Large

Three local high school teams enter DFAL play with much on the line – see story page C1.

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LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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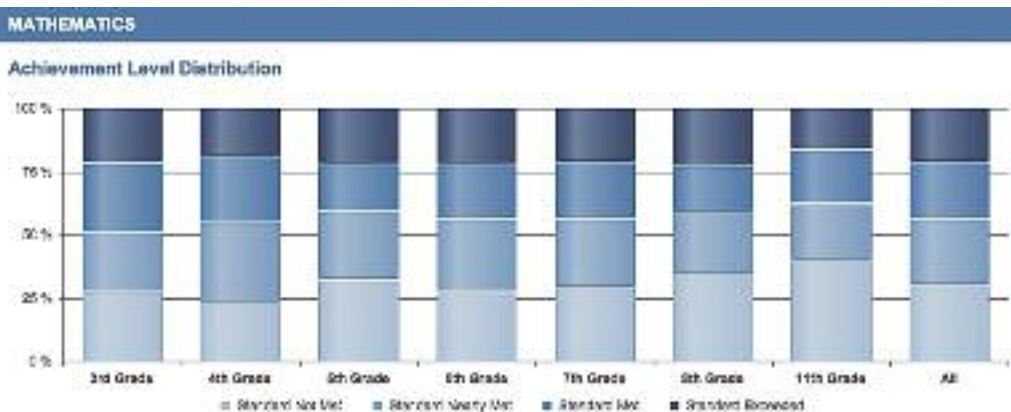
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Old Test, New Test: Lamorinda Schools Land on Top

By Sophie Braccini



When real estate values and desirability are driven by local schools' performances, state test results and the schools' Academic Performance Index (API) can have a monetary impact on a community. So, when the state changed the rules of the testing game, people took notice.

Fortunately the September results from the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress system were positive, with Lamorinda schools' test scores among the highest in Contra Costa County and the state. CAASPP was signed into law in October 2013 through Assembly Bill 484 to replace the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program.

The new CAASPP measures how students have assimilated the new Common Core standards that the school districts have been implementing for the past three years. "This was the first administration of the new test and it will be our baseline," said Carolyn Parker, Ph.D., the Moraga School District's director of curriculum and instruction. "Our students did an excellent job and we are very proud of them."

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Changes may be coming for Orinda Crossroads entryway – page A6.

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Update on Station 16 and 43 construction – page A8.

Life in Lamorinda B1-B10

Town Hall Theatre's "Drood" a fun romp – page B5.



Sports C1-C3

Lamorinda volleyball teams to battle for DFAL crown – page C2.



Our Homes D1-D20

Home upgrades you need for electric cars – page D1.





Lafayette

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, Oct. 26, 7 p.m.
Tuesday, Oct 13 canceled
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
 Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Oct. 19, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
 Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
 Arts & Science Discovery Center,
 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
 Wednesday, Oct. 7, 7:30 p.m.
 AUHSD Board Room
 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
 www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 7 p.m.
 Regular Board Meeting
 District Office Board Room
 3477 School St., Lafayette
 www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us
 Phone: (925) 284-1968

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org



Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Sept. 13-19

- Alarms** 36
- 911 Calls (incl. hang-ups)** 6
- Noise Complaints** 5
- Traffic Stops** 45
- Suspicious Circumstances** 7
- Suspicious Subjects** 13
- Suspicious Vehicles** 15
- Abandoned Vehicle**
3300 block Mt Diablo Blvd
- Battery**
Roundup
- Burglary, Auto**
Oakwood Athletic Club (2)
Happy Valley School
Diablo Foods
- Burglary, Commercial**
3400 block Golden Gate Way
- Dispute, Verbal**
1600 block Silver Dell Rd
3600 Bickerstaff
- Disturbing the Peace**
10 block Diablo Oaks Way
- Dumping**
Woodview/St Mary's Rd
- Harassment**
900 block Mt View (by phone) (2)
800 block Topper Ln (by phone)
- Health & Safety Violation**
1200 block Vacation Dr
Rowland Dr/Reliez Valley Rd
- Hit & Run**
St Mary's/Moraga Rd (2)
10 block White Pine Ln
Reported to police
Safeway (2)
900 block Dewing Ave
Dewing Ave/Mt Diablo Blvd
- Intoxicated Subject**
3500 block Brook St
- Loitering**
3500 block Mt Diablo Blvd
600 block Evelyn Ct
- Ordinance Violation**
Mosswood Dr/Village Center
- Police/Fire/EMS Response**
1800 Reliez Valley Rd
3500 block Mt Diablo Blvd
- Public Nuisance**
1100 block Upper Happy Valley Rd
3600 block Happy Valley Rd
3600 block Happy Valley Ln
- Promiscuous Shooting**
900 block Mt View Dr
800 block Tanglewood Dr
Merriewood/Rohrer Dr
900 block Mt View Dr
- Reckless Driving**
Moraga Rd/Mt Diablo Blvd
Lucas/Burton Drives
Acalanes High School
Upper Happy Valley Rd/Happy Valley Rd
Jack in the Box
Acalanes Rd/Hwy 24

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Is Parking Relief in Sight?

By Cathy Tyson

Laboring diligently, parking committee volunteers working on the Downtown Parking Management Strategy are in the final stages of preparing a plan to provide solutions and provided an update at the Sept. 28 Lafayette City Council meeting.

With parking rules in place since 1977, there have been revisions over the years, but no major update. Life, and definitely parking in Lafayette, has changed significantly in the last 38 years.

The committee comprehensively reviewed the problem, doing extensive outreach, and analyzed the 10,000 on- and off-street spaces in the downtown area and how they are used.

Looking at what they call the Parking Predicament, the group concluded "the problem is not how much parking the downtown core contains; it's where the parking is located, how accessible it is and how it is regulated or restricted."

Several parking management strategies already in use were evaluated. The most recent is the controversial parking meters installed on private parking lots at La Fiesta Square. Spaces now turn over more quickly, and drivers can usually find a space, but it is no longer free. The Lafayette Mercantile is a good example of public-private cooperation. Some city money was used to fund the construction of the parking garage, which allows free evening and weekend parking. Spaces along Mt. Diablo Boulevard are now metered; drivers can choose to pay for a spot close by or park further out for free.

Taking in an array of issues like short-term and long-term parkers, prohibitively expensive parking in-lieu fees, utilization of separated but adjacent private lots, BART parking and more, the committee came up with what they call "a Toolbox of Solutions." Topping the list of 27 specific items: offer residents and employees parking permits.

In addition, they concluded that Lafayette has a role to play to help make more parking available and to provide incentives, but the city does not have a responsibility to build new parking lots by itself.

Circulation commissioner Bill Loudon, a parking committee volunteer, noted that Berkeley has tiered parking, with value and pre-

mium lots offering cheaper and more expensive spaces, depending on location.

Installing sensors to communicate availability and location of spots via smart phones was called the "way of the future" by planning commissioner Tom Chastain, also a committee volunteer.

"Is smart meter technology available for existing parking meters?" asked council member Traci Reilly. She wanted to know if adjustable pricing could be increased during peak periods to recognize the value of a parking spot.

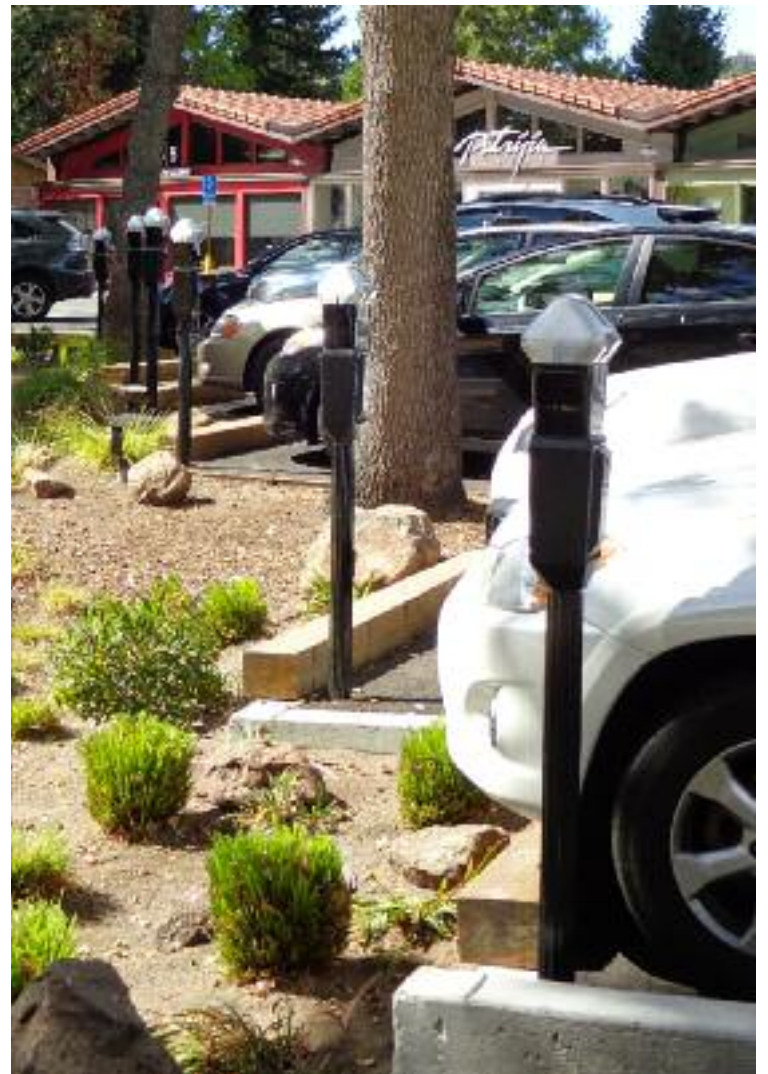
City leaders were encouraged that they saw a number of items in the toolbox that can be done at a fairly reasonable cost while still keeping a sense of urgency.

Another conclusion: the business community is also part of the solution. "Businesses need to understand that this is a shared resource," said Chastain, explaining that having easy access to parking for customers will make their business better. He was referring to one example of many in the downtown area; in the parking lot behind Postino restaurant, there are other directly adjacent lots behind neighboring El Jarro and the Prive and Company Jewelers, but they are separated by fencing.

"It's hard for us to require them (property owners) to do something new," cautioned mayor Brandt Andersson. Potential city funded incentives might pave the way.

Calling the meters at La Fiesta Square "game changing," Loudon sees more groups of property owners putting in meters together, as a way to open up small pockets of parking.

To see the entire report, go to www.lovelafayette.org, click on public meetings and go to the City Council staff report for the Sept. 28 meeting.



On a sunny Thursday, parking spots at La Fiesta Square were available for customers; more meters may be coming to privately owned parking lots in the future. Photo: C. Tyson

Love & Marriage, Municipal Style

There's so darn much love in Lafayette, the entire city staff are working on "The Chapel of Love Lafayette" for their annual Halloween extravaganza. The kicker is that two staffers have been officially deputized, so that committed couples can actually be married in the city offices that will be decked out Vegas-style. Both City Clerk Joanne Robbins, and Administrative Assistant Dana An-

derson can legitimately marry couples who already have completed their registration through the County. The chapel will be open for soon-to-be newlyweds on Friday, Oct. 30. Couples will have their pick of Judge Judy (Robbins) or Elvis (Anderson) as officiants, or perhaps these fun-loving, tolerant officials can be talked into a doubleheader celebration of love and commitment. *C. Tyson*

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\$2.4M Building, No Mortgage

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Anne Wondolowski, chair of the Lafayette Community Center Foundation, Jennifer Russell, director of Parks, Trails and Recreation, and Mayor Brandt Andersson at the grand opening of the Jennifer Russell Building. Photo courtesy of Steven Falk

Over 100 residents along with local dignitaries gathered Oct. 1 to celebrate the grand opening of the modern, energy-efficient Jennifer Russell Building at the Lafayette Community Center.

What is truly remarkable is that the building, which will serve residents for many years to come, is entirely paid for; there is no mortgage and no interest being charged. Park Facilities fees, which have been accruing for some time, paid for by developers or homeowners who apply to the city for a building permit, cover the vast majority of the \$2.4 million cost of the building. That bucket of money can only be used for park facilities, not pothole repair, or library books, or another police cruiser. In addition, the Lafayette Community Center Foundation contributed to the cost, along with some funding from voter approved Measure WW.

The former building on the site, the Manzanita Room, was built in 1954 with adjacent Burton Elementary School. It was purchased by the city in 1984, after it had been shuttered in 1978, and sat vacant for six years.

City Manager Steven Falk described the old building as the city's "first attempt at a civic space where the people would practice democracy and representational government." For decades, all of the City Council, Planning Commission and Circulation meetings were held in the drafty, aging room that was erected before air conditioning, good insulation, seismic safety

and handicap accessible bathrooms were the norm.

Speaking of building name-sake and devoted employee Jennifer Russell, Falk noted that for more than three decades she has tried to make Lafayette better through a huge variety of recreation and sports programs that expand residents' minds, improve their health, and open their hearts. "She is a mentor. She is a friend. And in this day and age of short-term employment and selfie photographs, she is an example of longevity, dedication, and selflessness."

"It is hard to imagine what Lafayette would be without its parks, its trails, and its numerous, diverse recreation programs," said Mayor Brandt Andersson, who helped cut the official red ribbon. "Likewise, it is hard to imagine what those critical aspects of Lafayette's identity would be without Jennifer Russell. Over the past three decades, she has dedicated her professional life to them. The shiny new letters on the Jennifer Russell Building only begin to acknowledge the debt the city owes to her."

The 5,300-square-foot building designed by architect Alan Cross and built by JUV Construction has to serve many purposes: not only for summer camp and sports activities, but as a rental for group functions and private events like weddings and large celebrations. Civic meetings have been moved to the Community Room of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, another civic treasure that opened in 2009.

Study of Possible Sales Tax Moves Forward

All five of the City Council members agreed to greenlight a committee to explore the reasonableness of putting an increase in the sales tax on the November 2016 ballot. Deadline for a recommendation one way or the other, is due by the end of this year.

Discussion at their Sept. 28 meeting focused on clarifying the mission statement for the independent group to take a long hard look at current and projected city

finances, along with sinking funds.

Recent Community Conversations illuminated residents' long-term needs and priorities. Coupled with priorities for the Downtown Specific Plan, there was a wish list of projects with little or no funding.

To clarify the report in the Sept. 23 edition of Lamorinda Weekly, the Chamber of Commerce is supportive of an investigation into the feasibility of a possible tax. C. Tyson

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community. **Send a letter to the editor:** letters@lamorindaweekly.com

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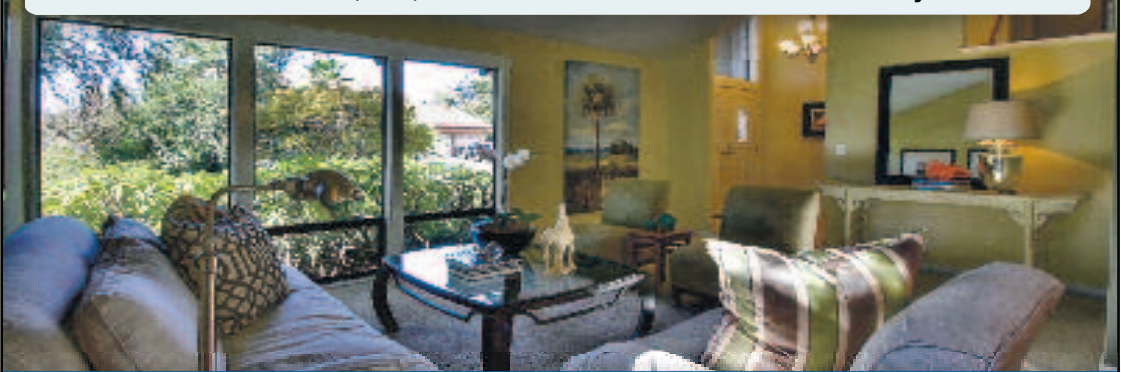
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Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, Oct. 19, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
Tuesday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us
Phone: (925) 888-7022

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Moraga Police Department

Fraud 9/25/15 A Larch Avenue resident got a phone call from an alleged collection agency stating that the homeowner was past due on a \$1,000 loan. The reporting person determined that there was no actual loan, and reported the matter to the police.

Car vs. bike accident 9/25/15 At the intersection of St. Mary's Road and Rheem Boulevard police located a bicyclist who had minor visible injuries laying in the roadway. The biker was later transported to a local hospital by the MOFD. The driver was not injured, but her car sure was – it was towed from the scene per her request. The incident is under investigation.

Traffic stop turns into epic police chase 9/25/15 A 1994 burgundy Chevy Suburban failed to stop at a red light and drove on the wrong side of the road. As cops approached, the vehicle fled and a pursuit ensued through Moraga and Lafayette – ultimately ending when the car crashed just off of Highway 24 near Oak Hill Road. The driver fled, but was caught about 200 yards away by a motorcycle officer. The 25-year-old driver from Martinez was arrested for driving a stolen vehicle, being a convicted felon in possession of a loaded (and stolen) firearm, felony evading police and felony probation violation.

Very loud party 9/26/15 A neighbor called police to report about 80 unwanted college-age guests at a party on Ascot Drive. Shocker – alcoholic beverages were present. Police, in their lingo “disbursed” the party people without incident. Officers explained the town ordinance to the apartment residents and cautioned them that further reports of loud or unruly parties may result in fines. No one went to jail.

Another party 9/27/15 Just hours after the original party on Ascot was kyboshed, at 3 a.m. the party was rekindled, same location, obviously at least some of the guests returned. Police observed about nine college-age students who were clearly intoxicated, and noted booze in the apartment, and could smell pot. This time cops determined they were in violation of the Town's ordinance re-

A Brief Moment In History

New hire brings Moraga Police Force to full capacity

By Sophie Braccini

With the recent hiring of officer Angela Likos, the Moraga Police Department is now fully staffed. “This day marks a brief moment in history,” said town manager Jill Keimach at the Sept. 24 swearing-in ceremony at the Hacienda de las Flores. Chief Bob Priebe, who over the last 10 years has said his department has never been fully staffed for an entire year, was not fazed by the comment. Not only was Priebe happy to showcase a full department, he was equally happy to welcome its newest female officer.

Prior to coming to Moraga, Likos was a police officer in Pinole for 10 years, and growing up, the Priebe and Likos families were very close. Likos went to high school with Priebe's son, who is a police officer in Pleasant Hill; they were police explorers together. And the family connection goes further than that: “I graduated high school with aunt Renée,” said Priebe, “and mom, Dina, was just a year behind us.” Over the years, Likos called Priebe on occasion, asking him his perspective and advice on things. When she considered applying for the open position at the Moraga Police Department, she called Priebe to ask him if there would be a conflict of interest.

“I always enjoyed working in a community setting where everybody works together,” said Likos, “and (I found) a sense of community (in Moraga) far greater than I thought it was.”

Priebe says that in today's environment officers have their pick of where they want to work, and an experienced female officer like Likos has even more choice. He said he has



Moraga School District superintendent Bruce Burns, councilmember Teresa Onoda, Moraga chief of police Bob Priebe, Officer Angela Likos, councilmember Phil Arth, town manager Jill Keimach, and Lt. Jon King Photo Sophie Braccini

lost several police officers because they found better paying jobs, offering more excitement than Moraga. Before making an offer to Likos, he wanted to make sure that it was a good fit.

“I like catching the bad guys,” says Likos, “but more important to me is working together to build community.” She says she appreciates the fact that parents are very involved with their children in Moraga; that people would stop and just have a conversation with her; that neighbors truly look out for one another. “I got that in Pinole,” she said, “but to a lower degree than here.”

At the ceremony, Keimach noted how impressed she had been with

Likos, who while in field training, reached out to Moraga residents to gather supplies for victims of the Northern California fires. This initiative was also an eye-opener for Likos, who was overwhelmed by the community's response. “To say that I was touched is an understatement,” said Likos. “When I came down to the police department to pick up (what people had donated) to take it to the victims, there was so much!” After she packed her SUV she had to borrow a second car. The donations ranged from cases of water to animal supplies, clothing and non-perishable food.

The young officer likes being on the street and rolling up her sleeves.

“A number of years ago my parents' home was burglarized,” she said. Since then she has had a better understanding of what it means to be a crime victim, and can put herself in a victim's position and relate.

“Our job does not end with taking somebody to jail or taking a report,” she said, “there is more to it. It's being able to educate people to prevent them from becoming a victim. Often people just need to be listened to.”

Likos knows that Moraga is a safe community, but because of this sense of security people might not take precautions such as locking their cars. “Let's not invite the bad guys here,” she said. “We don't need to be paranoid, but let's still be aware.”

New Lawsuit Filed Against Moraga School District

By Sophie Braccini

Over the past three years, the Moraga School District has settled four lawsuits with women who claimed to have been abused by former Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School teacher Daniel Witters, who committed suicide at the end of 1996. A fifth claim was filed in September by a woman who alleged that she was abused by Witters over a two-year period. She had not only until recently acknowledged the abuse and indicated in the claim that as she contemplated leaving her child for the first time at a daycare facility, she was overcome with fear, anxiety and panic, and decided to confront her past. “We will respond to this as we did with the other (lawsuits),” said MSD superintendent Bruce Burns, adding that he cannot comment on pending litigation. He noted that the Moraga School District now has a child abuse prevention program,

guarding loud and unruly parties – so the tenants were issued an official warning notice.

Laser beam cockpit intrusion 9/28/15 The Federal Aviation Administration reported that a commercial flight leaving the Oakland airport experienced a laser beam in the cockpit at approximately 7,000 feet, while flying over Saint Mary's College. Police discovered the origin of the laser beam was a college professor with a laser pointer who was teaching students about the lunar eclipse that was occurring at the same time. The professor was unaware of the plane. No further action was taken.

Other crimes that occurred in Moraga between Sept. 22-29:

False Alarm – Quintas Lane, Moraga Way

Medical Assistance – Augusta Drive

Bench Warrant – Corliss Drive

Stolen Bike Found – address undisclosed

Domestic Dispute – Camino Peral

Found Keys – Rheem Blvd near Harold Drive

Coroner Needed – Alta Mesa Drive

Found – ice chest with water and alcoholic beverage on Moraga Road

DUI – Moraga Way

which is run in the three local school districts, and it trains staff, teachers, parents and students so the children are safe and protected. “We are advocating beyond the district,” he added. “I have spoken about this issue

to all the superintendents in Contra Costa County, Alameda County, California School Board Association.” Some of the key concepts taught to children include presenting age appropriate material affirming that if

something happens that makes them uncomfortable they have the right to be defended and it is never their fault. The program, called Speak Up – Be Safe, is managed by the Child Abuse Prevention Council.

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Positive Outreach

But will it produce results?

By Sophie Braccini



Niko Letunic, center, and a group of interested bikers discuss the route they want to explore on Oct. 3. Photo Andy Scheck

A new group of Moraga residents last week got their feet wet participating in local democracy. Through a brainstorming session and an exploratory bike ride, the residents provided input to update Moraga's bike and pedestrian plan, hoping to make Moraga more bike and pedestrian friendly. The question is, once the new plan is drawn up, will the Town Council make it a priority and fund it?

Consultant Niko Letunic of Eisen/Letunic, a transportation, environmental and urban planning firm, led the public brainstorming session on Sept. 29 at the Ha-

cienda de las Flores. Letunic reminded the 30 or so residents who attended that the purpose was to create a realistic 10-year plan aiming at improving bicycle and pedestrian safety, as well as encouraging more people to use these alternate modes of transportation. Groups of six residents were formed; they looked at a map of the town, pointing out deficiencies from both pedestrians and bicyclists points of view.

The participants highlighted the places where sidewalks and bike lanes are discontinuous or in poor condition. Some asked

that local schools be involved in the study. Everyone noted the poor state of Rheem Boulevard, some asked to improve the connection between neighborhoods and existing trails, while others compared their experience in other cities that welcome pedestrians and bicyclists, and have signage on roads to improve safety.

Approximately 20 people participated in the Oct. 3 bike ride to explore and pinpoint on the ground dangerous areas around town for bicyclists. Most participants were in their mid-30s to late-40s, and were fathers of young children, students and active younger moms, who share a love for the outdoors that they explore on foot or bike, with or without kids in tow. The majority were serious bikers including Lance Larsen of Moraga, who has been on bike teams for years, Miles Frank, who is part of Saint Mary's College bike team, Elaine Ebner, an Orinda resident who is the president of Tieni Duro Junior Cycling, and many other current or former Moraga residents and a few casual bicyclists.

The ride started from the library northbound on St. Mary's Road to the corner of Rheem Boulevard where participants noted how dangerous that stretch of road was, with sometimes a non-existing bike lane. The serious cyclists wanted to focus on the main roads, and not the multi-use trail that also carries some bike travelers: the multi-

use trail is for walkers, families, children learning to bike, not for bikers who want to safely speed along the arterials. Moraga Road, going southbound between Corliss and the Commons Park is similarly dangerous, according to participants, the bike lane reduced to a few inches and in poorer condition than the road itself.

Along the side streets the group noted the need for better striping and signage to direct casual bikers off the main road and through neighborhood streets to reach destinations such as the parks or the schools. Small improvements were also recommended, such as a curb ramp at the end of the pedestrian and bike path connecting Canyon Road and the School Street neighborhood.

"I like that the town of Moraga is doing this," commented Ebner during the bike ride. "Overall we need more safety for bikers; for parents teaching kids how to ride, recreational riders, and the most experienced. Often casual and serious bikers share the same infrastructure so building a safe network for all levels and paces is critical."

Town staff and the consultant will present the preliminary results of the study to the Moraga Town Council on Oct. 14, and residents with additional comments are encouraged to attend the meeting at 7 p.m. at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. For more information on the study and to leave a comment online, visit moraga.ca.us.

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Orinda

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, Oct. 20, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
22 Orinda Way

School Board Meeting Orinda Union School District

Monday, Oct. 12, 6 p.m.
OUSD Office, 8 Altarinda Road,
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org
Phone (925) 253-4200

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report Sept. 13-26

Alarms	66
Noise Complaints	8
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	10
Traffic Stops	137
Suspicious Circumstances	8
Suspicious Subjects	13
Suspicious Vehicles	23
Burglary, Auto	
10 block Camino del Diablo	
Wilder @ Hwy 24 (2)	
Rite Aid	
500 block Hawkridge Terr	
60 block Brookwood Rd	
Burglary, Residential	
40 block Barbara Rd	
10 block Westover Ct	
Disturbance	
100 block El Toyonal	
10 block Overhill Ct	
20 block Irwin Way	
40 block Los Altos Rd	
Fraud	
Bank of America	
10 block Orinda Way	
Harassment	
90 block Lucille Way	
Health & Safety Violation	
Santa Maria/Orinda Way	
Moraga Way/Stein Way	
Hit & Run	
Camino Pablo/Hwy 24	
Safeway	
ID Theft	
10 block Lost Valley Dr	
200 block Ivy Dr	
Orinda Shell	
80 block Tarry Ln	
20 block Irwin Way	
Missing Juvenile	
20 block Ardor Dr	
10 block Honey Hill Ct	
Ordinance Violation	
10 block Owl Hill Rd	
El Sueno/Camino Sobrante	
10 block El Sueno	
Panhandling	
Camino Pablo/Brookwood	
CVS	
Police/Fire/EMS	
Glorietta/Rheem	
10 block Country Club Rd	
Hwy 24/Wilder	
10 block Carisbrook Dr	
60 block Alta Vista	
Miner Rd/Camino Lenada	
Psych Hold	
St Mary's College	
Promiscuous Shooting	
80 block Loma Vista Dr	
Public Nuisance	
500 block Moraga Way	
50 block Charles Hill Rd	
Safeway	
Camino Pablo/Camino Sobrante	
Post Office	
Reckless Driving	
Moraga Way/Oak Dr	
Camino Pablo/Moraga Way (2)	
San Pablo Dam Rd/Bear Creek	
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd	
Calvin Dr/Rheem Blvd	
Camino Pablo/Santa Maria Way	
20 block Loma Vista Dr	
Moraga Way/Stein Way	

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Orinda's Crossroads Entryway Will See a Change of Appearance Soon

By Victor Ryerson

A series of three unrelated items considered recently by the Orinda City Council could signal the possibility that the city's Crossroads gateway from the west will soon see major esthetic improvement – or not. As generally is the case in such matters, the answer lies in the availability of money to pay for the projects. And curiously, none of the council members indicated any awareness at the Sept. 1 council meeting that the three items were in any way related by their physical proximity to one another near the city's busiest and most visible street intersection.

The items did not require specific action by the council, but rather sought feedback on design and priority from the council members. The input will be used by staff to refine concepts for two projects planned next to the east side of Camino Pablo between Brookwood Drive and the BART station, and by Orinda's council representative to the Southwest Area Transportation Committee (SWATC) for local street improvements. SWATC's final expenditure plan is expected, among other things, to include a major revision of the intersection of Brookwood and Camino Pablo, which accommodates traffic from the eastbound Highway 24 off-ramp.

The most significant project from the esthetic standpoint is a plan to redesign the Orinda Mini-Park, the small corner park that is now almost lost between the busy traffic at the intersection and a row of redwood trees along the rear side of Theatre Square that were planted to provide screening. Those trees are the impetus for the change, as PG&E has announced that they must be removed because they are growing too close to the major high-voltage transmission lines overhead. Richard Westin of the Orinda Community Foundation (OCF), which is raising money to improve the park, told the Council that the site will be "stark and ugly" when PG&E removes the trees. "It's gonna shock the community when those trees come down," commented another speaker.

The conceptual design presented to the council by Parks and Recreation Director Michelle Lacy and park supporters is an undeniably attractive public space with cascading hardscaping, natural plantings, informal seating, and a "water feature" – a recirculating fountain – that would provide white noise for the benefit of park users. On one of the vertical

stone walls would be an Orinda sign, "beautifully lit with LED lights [that] will say, 'Welcome to Orinda,'" Westin said.

The cost of the proposed park is in the \$400,000 to \$450,000 range, and therein lies the problem. Mayor Dean Orr expressed concern that the estimated cost had risen over time from \$57,000 to this level, and questioned whether it would be a wise expenditure of city funds at a time when the city is spending \$7 million for road projects. "It's a matter of principle," he said. Other council members also favored scaling down the concept, although they did not establish a target cost.

Westin presented an offer from OCF to fund \$225,000 of the cost if the city would match that figure, but the council demurred. This sum would pay for execution of the current design. Westin could not say whether OCF would provide matching funds for a scaled-down project, as he did not have the organization's authority to do so.

Just north of the Mini-Park site, separated from it by a small Contra Costa Sanitary District parcel, is the site of the second project discussed by the council. The project is a plan to improve the lighting from the BART station to Theatre Square, and bring the stairs and access ramp from the Camino Pablo sidewalk to the upper street level into compliance with Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards. "Really, what's there now is quite pathetic," commented council member Darlene Gee.



Walking path to Theatre Square (left) and Orinda Mini-Park (right)

Photo Andy Schreck

A conceptual design incorporating ADA-compliant ramps separated by planted areas was presented to the council, along with designer LED lighting throughout the area. "I'm thrilled with the lighting," council member Amy Worth said, echoing the sentiments of the others. However, the council balked at the \$263,000 additional cost of the project above the current budgeted amount, which is funded by a \$250,000 BART grant and other sources. The council gave staff directions to eliminate certain features of the plan, including the planting and irrigation, to reduce the cost.

The final matter considered by the council was the SWATC Preliminary Expenditure Plan, which

faces a long road to approval and, ultimately, a funding measure on the 2016 General Election ballot. Orinda will have at least three opportunities to provide input for the final plan before its anticipated approval in July of next year. The big issue for the city is improvement of the Camino Pablo/Highway 24 intersection, explained Public Works Director Chuck Swanson, so that piece of the city's gateway may also see major improvement in the foreseeable future.

These three discussion items portend inevitable changes in Orinda's most visible gateway over the next year or two, but how dramatic and attractive those changes will be still remains to be seen.



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Orinda's Planning Director Steps Down

By Victor Ryerson



Emmanuel Ursu at a Housing Element workshop last year. Photo Ohlen Alexander

Emmanuel Ursu has resigned after serving nearly 15 years as Orinda's planning director. His resignation was effective Sept. 18, and he was recognized by the City Council on Sept. 15 for his long years of service and contribution to the community.

Ursu came to Orinda in November 2000 from the consulting world with the intention of staying "for five years, tops," he says, but was seduced by the challenges of the top planning spot in the relatively new community. His tenure expanded to three times what he had planned as he found the experience to be the "great, rewarding time of (his) career." He has lived in Orinda for 14 of those years.

Ursu came onboard at a time when the city was at a turning point in its history, and he regards the big projects he took over in his early years as perhaps his greatest accomplishments. Among these are the renegotiation of the development agreement governing Wilder (then Montanera) in the Gateway Valley, which had already had a troubled history of local opposition and financial failure. With the renegotiated agree-

ment in place and the Environmental Impact Report approved by 2005, development of the project could proceed.

He also points to his role in the development of the civic buildings and downtown housing projects as a major achievement. When he arrived, the old Orinda Library site was to be used for construction of the new City Hall. Ursu persuaded then city manager Bill Lindsay that the site would be better used for senior affordable housing, resulting in relocation of City Hall to its current site and the construction of an award-winning senior housing development in the original location. Simultaneously, the Orinda School District surplused the old Pine Grove site vacated by JFK University, and Ursu put together a development plan and policies that would devote that site in large part to housing, including eight below-market units targeted for school district employees. All of these new buildings, as well as smaller residential subdivisions on Stein Way, Lavenida Way, and prospectively around the old Moraga Adobe, bear witness to his work in reshaping Orinda.

"It has been quite a ride," he told the council members during their farewell ceremony. As for Orinda's future, Ursu says the biggest ongoing challenge is maintaining and enhancing Orinda's environment, balancing the quality of its new homes against the General Plan mandate to maintain its semi-rural character. "Change is inevitable," he says, and this aspect of the job will never end.

The biggest item of unfinished business, in his opinion, is Orinda's downtown. "There is really ... tremendous opportunity to enhance" the downtown experience, he says, with additional opportunities for shopping and other activities. He hopes this will become the focus of the City Council for the next two years.

Ursu's own future will probably involve going back into consulting work, although he does not rule out an eventual return to public service. In the meantime, Victor Camiglia of Municipal Resource Group will serve as Orinda's interim planning director while the city conducts a search for Ursu's full-time replacement.

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Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors

Wednesday, Oct. 7, 7 p.m.
 Wednesday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m.
 Moraga Library Community Room
 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga
 For meeting times and agendas,
 visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 1:30 p.m.
 Board Chamber room 107,
 Administration Building,
 651 Pine St., Martinez
 For meeting times and agendas,
 visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

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MOFD to Leave Local 1230?

By Nick Marnell

Rumblings abound among the Moraga-Orinda Fire District rank and file of a desire to break off from their parent labor union and form their own local, according to a district union representative.

"Nothing specific, we're just looking at our options," said firefighter-paramedic Mark DeWeese. "We always want to look at what's out there. What if we had our own union? We have 50 guys in our district and there have always been a bunch who think that it would be better for us to go off on our own."

Both MOFD chief Stephen Healy and Vince Wells, president of the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1230, declined to comment.

"We're not looking to leave IAFF," said DeWeese, the district union representative. As to the pros of breaking off to form a separate local, "I'd rather not answer that," he said.

Mike Mohun, San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District captain and president of Local 3546, which split from its parent union in 1993, cited the benefits of a break-

away by using simple logic. "The larger the group you belong to, the smaller you are," he said. "In a smaller organization, you have more of a say."

The SRVFPD captain said that he favors the hands-on approach he employs at his local chapter. "I work in San Ramon," he said. "I am in constant contact with my employees, the chief officers, the board of directors. I am much more geographically accessible."

According to Mohun, the breakaway of MOFD would also take a burden off of Local 1230.

"The more employees that you represent, the more difficult it becomes to manage them," he said. "It'll be much easier for ConFire." Wells is a captain with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District.

"There's no urgency," said DeWeese, who noted that the membership meets regularly to discuss such topics. As for any affect of a possible split on the district residents, "It wouldn't be a big deal. Not much would change for the citizens of Moraga and Orinda," he said.

Lamorinda Fire News Briefs

By Nick Marnell

Stations 16 and 43 Construction

A structural engineer told Contra Costa County Fire Protection District chief Jeff Carman that he concurred with the opinion of the district contractor that fire station 16 in Lafayette was not doomed to the wrecking ball. "There's no reason why we can't rebuild it," said the chief. Initial plans call for the stripping of the structure down to the frame and rebuilding from there.

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District, though, plans to raze its dilapidated station 43 and erect a totally new structure on Via Las Cruces in Orinda. Initial estimates approach \$4 million. Fire chief Stephen Healy said that the district may need to purchase a temporary station to house the station 43 crew during construction.

Representatives from Brandis Talliman LLC, a San Francisco-based investment banking firm, plan to outline public and private financing options at the Nov. 4 district meeting.

MOFD is Hiring

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District is seeking firefighter-paramedics. Fire chief Stephen Healy said that the district extended its application period this time from one to two months to broaden the pool of potential applicants. "The best candidates are taking a lot of tests," he said.

The deadline for applying is 5 p.m. Nov. 13. More details, along with the employment application, are available at the district website, mofd.org.

ConFire Ambulance Contract

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors awarded the available county ambulance contract to the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, and the district's contract negotiations with the county emergency medical services agency should be completed by mid-October, according to ConFire chief Jeff Carman. The district then plans to finalize an agreement with American Medical Response, the current county emergency medical transport provider, to subcontract for ambulance service. ConFire takes over the available county ambulance contract in January.

"We are working to merge our two dispatch centers," said Carman. The Contra Costa Regional Fire Communications Center in Pleasant Hill operates 24 hours a day, every day of the year, with ConFire dispatchers providing fire and medical service to most of the county. The center also contracts for dispatch service with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. ConFire will add AMR dispatchers to the center to systematically deploy ambulance calls after the first of the year.

ConFire and AMR transmit via different radio frequencies, but by January, the chief said that AMR dispatch will merge into the ConFire radio frequency.

"We're making good progress, but there's not a lot of breathing room," said Carman. "But that's the way I like it."

Lafayette

Even More Love in Lamorinda



From left, Planning and Building Director Niroop Srivatsa, Council Member Don Tatzin, and City Manager Steven Falk at the Art and Wine Festival.

Photo C. Tyson

For the past 20 years, the city of Lafayette has been producing the distinctive green "Love Lafayette" bumper stickers seen around town. This year at the recent Art and Wine Festival, city manager Steven Falk wanted to spread the love beyond the city limits and came up with two more bumper stickers: "Adore Orinda" and "Amour Moraga." This came as a bit of a surprise to both the town manager of Moraga, Jill

Keimach, and the city manager of Orinda, Janet Keeter. Keimach calls the new mobile advertising, "a great gesture," while Keeter was startled, saying, "First I've heard of it."

Complimentary bumper sticker love is available for all three Lamorinda municipalities at Lafayette's city offices in Desco Plaza, 3675 Mount Diablo Blvd., Suite #210. C. Tyson

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Business

Hofssi Chocolates - Chocolatières of Lamorinda

By Sophie Braccini



Sisters Linda Hofmeister, left, and Susan Rossi show their creations.

When most people hear the word gianduja, the first thing that comes to mind probably is not chocolate. The delicious blend of roasted nuts and chocolate was born in Italy in 1806. Napoleon's Continental Blockade of British imports created a cocoa shortage that led Italian bakers in the Piedmont area to reduce the amount of cocoa in their chocolate recipe and substitute it with roasted hazelnuts. Gianduja is the main product of Moraga-based Hofssi Chocolates.

Sisters Linda Hofmeister and Susan Rossi, owners of Hofssi – the name a combination of the chocolatiers' last names – started making the concoction in their homes. Hofssi's gianduja consists

of 40 percent nuts, ground to a very thin powder, mixed with dark or milk chocolate and wrapped in foil. The darkest chocolates are their best sellers, appreciated by those who want intense flavor. They also make toffees and caramels for demanding foodies as part of their cottage business.

"Four years ago, Linda started making chocolate," says Rossi. "She went to Costa Rica, visited farms, learned about the industry and techniques that transform the beans. Then a year ago, she called me and told me she was ready to start a business." At the time, with her children starting to be more independent, Rossi was thinking of restarting her law career. "I decided to join my sister instead."

The sisters' adventure has been some years in the making. Hofmeister and Rossi were born five years apart in a family of seven. Rossi, a lawyer with a baking undercurrent, started making sweets when she was 10, while Hofmeister was a commercial lender, described by her sister as an artist always ready to explore new forms and techniques. They both lived in Lamorinda until 12 years ago when Hofmeister moved to Minnesota; she has been back in Moraga now for a few months.

While Hofmeister prepared to move her family back to Lamorinda, Rossi took classes. "I trained with Ecole Chocolat, a very comprehensive online school," explains the Moraga mom. "They have a lot of videos, and every type of chocolate transformation is practiced. I learned how to temper chocolate, how to move the hands and tools, and one day we made gianduja. I could not believe what I was tasting, it was so good, and no one else had it."

Both Rossi and her sister have high food standards. "We call it conscious consumption," says Hofmeister. They select organic ingredients every time it is possible, and will experiment as long as needed to make it work. For the gianduja, Rossi uses raw California organic almonds and Oregon organic hazelnuts from Honor Earth Farms. They use the Guitard organic line, and add organic powdered sugar and dairy from local organic farms to their chocolate and toffees, which Hofmeister made for years as gifts for friends

at Christmastime. Hofmeister also makes caramels in a variety of flavorful combinations: classic sea salt, coffee, chocolate, coffee/almond/cocoa nib and a more exotic cardamom/ginger/cashew, and dark or milk chocolate covered sea salt.

Both Hofmeister and Rossi have Cottage Food Operator licenses, which allows them to make and market food items from their homes. Susan Marconi at Across the Way in Moraga was the first retailer to take in Hofssi products. "It sells very well," says the store manager. "When I cut out small pieces for people to taste, it is a sure way to see it go very fast." Other retail outlets in Lafayette also carry Hofssi Chocolates: Floret at 3581 Mt. Di-

ablo Blvd., Lazy K - the Orchard Nursery gift shop, Diablo Foods, and Clocks Etc. in La Fiesta Square. Orinda Books will offer the products in December.

"When I'd like Hofssi to be in a store, I just go in, give them samples and show them the packaging," says Rossi. "If you catch them at a good time, people love it."

The two sisters have many creative ideas on how to grow their business.

"I'd love to have a store," says Rossi, "but we do not want it to become too big because it is important for us to control the quality of our products."

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

business briefs

Caroline Salon is Moving

57 Lafayette Circle - 2nd floor - (925) 284-1474 - carolinessalon.net

Caroline Salon this week was expected to move to higher ground on Lafayette Circle. The new locale is across the parking lot from the former location (33 Lafayette Circle), and is now just above Chow. The entrance is between Chow and Nitro Dog. The salon is taking advantage of the new space to add additional services with more professionals joining Caroline Wiseman's team: Kazuko Kantor, master hair stylist and colorist; Jennifer El-Gohary, skin care specialist/esthetician (formerly brows only); Callie Reyerson, eyelash extension specialist; and Kristina Hong and Vanessa Love, nail care specialists.

Bistro Burger & Grill Opens in Lafayette

965 Mountain View Drive

San Francisco-based Bistro Burger & Grill recently opened its fifth location in Lafayette, across from Trader Joe's on Mountain View Drive where Susan Foord Café was located for so many years. The restaurant has been completely remodeled by Ali Kazemi, who also owns the four other locations. The style adopted is modern and elegant, with reclaimed wood tables and bar, dark tiles mimicking wood floors, and colorful original art on the walls. Two digital TVs hang over the large bar, and Kazemi



Chef Pietro Buttita, left, and owner Ali Kazemi at Bistro Burger & Grill in Lafayette the day before opening

Photo Sophie Braccini says there will be a DJ Fridays. Kazemi hired chef Pietro Buttita for the Lafayette location. The menu includes a large selection of burgers made with Niman Ranch pasture-raised beef, salads, sandwiches, pastas, and grilled fish, as well as an extensive list of cocktails, wines, smoothies and milkshakes.

Wax A Peel in Lafayette

3579 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette - www.waxapeel.com/

Leah Henrikson moved her salon Wax A Peel this summer from Pleasant Hill to Mt. Diablo Boulevard, next to Francesca and across from Postino's parking lot. The licensed esthetician and her team specialize in facial and body waxing as well as facial peels. "We use nothing but hard wax (stripless wax) for all the sensitive areas, such as your bikini, underarms and facial waxing," she states online. "(For) all bikini and Brazilian wax's we offer you numbing spray and a glass of champagne or wine to help put you at ease."

Stat Med Expands to Pleasant Hill

970 Dewing Ave #100b, Lafayette

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www.statmed.com

In 2014 Dr. Armando Samaniego and his team of ER trained professionals opened their first urgent care service, offered seven days a week, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and weekends and holidays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Lafayette. The facility offers non-life threatening emergency care. "As many as 70 percent of Emergency Room visits are not life-threatening and can be treated in an urgent care setting with appropriately trained physicians," notes Samaniego. Now the Stat Med team has opened a new state-of-the-art facility serving the Pleasant Hill/Concord area, as well as northern Lafayette residents, who may find the Sunvalley location closer to home.

News from the Three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette

Ribbon cutting for Wax A Peel on Thursday, at 5 p.m. Oct. 8 at 3579 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

October Mixer at Bradley School of Music from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 1042 Brown Ave.

Moraga

Business meeting opened to members and interested parties at 8 a.m. Friday, Oct. 30 at the Fireside room at the Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive. Stephanie Shaterian, owner of fLO Content Marketing, will discuss how to create marketing videos.

Orinda

Orinda Chamber Luncheon with guest speaker NFL Veteran Drew Bennett at noon Friday, Oct. 16 at the Orinda Country Club. Cost: \$30. RSVP online by Oct. 14 at www.orindachamber.org.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

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Three Lamorinda Schools Garner 'National Blue Ribbon Schools' Status

Submitted by Jonathan Lance and Kathy Frenklach

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson Sept. 29 congratulated 29 California public and four private schools that are being recognized as 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools. The California winners of the coveted award are among 285 public (traditional, charter, choice, and magnet) schools and 50 private schools announced by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

Contra Costa County had four schools honored with the prestigious award, which made the county home of the second most Blue Ribbon Schools, after Los Angeles County.

The schools are:

- Campolindo High (Moraga),
- Acalanes Union High School District
- Happy Valley Elementary (Lafayette), Lafayette School District
- Del Rey Elementary (Orinda), Orinda Union School District
- Neil A. Armstrong Elementary (Danville), San Ramon Valley Unified

"California's newly selected Blue Ribbon Schools are among the best in the nation and reflect our state's commitment to preparing students for college and career," Torlakson said. "We celebrate these models of excellence as they shine in the national spotlight. I congratulate all the hardworking stu-

dents, teachers, parents, staff, and administrators who made this recognition possible."

Superintendent of Orinda schools, Dr. Joe Jaconette said, "Del Rey is the first school in our district to receive this type of national recognition. All schools in the district were previously recognized as a California Distinguished Schools. The Orinda School District is proud of the success achieved by the students and staff at Del Rey. We know the award confirms the work of students, educators, and parents in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content."

The federal Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private schools from elementary through high school. The California schools were recognized as Exemplary High Performing Schools and were required to be performing in the top 15 percent of schools statewide as measured by state assessments. National Blue Ribbon Schools will be honored at a national awards ceremony on Nov. 9-10 in Washington, D.C., where each winner will receive a plaque and flag. Details of the 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/nclbbs/2015/index.html>.

Lafayette

None the Richer in Lafayette

Pouch containing cash found

By Cathy Dausman

Lafayette police are temporarily at a loss to determine who else is at a loss – of a substantial amount of money. A good Samaritan found a zippered pouch containing cash the week of Sept. 14 in the parking lot of the Old Firehouse School and turned it over to the office. The office staff contacted Lafayette police, and the pouch is currently in the evidence room, said police services assistant Eileen Fahy, who processes all incoming evidence, including found property. Most days she deals with backpacks containing clothing or toiletries. She says her storage space is limited and eventually the item will need to be transferred to the county sheriff's offices. Fahy said this money may represent "a bank deposit for a school sports program or a small business." To claim the item, contact the Lafayette Police Department at (925) 299-3236, describe the pouch and the amount of

money it contains. The owner needs to appear in person, present identification, and sign for the pouch. Fahy summarized the loss

saying, "It's somebody in the community," and from what she told *Lamorinda Weekly*, it isn't chump change.

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Letters to the Editor

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the *Lamorinda Weekly*. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines.

email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com;

Regular mail: *Lamorinda Weekly*, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

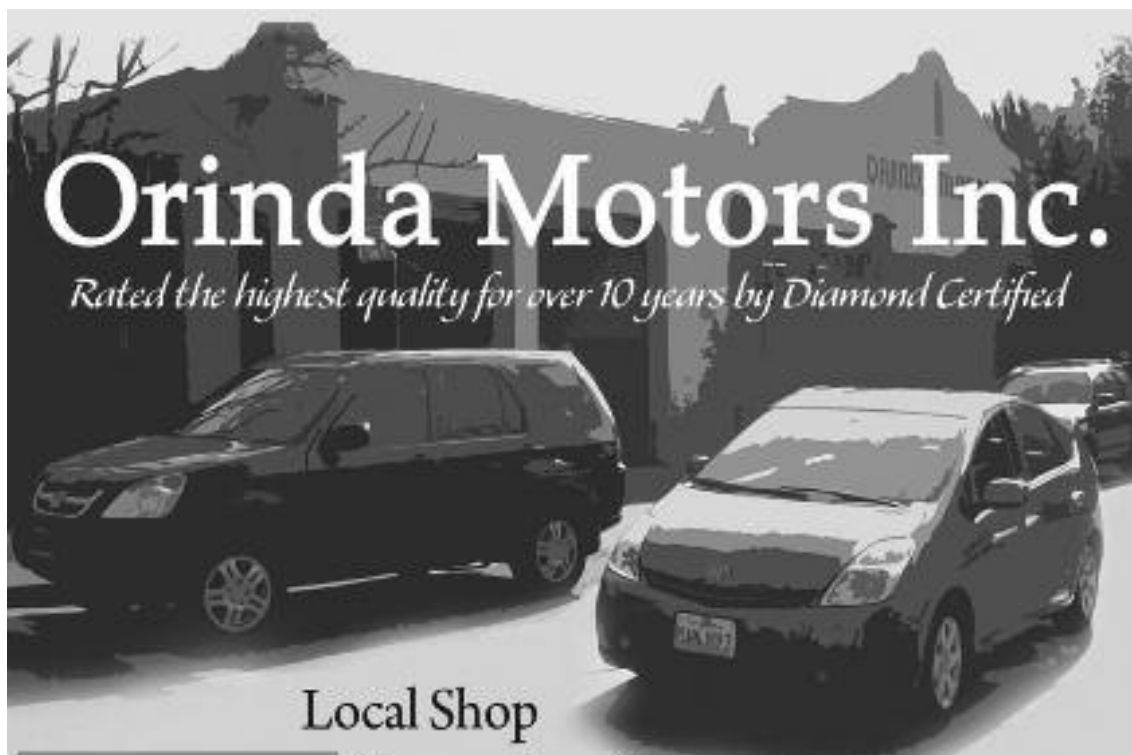
Editor:

MOSO and its associated municipal code zoning rules are cherished by most Moragans as a needed protection for Moraga's open space. These protections have served the Town well for almost 30 years.

At its September 9 meeting, on a 3 to 2 vote, the Moraga Town Council waived the first reading and voted to approve a zoning text amendment (ZTA) that further weakens Moraga's open space provisions. This ZTA is a prerequisite for one commercial enterprise to proceed with its permit process to establish a for-profit recreation business, to be located in a quiet residential neighborhood at the former Moraga Tennis and Swim Club. Purportedly, this unneeded ZTA applies only to MOSO-zoned open space but the same zoning provisions presently exist for non-MOSO open space. Similar provisions exist for most of Moraga's residential neighborhoods as well. This ZTA sets a dangerous precedent for future zoning revision and further weakening of Moraga's open space protections. Is this what most Moragans want for their community? I think not. Please see the Contra Costa Times article on the September 9 meeting at: http://www.contracostatimes.com/bay-area-news/ci_28791683/former-moraga-lawmaker-cries-foul-over-proposed-use.

This ZTA was put before the Planning Commission on August 3 where a majority of the Planning Commission refused to support this proposed ZTA, instead providing recommendations to the Council as to how to proceed, recommendations that a majority of the Council apparently chose to ignore. If you truly value your open space protections, act now before it is too late. Write to all five council members and tell them that you do not want MOSO's zoning provisions weakened in any way. Attend the next council meeting when the second reading and final decision on this ZTA will be made, and express your concerns during public comment.

Clay Serrahn
Moraga



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Old Test, New Test

In the Moraga School District, 84 percent of students met or exceeded the English language arts/literacy standard and 80 percent of students met or exceeded the mathematics standard, while the Lafayette School District stood at 82 percent and 80 percent, the Orinda Union School District at 87 percent and 83 percent, and the Acalanes Union High School District at 85 and 70 percent, respectively. In California, 44 percent of students in all grades met or exceeded the English language arts/literacy standard and 33 percent met or exceeded the mathematics standard.

The new test was quite different in format and in content than STAR. "The old test consisted of filling in bubbles on sheets of paper. This time, all the tests were taken on computers and students had to write narratives in some parts of the test," explained Parker. CAASPP requires the students to manipulate information, analyze problems and demonstrate how they reached a conclusion. The good scores are therefore also the result of a more intensive and systematic preparation of the students using technology in the classroom, as well as mastering

core standard concepts.

"Last year the district started a K-2 computer program, knowing this test was coming," said MSD Superintendent Bruce Burns. The test was administered to third through eighth graders and to 11th graders.

"The principals will be working with their staff to analyze the results and set instructional goals to focus what they want this year with their students," added Parker.

At Camino Pablo Elementary, Principal Tom Rust has started the analysis, working with teams of parents and teachers. "The biggest thing is how well our kids did, and we are celebrating it," said Rust. "In a lot of places the test (results) took a dip. We are very proud of how our students did." Rust said that the test results allow the team to focus on areas that appear to be relatively weak. "For example, there are four sub-categories in English proficiency, and it appears that the listening section for English learner students was a little lower," he said. "The math testing had three sub-categories and we will end up looking at the problem solving part."

The focus, noted Burns, is not about teaching to the test, but that

... continued from page A1

since this new test is more relevant, it is a very useful tool. "The core standards are more rigorous and challenging," said Burns. "(The CAASPP) is different because we are asking kids to take skills that they should know and apply them, to use critical thinking to arrive at solutions to the problems they are being asked." Parker adds that the test is also adaptive to children, which makes a big difference.

The CAASPP website includes test results and also has a video for parents to help them understand the information that was sent to them. "This is one snapshot in time, and we also look at report cards, teacher's information, quizzes, tests, to paint a picture of a child overall performance," assured Burns.

At this time the State has not released the new APIs for Lamorinda schools, but it is likely to come with a new formula that the community will be scrutinizing. "The State is looking into incorporating other data points such as attendance rate and graduation rate to paint a more well-rounded representation of a school district," said Burns.

To view the CAASPP test results, visit caaspp.cde.ca.gov.

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Family Roots Run Deep

The history behind Lafayette's oldest Chamber of Commerce member

By Sophie Braccini



Harry Ide with his wife Shigeko and their girls, from left: Dawn, Patricia, Sachimi and Tokiko in 1953 Photo provided

When Dawn Eames walks into the Farmacy Darlings boutique in the back of Mt. Diablo Nursery and Garden, through the displays of farm- and cowboy-inspired objects and repurposed furniture, she sees shadows of what was her first home – the wood frame and beams designed by her father, the large windows letting ample light into the minimalist Japanese-inspired 800-square-foot house.

“There was the kitchen,” says Eames. “There, my parents’ bedroom; there, the bedroom I shared with Patricia; and there, the one Sachimi and Tokiko shared.”

This was the home that Harry and Shigeko Ide built for their family in 1950, in the back of their burgeoning garden center at 3295 Mt. Diablo Blvd. The nursery, now owned by Garth Jacober, will celebrate 65 years of continued activity on Oct. 23-25.

Eames, the youngest of four sisters, was born a few months before the family moved into the home. The Ide’s first two children were born in very different circumstances: in the Japanese internment camps created in 1942 by Franklin Roosevelt’s order 9066 that required all Americans of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast to be housed in detention camps for the duration of the war.

When Ide came back to the Bay Area as a young father, he worked as a gardener. “He always loved plants,” says Eames, adding that her father always said that they should be treated as well as people. One of Ide’s clients, Lafayette resident Bernice Ellis, decided to support his desire to set up his own business. Ide bought the piece of land next to the Lafayette Park Hotel where the nursery still sits, and later was

able to build a home for his family. The Moraga resident inherited the land and buildings from her parents.

“Growing up, it was a little lonely here,” says Eames. “There were only businesses around. Fortunately some girlfriends came here from time to time to play, roughing it in the supplies for the garden.” Eames remembers how in the first years of the business, life was spent at the nursery 100 percent of the time, with both parents working seven days a week. “They were very hard working and very strict,” she says. “They instilled in us values (such as) working hard at school, keeping up the family’s reputation, and punctuality.”

When Eames was 10, the family bought a house nearby, and her mother had the time to develop her own passion: Ikenobo Ikebana, flower arrangement in the purest Japanese form. She developed and taught this style of Ikebana until she died in 2009. She also transformed the Ide’s house into a gift shop, which was taken over by the Farmacy Darlings in 2010.

“Harry’s Nursery, now Mt. Diablo Nursery, is the oldest Chamber of Commerce member,” says the Lafayette Chamber’s executive director Jay Lifson. “Harry was always very supportive and was an asset to the community.”

Ide’s love of plants and garden design may have been inspired by his Japanese heritage, but he was quite aware of the natural landscape and plants of California. He trained many young people of all backgrounds in the nursery, including Jiro Mishimoto who took over the business when Ide retired in 1982, and Jacober, the present owner of Mt. Diablo

Nursery, who got his first job there in the early ‘70s.

“That was my father’s philosophy; that is still the same here today,” says Eames. “Everyone who works in the nursery has to respect plants and be very knowledgeable.” Eames’ says her father used to see clients coming with plants that were very stressed; he would replace them, and keep the stressed ones, nursing them back to health.

Today, Jacober works in the nursery with a young man who knows most everything about plants, Matt Guziejka. They will be leading the Oct. 23-25 65th anniversary festivities, which will include a composting workshop, a container class, and a 20 percent discount on all the plants.

Eames will be there, bringing drinks and cookies to celebrate her heritage within the community.



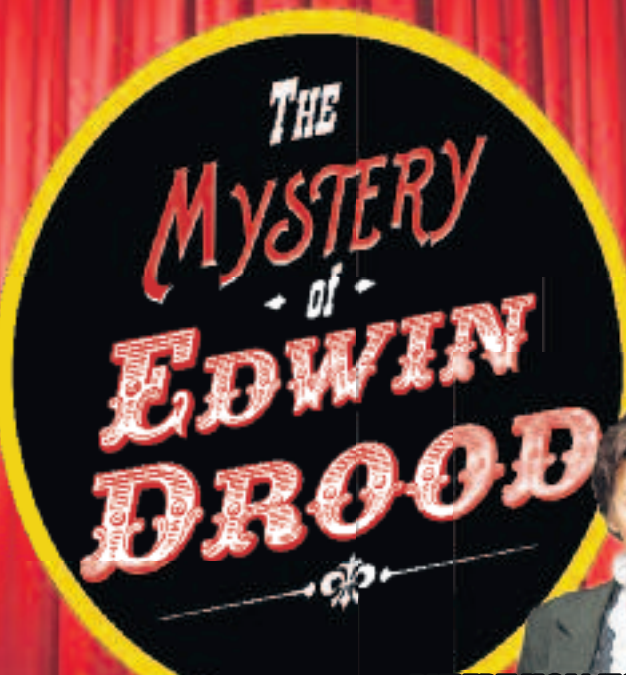
Dawn Ide-Eames

Photo Sophie Braccini

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October 4 – December 13

A Fine Line: The Dr. Maurice Alberti Print Collection of European and American Masters

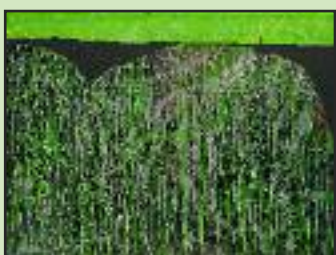


Dr. Maurice Alberti, SMC class of 1951, was an avid print collector. Upon his death he gave St. Mary's his vast collection of museum quality American and European prints. On view are works by Henri Toulouse Lautrec, Pierre Auguste Renoir, Georges Braque, Henri Matisse and Marc Chagall and many more esteemed artists.

Georges Rouault, Ballerine, 1926-27, Lithograph, 11 7/8 x 7 5/8", Collection of the SMC MoA

October 4 – December 6

Luis Gutierrez: Another Kind of Truth



Luis Gutierrez, Fields of Green

Mexican-American artist Luis Gutierrez was born in the small town of Pittsburg, California in 1933. Despite receiving no encouragement and never being taken to museums, Gutierrez

was drawn to the visual arts. On view is Gutierrez's newest body of work, anchored by a small group of assemblages, for which he became well known in the 1980s and '90s.

October 4 – December 6

Ron Hutt: The Axis Mundi / Open Portals



Ron Hutt

The Axis Mundi / Open Portals project utilizes horizontal and vertical panoramic photographs captured while crisscrossing the United States and Europe. He teases out digital paintings from these images.

October 4 - May 1

William Keith and the Battle for Hetch Hetchy



William Keith, Collection of the SMC MoA

In 1907, William Keith accompanied John Muir to Yosemite's twin valley, Hetch Hetchy. The trip was not a lighthearted hike, but a determined mission to bring the rich colors and epic landscapes back to the Bay Area, where politicians schemed to dam the valley. On display are Keith oil paintings, accompanied by photographs and documents courtesy of the Sierra Club, Restore Hetch Hetchy, and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

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Chilly Sport Heats Up

Lamorinda residents spend time curling on the ice

By Bobbie Dodson



Orinda resident Juan Kelly on the ice

Photos provided

It's dubbed 'chess on ice' and I think that's because there's a lot of thought required as you get the stone from one end of the court to the other," says Juan Kelly of Orinda. He is one of the more than 250 who engage in the ancient sport of curling in the Bay Area.

"Although curling originated in the 15th century, the 'modern' Scottish style was introduced in the 17th century. It was always played outdoors until the 20th century and became an Olympic sport in 1998," Kelly explains. "I think many people are amazed that there is a curling club right here in our own backyard. I was happy to find it when I moved here a year ago as I'd enjoyed the sport when I was introduced to it in Wisconsin, and then continued in New Hampshire where I lived at the time." He even was active in curling in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

One not only has to learn how to play the game, but first needs to become conversant with the different terms such as: "house," the rings or circles toward which the play is directed; "curl," the amount a stone bends while traveling down the sheet of ice; "back line," the line across the ice at the back of the house; "button," the circle at the center of the house

where the most points are scored; "pebble," a fine spray of water applied to a sheet of curling ice before commencing play; "sheet," the specific playing surface upon which a curling game is played; and "skip," the player who determines the strategy and directs the play for the team and the one who delivers the last two stones for his or her team to each end. There are many more.

Juan describes the game this way: "The stone is released with a clockwise or counterclockwise spin, so it can curl either way. The skip is positioned at the other end of the ice and he tells the sweepers, who use brooms to help direct the stone, what to do. When they sweep and melt the ice it causes the stone to go faster. If there were no sweepers the stone wouldn't get to the house at the other end. The team scores points for stones that end up in the house. Teams are made up of four players and each throws two stones, so it's possible for one team to

score eight points, if all their stones are in the house, and the other team has none there."

Lafayette eighth-grader Nelson Rogers says, "Like many others, my family was intrigued by the sport after watching the Sochi, Russia Olympics. My mother, brother and I went to try it. I loved it, but the other two didn't. I think it's special because it is strategic, unique and competitive. I'm on the junior team of the Bay Area Curling Club in Oakland and typically play every Friday night."

The local ice rink is owned by the city of Oakland, but managed by the San Jose Sharks. The Bay Area Curling Club also has teams in Fremont and San Jose. "You only have to walk 50 yards from the 19th street BART station to the rink at 519 18th Street, so it's easy to get there. It costs \$25 for the two-hour session on the ice," Kelly says. "If you want to see a game, go on the website, (bayareacurling.com), then check when the league games are playing. It's free, but be sure to wear heavy shoes and layers of clothing. Sitting in an ice rink can be very cold. As for playing the game, shoes are the most important and it's good to have curling shoes, but you can play in shoes that are low cut and have a grip to them. Wear comfortable clothing, and gloves for sure."

Kate Garfinkel, who is on the board of directors and is in charge of programming for youth and wheelchair participants, says newbies are welcome. "We have clinics for people who would like to try out curling. Contact me (kate@bayareacurling.com) with any questions you might have. I have been curling for seven years and like it because it's challenging both physically and mentally. It is much harder than it looks. Also, it provides a fun social community."

The San Francisco Bay Area Curling Club was established in 1958. It is a nationally recognized leader in curling development and has taught thousands of Bay Area residents to curl. Kelly adds, "It's the hottest sport on ice!"



Eighth-grader Nelson Rogers, of Lafayette, plays on the junior team of the Bay Area Curling Club in Oakland.

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Holocaust Survivor Brings Her Story to the Orinda Library

Author Dora Sorell to speak on Oct. 22

By Diane Claytor



Sorell autographing a copy of her book, "Tell the Children, Letters to Miriam."

“When my first grandchild ... was born, it dawned on me that the new generation ... would grow up without knowing who we are and where we came from ... all that we suffered and lost during the Nazi era. Unless I told them.” So begins Holocaust survivor and Berkeley resident Dora Sorell’s fascinating and important memoir, “Tell the Children, Letters to Miriam.” And tell them, she does. With graphic detail, Sorell writes letters to her granddaughter describing her life in the “old country.”

“They’re vignettes, really,” Sorell says. When memories would come to her, she would write a letter, tell a story. Sometimes it would be once a week, sometimes it would be twice a day. “Some were sad, others tragic,” she writes in the book’s preface, “yet many were funny or sweet, as life and memories usually are.”

Her letters were turned into a highly-rated book in 1998 and Sorell became a sought-after speaker. She estimates that she has told her story more than 600 times to thousands of people in the Bay Area and beyond. On Oct. 22, Sorell will again be telling her story, this time at the Orinda Library. It is, indeed, quite a tale and one not to be missed.

It is a heartbreaking story: in 1944, at age 22, Sorell, her parents, two brothers and 40 other family members were transported to Auschwitz. She was the only one in the family to escape the gas chamber.

Sorell survived first the concentration camp and then a forced labor camp. She survived hunger and beatings, fear and loneliness. Following her liberation and return to her hometown of Sighet, Romania, Sorell married her high school sweetheart, who had waited for her.

“He was one of the lucky ones,” Sorell explains. “Instead of being sent to the concentration camp, he spent five years in jail for being a communist.” They were married for 63 happy years before his death eight years ago.

It took Sorell 16 years and 10 visa applications before she and her family were finally able to leave communist Romania. During that time she graduated from medical school and began practicing medicine. After two years in Brazil, where two of her brothers lived, she and her family moved to the United States, first to New York, where another two brothers lived and where Sorell became a tenured professor of rehabilitative medicine, and 20 years ago, to California.

Sorell takes no money for her presentations, stating that she refuses to make money from such a tragedy. Over the years, any funds received are donated to charity. “When I see others suffering as I did ... I give it to them,” she was quoted as saying in a San Francisco Chronicle article last year.

Sorell raised three children and now has the joy of spending time with her eight grandchildren, and the determination to tell her story – one that Sorell believes needs to be shared “to impart that experience to young people and acquaint them with the dangers of hatred and intolerance.”

“Sensitizing the new generation to discrimination and suffering has become my mission,” she writes.

Her book has a five-star rating on Amazon.com, with one reviewer writing that it is a “vivid story so well told,” and another stating, “The Holocaust description is the most moving one I have ever read and preserves ... the realities of a terrible time through the eyes of a survivor.” A natural-born storyteller, Sorell happily notes that she has lots of tales to tell. She tells them from a personal perspective. Audiences who have seen her presentations have called her entertaining, sweet, cute, humorous and even sassy.

At 94 years of age, Sorell is experiencing health issues. Her hearing may not be what it once was and, as she notes, with humor, “When I forget what I was saying, I just say ‘well, sure, I’m 94.’” But

she calmly recalls hundreds of stories from the past, often beginning a sentence with “Let me tell you this story.” And she hopes to be able to continue telling these stories.

“It’s very important for people to know about the Holocaust and about the history of that time,” she says. As she told an interviewer in 2000, she’s going to talk about the Holocaust until she takes her last breath. It is her legacy to the future generation.

You can hear Sorell speak and see her many pictures at a free community event, sponsored by The Rotary Club of Orinda, at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 22 at the Orinda Library. Sorell will speak for an hour and then open the floor for questions. Copies of her book will also be available for purchase and signing.



Dora Sorell and Orinda Rotarian James Wright

Photos provided

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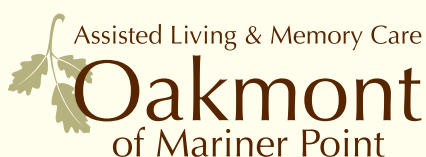
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Final Cal Shakes' Season Production Falls a Bit Short

Strong cast and direction of 'King Lear' offers a visually striking performance, but leaves one wanting

By Lou Fancher



From left: Kjerstine Rose Anderson as The Fool and Anthony Heald as Lear in California Shakespeare Theater's production of "King Lear," directed by Amanda Dehnert. Photo Kevin Berne

Given Cal Shakes' bold approach to Shakespeare's canon and the temptations of a versatile, endlessly plumbable cast to be comedic or tragic, the Orinda outdoor theater's final 2015 season production, "King Lear," chooses to be both. Director Amanda Dehnert's split treatment travels in two too disparate directions to be entirely successful,

but the peaks are certainly high enough for applause. A commanding, two-stories-high set – an enormous steel grid box like a Rubik's Cube with grimy, frosted glass pane windows – pivots, opens to reveal, closes to capture and masks the actors. Set designer Dan Ostling's well-used construction is balanced by designer Melissa Torchia's costumes, marvelously suggestive of past elegance, slick trickery, provocation and decay.

Perhaps Dehnert was as captivated by the precocious Cordelia as was King Lear, whose favor for his youngest daughter is his – and everyone's – undoing. Casting the same actor (an energetic Kjerstine Rose Anderson) as both Cordelia and as the Fool who whispers or sings dangerous ditties in the ear of Lear (a rock-steady, beautifully vulnerable Ashland Shakespeare Festival veteran Anthony Heald) is a misstep that brings mixed results. While there is reason to draw parallels between the spirited Cordelia and the sprightly Fool, doing so confuses the father/daughter relationship. More egregiously, the poignancy of their bond and the eventual tragedy of their lives is lightened by the two actors

having shared silly antics and slanted glances as the Fool and Lear.

Nevertheless, the unraveling of a man, his mind, and his power makes for compelling scenes including the play's opening. When Lear demands that his daughters profess their love to earn a portion of his empire, Cordelia's two older sisters, Goneril (cool, devilish Arwen Anderson) and Regan (smoldering El Beh) create an astutely-toned buildup for Cordelia's "I have nothing to say" declaration. Lear's favorite daughter loves him only dutifully, she teasingly tells the King, setting off an inferno that leads to her banishment and all manner of behavior that tears the family bonds to shreds.

Alliances break throughout the kingdom, with the most compelling moments the electrocution and eye-gouging of Gloucester (Charles Shaw Robinson) and every scene in which the Earl of Kent rants or raves his philosophies (a stunning performance from Aldo Billingslea) or Edmund (immeasurably watchable Daniel Clegg) displays his wickedness and avarice.

At times, there is so much talent raging on stage a viewer wants to

freeze the action, laugh or cry, then shout "carry on!" It makes for excitement, if not a sense of connectivity and overall flow.

Dehnert can clearly stretch the tension of love, lust, lost mental powers and sibling rivalry into fierce, snapping scenes that escalate in the play's ultimate explosions of a storm, torture, poisoning, and deaths. So it is a mysterious choice to undercut the journey to total tragedy with digressions including a Monty Python-style death of a servant (marvelous physicality from charismatic Patrick Alparone), Kent's pink mohawk that jarred and seemed nonsensical, and Cordelia's scampering as the Fool.

Ultimately, a strong cast and a director with broad capabilities proves this "King Lear" could be either comedic or tragic. Aiming in both directions and loaded with a courageous director, excellent cast and striking visuals, it impresses, but never quite arrives at either destination.

"King Lear" runs through Oct. 11 at Bruns Amphitheater, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way (formerly 100 Gateway Blvd.) in Orinda. For more information, visit calshakes.org.

Battle of the Bands is Back

Submitted by Patrick Brogan



2014 and 2013 Battle of the Bands winner Wild Guess. From left: Morgan Swanson, Alexa Heine, Mikey Deng and Niels Sorensen. Photo Jason Heine

Battle of the Bands at the Lafayette Library is back for its third annual performance. The teen event, which over 100 people attended last year, is set to take place from 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 7 in the library's Community Hall. Anyone aged 13-19 in the San Francisco Bay Area can audition, but only four bands will have the chance to grace the stage. Over \$200 in prizes will be

awarded as well as prizes from such sponsors as Red House Studios in Walnut Creek and local stores including Lamorinda Music, Campana Music and Mighty Fine Guitars. Radio station Live 105 will make a return appearance. Part of the grand prize includes being the opening band at a Red House Studios performance. There will also be raffle prizes and Walnut Creek-based food trucks,

Tonli Dumpling and United Bites. The judge lineup this year includes Alexa Heine, who is the lead singer of last year's winning band, Wild Guess, and local professional musicians Christopher Shirley, Jeff Kalmbach and Matthias. Email your audition video to pbrogan@ecclib.org by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18 for your chance to get out of the garage and finally on to the stage.

Zombies are Coming to Lesh

Submitted by Kenn Adams



Ben Weddell, left, is shocked to discover that his sweet, little sister Gretchen Salter, right, is really a blood-thirsty, brain-eating zombie in "Z is for ... Zombie: And Improvised Zombie Apocalypse!" Photo provided

Lafayette-based improv comedy company Synergy Theater is invading the Lesh Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek with its annual improvised horror spoof, "Z is for ...

Zombie: An Improvised Zombie Apocalypse!" at 8:15 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 16 and 17. "In Z is for ... Zombie," explains Synergy Theater's artistic director Kenn Adams, "some of the characters are regular townsfolk, and others are

shape-shifting zombies from space who have killed, eaten, and taken the form of their unsuspecting victims. When the story begins, nobody knows who is still human and who has been turned into a zombie – not even the cast! So, all through the show, the characters are trying to stay alive when, at any moment, the person they trust the most might suddenly go zombie and suck out their brains."

"It's really a kick," says longtime company member Lynn Shields, "because the cast and the audience are all playing the game at the same time: trying to figure out who's telling the truth and who's really a zombie."

"It's incredibly funny," adds Synergy veteran Ben Weddell. "It's part horror movie spoof, part improv comedy show, and part reality television. Who will be the last human improviser standing?"

Synergy Theater has a regular schedule of rotating improv comedy shows in Lafayette where they perform at Lamorinda Music on the third weekend of every month. Will they venture into Walnut Creek again? Well, you know those zombies. They're hard to keep down.

Tickets for "Z is for ... Zombie" are \$15 and can be purchased online at www.lesherartscenter.org or by phone at (925) 943-7469.

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Sparkling Like a Good Champagne

'The Mystery of Edwin Drood' at THT dazzles and delights

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Dennis Markam (Mr. William Cartwright/The Chairman), Michael Doppe (Neville Landless), John Blytt (Rev. Crisparkle) and Jennifer Weiner (Helena Landless), Melynda Kiring (Princess Puffer), Nicole Thordsen (Rosa Bud), Ted Zoldan (John Jasper), Alex Moore (Bazzard), Suzie Shepard (Edwin Drood) Photo Stu Selland

The most entertaining play of the season in Lafayette, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," is built upon a very serious foundation: the last Charles Dickens novel that was left unfinished due to his death on June 9, 1870. But as the book was incomplete, it gave Ruppert Holmes, playwright and songwriter, the idea to create an engaging musical that would involve audiences in deciding what really happened to Edwin Drood.

Lafayette's Town Hall Theatre Company has taken on the 1986 Broadway creation, which swept all of the Tony Awards that year. The 13 actors are led at a boisterous pace by master of ceremonies Dennis Markam, who is at the top of his game. The cast rehearsed 200 possible endings to the play and every night they deliver with gusto the conclusion chosen by their audience.

"I saw the show 11 years ago and found it to be much infectious fun," said THT artistic director Joel Roster, who directed Edwin Drood, "and I came back six times to see different endings."

The action is set as a play within a play. The audience is in the presence of the British theater company, "The Music Hall Royale," led by the Chairman (Dennis Markam) who introduces the actors to the audience as they are about to perform "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." This technique creates a distance around the main drama as well as comic effect,

underlining the artificial aspect of the play, while creating a connivance with the public who is asked from the start to participate in the presentation.

The humorous stage direction is served with flamboyance by the cast playing their 19th century characters, all with a bit of appropriate over dramatization. The bad guy is really bad, the mysterious one is quite disturbing, and the sweet girl could not be more naïve and vulnerable. There are many funny twists and turns, such as the actor Philippe Bax, played by Alex Moore, who is craving a bigger part, trying to attract attention and is finally given a song to sing supported by the entire cast of the Music Hall Royale.

Since the play is a musical, all the actors are professional singers – a special note to Melinda Kiring, who plays Princess Puffer, for her nice vibrato. The music interspersed throughout the play adds to the lightness of the evening, to the rhythm and choreography on stage.

The first act ends exactly where Dickens stopped the novel. Completely. The actors stop in the middle of their action and wonder where to go next. The second act is created by the audience.

Spectators go downstairs for the intermission, where they can indulge in the special cocktail created for the play and wonder what will come next. When they return to their seats, all the main characters are on stage

holding a number. Four of the actors go through the rows of spectators actively questioning them and tallying who people think is the culprit.

And the main characters discover who the culprit of the night is at the same time the audience does. Backstage the actors who took the poll count the results, and the only ones who know who was chosen are Durdles (played by Derek Travis Collard) who will announce it and conductor/pianist Margaret Halbig who will play different songs according to which character is chosen, says Roster. "When the culprit is announced on stage, the actors have no idea who was chosen. They have to immediately step into the chosen scenario." For an actor that is an incredible challenge, says Roster, but it is also a lot of fun.

The actors' enjoyment is contagious. They require a bit of improvisational talent, since audiences react differently each night. Roster relies on Markam's brilliance and improv talent to round out each night with panache.

The energetic and fast-paced play is a sure crowd pleaser for THT. "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" is the first production of the 71st season of the local theater and will run through Oct. 24. It will be followed by Mary Chase's "Harvey" for the holiday season. For information and tickets, visit www.townhalltheatre.com.

Short "Feud" for Lafayette Family

By Cathy Tyson



From left: Girlynda and Ed Gonzales, with their two daughters, Alexis (Lexi) and Isabella (Izzy), and goddaughter Cristine Dominguez Photo provided

What is one of America's longest running game shows, featuring two families competing to name the most popular responses to survey questions? One Lafayette family can tell you from personal experience.

Survey says? "Family Feud." The Gonzales family recently returned from taping two episodes of the game show with nothing but praise, and some prize money. Ed Gonzales said it was an "absolute blast and something we'll remember for the rest of our lives."

It takes some effort to be selected as contestants. The family applied for and received an audition in San Francisco. Apparently they were smart and perky enough,

because a postcard arrived later that announced they had made the cut. Next, the production company flew all five members of the family that were competing to Atlanta, Georgia, put them up at the Omni Hotel for three days, and drove them back and forth to the production studio.

"It was harder than we all thought," said Gonzales, acknowledging that they were exhausted by the end of the day.

They were at the studio from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. re-auditioning, participating with the studio audience and finally taping their two episodes against the Shellnutt Family of Alabama, which included State Senator Shay Shellnutt, as well as the Lovett

family of Georgia. For each half-hour program, the taping took approximately two hours, with enthusiastic host Steve Harvey.

Ultimately the Lafayette family won \$780, which represents \$5 per point they accumulated for correct answers to surveyed questions – a little shy of the maximum potential win of \$100,000 and a new car.

One question that clearly puzzled Ed Gonzales was, "What do a steak and a kiss have in common?" Being live TV, and encouraged to say something, he blurted out the only thing he could think of: "Family Feud."

The episodes will air on Oct. 12 and 13, at either 6 or 6:30 p.m. – check local listings for the channel.

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Community Service

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

Hill Branch Supports Family House and Children's Hospital

Submitted by Sara Whitfield



Hill Branch members tour UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland

Photo provided

The 2015 debutante class of Hill Branch – including Lamorinda locals Cate Barber, Rachel Cratsenburg, Linnea Engstrom, Erica Holland, Gabriella Kreutzelman, Kenyon Watson, Hannah Buck, Montana Dunn and Amanda Giles – in addition to their escorts and fathers were given a tour of UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland, which will be the recipient of funds raised from the Hill Branch Winter Ball.

UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland will break ground this month on major infrastructure improvements expanding the outpatient

zone along with upgrades and enhancements to surgery and intensive care units, setting a new level of excellence in pediatric care. The emergency room at Children's Hospital Oakland sees more kids each year than other ERs in the area combined. The hospital is one of only five ACS verified Level 1 Pediatric Trauma Centers in California dedicated exclusively to caring for children.

Family House is a low-cost "home away from home" for patient families who live more than 70 miles from the hospital. Most of the food, supplies and toys are generously do-

nated by the community. This year's debutantes, escorts and fathers donated over 56 boxes of toiletries, paper supplies and desserts and dinners to over 30 families who were guests at Family House the evening of their recent visit.

The Winter Ball – a celebratory and charitable Hill Branch event 58 years strong – will be held on Dec. 21 at the Westin St. Francis in San Francisco. For more information on Hill Branch and the Winter Ball, visit www.chohillbranch.com.

Bay Area Nonprofit Calls on the Community to Hike to End Homelessness

Submitted by Chris Flitter



Lafayette resident Ernie Vosti with his grandson, Ethan, at last year's Hike for Shelter event.

Photo provided

Nearly 120 people from the Lamorinda area, including more than 60 from St. Perpetua School alone, and hundreds of others are hoping to raise \$150,000 this year at the Sixth Annual Hike for Shelter event from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18, starting at the base of Mt. Diablo State Park at Macedo Ranch in Alamo. Presented by Lafayette-based Douglass Designs Inc., Hike for Shelter is a fundraising and awareness campaign open to all individuals, groups, and families of all fitness levels to benefit Shelter, Inc. The Martinez-based nonprofit prevents homelessness and promotes self-sufficiency among low-income and homeless residents through multiple services, such as case management, tutoring, employment services, finance management, parenting classes and life-skills training. Four hikes are available at varied levels of difficulty.

According to Shelter, Inc., the face of homelessness is changing. The nonprofit is seeing more adults, children and veterans struggling to meet basic needs, such as food, housing and safety. As the needs are growing, the availability of resources and services are declining due to budget cuts

and a slowly recovering economy.

"Last year was my first time participating in the Hike for Shelter and I had a wonderful time walking (and running) with my grandson, Ethan," said Lafayette resident Ernie Vosti. "The hike was very well organized from the registration process, to the trail markers, to the delicious catered lunch and program. I hiked last year because it looked like a fun outdoor activity with my grandchildren and I knew it supported a good cause. Since then I've had an opportunity to learn more about Shelter, Inc. and am currently a volunteer helping with their computers and I'm on the 2015 Hike Committee. I'm hiking this year because I want to support Shelter's mission to prevent homelessness by helping low-income families to stay in their homes. It is much more cost effective to keep families in their homes than to allow them to slip into the abyss of homelessness."

Individuals, families and teams can register at www.shelterhike.org. Registration fee is \$25 and there is a minimum fundraising goal of \$250 per adult and \$750 for 3-6 adults. Kids (under 18) are not required to fundraise.

Harvest Festival Helps Trinity Center

Submitted by Vicki Pappas



St. Anselm's parishioners John Powers, Marian Mulkey, and Liz Powers. John Powers is on the Trinity Center board of directors and was instrumental in the success of the fundraiser.

Photo provided

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church in Lafayette hosted its annual Harvest Festival Sept. 12, which raised over \$30,000 to benefit Trinity Center, Walnut Creek, one of the few programs for homeless adults in Contra Costa County that provides a safety net of basic human services including food, breakfast and hot lunch, showers and laundry, clothing, referral services, help with benefits, and more.

Participants included parishioners of St. Anselm's, St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Walnut Creek, and St.

Luke's Episcopal of Rossmoor. There was a live auction, a silent auction, a raffle and a live baseball pool, conducted while the San Francisco Giants pounded the Padres. Guests were so excited in their desire to help Trinity Center that some even bid on non-existent prizes in order to give more to the cause.

The St. Anselm's chairperson of the Harvest Festival, Marty Fischer, had this to say following the event: "What thrilled me as much as the grand total was the spiritual unity of

those who were there and the feeling of common purpose, almost joy at making contributions to a cause that we all were 100 percent behind. It was unlike any Harvest Festival that I've been to in my many years of going to such events. Our goal was to retain a social event that unified the congregation and raise a lot of money. We exceeded at both."

For information about Trinity Center, visit trinitycenterwc.org. For information about St. Anselm's, go to www.stanselms.ws.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

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

Painting with Thread

Learning the art of Japanese embroidery

By Sophie Braccini



Lynda Fu prepares her silk thread before starting to embroider.

Photos Sophie Braccini



Pansies embroidered by Fu

Japanese embroidery (nihon shishu in Japanese) is a millennium-old art that was first used to adorn sacred items and was intimately linked to the production of Japanese traditional dresses, robes, Noh and Kabuki costumes. A demanding discipline, it is practiced at the higher level by few embroiderers. One of them, Lynda Fu, lives and teaches in San Francisco. She will be teaching level 1 nihon shishu in Moraga, at BDK America, once a week for four weeks starting Oct. 23.

"Many of the themes come from traditional imagery, with specific use of forms and colors," says Fu. The patterns are largely inspired by nature: flowers, birds, plants, water or wind, but in a stylized, yet naturalistic way. "One of the things that makes Japanese embroidery unique is the fact that we use silk thread on a silk fabric."

Fu sits at the wooden frame where the silk fabric she will embroider is tightly stretched, about to begin with the first petal of a cherry blossom. She picks a single yellow thread of silk, holds it, pulls a second one and twists it. For this flower, the embroiderer twists three threads together that she passes through the eye of the needle; then she starts embroidering. Stitch after stitch, she adroitly covers the petal in silk, like a painter would with fine strokes of a brush. The small petal shows the distinctive notch of a cherry blossom, not to be confused with a round plum blossom.

The silk threads come in 500 different colors. The pattern, the season and the age group of the person who will use the finished product all come into consideration when choosing the right colors. The embroiderer also chooses the appropriate techniques to

be used. Japanese embroidery has 43 embroidering techniques, which vary in terms of thickness, bulge or dots that can be created. The different techniques allow for subtle and intricate imagery – a true art form.

Fu started embroidering over 30 years ago. "I always enjoyed handwork, and had tried western style embroidery, like trapunto, cross-stitch, crewel, but nothing really stuck with me," she said. "I had always been looking for something, and as soon as I saw Japanese embroidery I knew that's what I wanted to do."

Fu was attracted to the silk material and appreciated the natural designs tremendously. "Working with silk is working with the king of all fibers. The variety is amazing; it comes in strands made of 12 single cocoon threads put together. There is an infinite variety that comes with the silk from either splitting or twisting the strands together, depending on what is required by the design," she explains. It took her seven years to complete the 10 phases of the curriculum. The Japanese Kurenai Kai school of embroidery opened a branch in Atlanta where Fu was able to take advanced classes after the 10 phases of initial training, and she became a certified instructor of the Japanese embroidery center.

Phase 1 of the art will be taught from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during Fu's Friday classes in Moraga. Participants will be able to master the basic techniques and gain enough knowledge to finish their first piece on their own; Fu will provide support after the class, if needed. No prior embroidery experience is necessary, says Fu. "If someone wants to learn it, they will do it. You just have to have the desire," she says. "I have had a gentleman who had no experience and wanted to study. All he could do was sew a button. He has done fabulously." Fu says that in Japan men embroiderers are often more respected than women.

Since moving to Moraga at 1675 School Street, BDK has organized, in partnership with the town of Moraga, a meditation class and a class on the history of Japanese Buddhism, and is seeking other partners, such as Saint Mary's College, to be an active part of BDK's endeavors in the Lamorinda community. In January 2016 two other art and culture classes will be offered: Ikebana - Japanese flower arrangement; and discovering the Japanese way of tea. For information and to register for the embroidery class, visit bdkamerica.org.



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Lynn's Top Five Financial Planning Days 2015

By Lynn Ballou, CFP®

Each fall the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, in association with the Financial Planning Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Foundation for Financial Planning, holds an extraordinary event called Financial Planning Days. What started out with just one location in Oakland has now expanded to five venues in the Bay Area alone. In addition to Oakland, Silicon Valley and San Francisco, opportunities have opened up this year to expand the event into Alameda and Martinez. The first Financial Planning Day will be held in Oakland on Saturday, Oct. 10 at City Hall; the final day will be held in San Francisco on Saturday, Nov. 7 at the Public Library.

Here are the top five things you need to know about Financial Planning Days:

1) It's free! This is a fantastic chance for the public to meet one on one with a Certified Financial Planner professional or other qualified expert in their field to discuss any and all personal finance-related questions, free of charge. The event is staffed by vetted professionals who are vol-

unteering their time with no strings attached.

2) It's all about you. One of the founders of this event is the well-known Certified Financial Planner professional Frank Paré, who feels that it's very important for the public to know that "we will have financial planners there who are experts in helping people plan versus focusing on a product as a solution. In addition, if attendees receive advice from a planner-expert and they want a second or third opinion, they can get it right there the same day."

3) Making financial planning fun and safe. Marco Chavarin, vice president of development for Consumer Credit Counseling Service of San Francisco, has participated in and helped run SF's Financial Planning Days since its inception. His organization provides support and practical ideas for attendees. He offers the following: "When most people think about financial planning, they don't think it applies to them and unfortunately the norm is for people to take the ostrich approach and just bury their heads in the sand. Our planners are fantastic at what they do and really

care – we're trying to normalize financial planning." Chavarin points out that exit interviews over the years with attendees have shown that participants definitely "walk out happy with the service and tools they gained."

4) Helpful one-of-a-kind workshops. In addition to one-on-one private consultations, also included are a variety of classroom workshops on topics that range from budgeting to estate planning. And at some venues consumer counselors are on hand to assist those who need specialized help. While walk-ins are welcome for one-on-one counseling, you should absolutely sign up in advance for the workshops as they fill up quickly and might be full by the day of the event (see link below).

5) Why go? "Because you don't know, what you don't know!" as this year's chairwoman of Financial Planning Days in San Francisco, Jennifer Hicks, CFP®, points out. She offers the following motivational advice: "Professionals exist because each of us have our specialties, and it is impossible to know everything about everything! I

don't know what I don't know about cars ... so I go to a mechanic. I don't know what I don't know about being sick ... so I go to a doctor. You don't know what you don't know about financial planning ... so come see a financial planner at Financial Planning Day!"

6) How do you prepare and how do you participate? Visit <http://financialplanningdays.org> for the information you need to sign up for the event most convenient to you. Once you have signed up you will receive further links to worksheets to help you prepare. As a volunteer over the years, I recommend you bring a current budget, details about your current sources of income, a list of your assets and any debt details, and a recent tax return to refer to. But most important: bring a list of your questions and any supporting documents you think might be helpful to review with a planner.

I have really enjoyed volunteering at this event and all volunteers I've worked with over the years feel the same and find this to be one of the most rewarding experiences of our careers. I en-

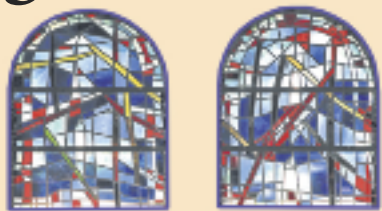
courage you to share the link to this extraordinary opportunity with any friends, colleagues or family members you feel could benefit. Hope to see you there! Happy Financial Planning Days!



Lynn Ballou is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional 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). The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and not intended to provide specific advice or recommendation for any individual. Financial Planning offered through Ballou Plum Wealth Advisors, A Registered Investment Advisor and a separate entity. Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC.

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Lamorinda's Religious Services



The Orinda Community Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org

"No matter who you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"

Join us Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School 10:00 a.m

Lafayette United Methodist Church



955 Moraga Rd., Lafayette

284-4765, office@thelumc.org, thelumc.org

Worship	Sunday	10 am
Children & Teen Faith Formation	Sunday	10 am
Teen Fellowship	Sunday	6 pm

Opportunities for Worship, Love, Service



St Stephen's Episcopal Church

66 St. Stephen's Drive, Orinda
254-3770. www.ststephensorinda.org
Sunday 8am, 10am

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church A Loving Community

Sunday Services: 8 and 10 AM

In-church Youth Zone, 10 AM Nursery Childcare
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws



► SUNDAY Worship, 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 AM, with programs for all ages.

► SEEDLINGS Preschool, M-F

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mvpc

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10 Moraga Valley Lane | www.mvpc.today.org | 925.376.4800

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Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm
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www.christianscienceorinda.org

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10:15am Pre-Service Fellowship (Free Coffee & Bagels)
10:45am Contemporary Worship Service

Wednesdays: 10:00am Community Bible Study
1689 School Street, Moraga (925) 376-3550
www.willow.springchurch.net

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church 433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422 www.holyshepherd.org



8:30 a.m. Traditions Worship Service
9:45 a.m. Education for all ages
10:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service
Coffee Fellowship at 9:30 and 11:45 a.m.
Childcare available for ages 5 and younger

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ART

Columbus Day Weekend LAA Art Show and Sale from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10 at the Lafayette Christian Church, just off St. Mary's Road at 584 Glenside Drive. Eighteen LAA members will display recently completed works, including ceramics, jewelry, glass art and photography.

About Face - The Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County is offering two-day self-portrait painting workshops at no cost to all Contra Costa County veterans. Workshops will take place in Martinez at ARTU4iA, a working art studio led by noted artist John Kleber. No art experience required. All painting materials will be provided. Workshops are from 6 to 9 p.m. on Oct. 20, 22, 27 and 29 and November 3, 5, 17 and 19. Free food and beverages will be provided. Class size will be held up to 15 participants. Register online at AC5.org/ABOUTFACE.

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art presents "A Fine Line - The Dr. Maurice Alberti Print Collection of European and American Masters." The show opens Sunday, Oct. 4. The collection consists of master works on paper by leading Impressionists, Expressionists, Fauvists and Cubists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For info, call (925) 631-4363 or visit stmarys-ca.edu/museum.

Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery presents "Through the Eyes of Masters: Artist Julie Cohn Lectures on Matisse, the artist and his life" from 7 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 8. Free.

Valley Art Gallery's "Colorfall" exhibit runs through Nov. 7. Fall is the most colorful time of the year, with russets and siennas joining the greens and golds of summer. Valley Art Gallery celebrates this expanded palette with its new show, and a juried selection of new work from a talented group of local members.

MUSIC

The Piano Composers of The Contra Costa Performing Arts Society is presenting its first musical event of the new season at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Family and friends of all ages can enjoy the variety of musical styles each musician/composer brings to the performance, eliciting the full breadth of sounds from the excellent Steinway grand. Free. For info, visit www.ccpas.org.

The OSLC Concert Series presents organist David Auerbach in "At the Round Earth's Imagined Corners," a recital contrasting music of England, France, Germany and the United States at 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane in Lafayette. Free; freewill offering. For info, visit www.oslc.net.

The Gold Coast Chamber Players perform the music of Mozart and Mendelssohn in Prodiges. The concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Ticket price includes complimentary champagne, a pre-concert talk at 7 p.m., and a reception with the musicians following the performance. Tickets are available at www.gcplayers.org and by phone at (925) 283-3728. Limited seating, please reserve early.

THEATER

Cal Shakes presents "King Lear," which runs through Oct. 11 at Bruns Amphitheater, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way (formerly 100 Gateway Blvd.) in Orinda. For more information, visit calshakes.org. (See story page B4)

Town Hall Theatre presents "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" by Rupert Holmes through Oct. 24. Taking place at the turn of the century in a bawdy music hall, a group of actors decide to attempt the unthinkable - to solve, resolve and conclude Charles Dickens' unfinished masterpiece, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." With the audience deciding several outcomes every

evening (resulting in over 200 different combinations of endings), "Drood" is fast, incredibly funny ... and never the same show twice. Rated PG-13 for bawdy humor and adult situations. Contact the Town Hall Theatre Box Office at (925) 283-1557 or check the website at www.TownHallTheatre.com for show times and tickets. (See story page B5)

LECTURE & LITERATURE

Lafayette Physical Therapy Lecture Series will feature Michele Duffy BTB, M.F.S., who will discuss Feng Shui and Wellness from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 29 at 3468 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite B110 in Lafayette. For info, visit http://lafayettept.com/events/.

"The Gift of Failure - Fostering Intrinsic Motivation and Resilience in Kids" at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 8 at the Acalanes Performing Arts Center. Jessica Lahey writes for the New York Times and the Atlantic about parent and student issues. She shares the message that failure is vital to success, and shows parents how to offer support even as they encourage autonomy. For tickets, go to jessicalahey.eventbrite.com.

The Elfenworks Center for Responsible Business at Saint Mary's College invites the public to hear the perspectives of Dr. Carolyn Y. Woo, president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services. Dr. Woo will offer insights into Pope Francis' encyclical and the role of business in advancing the common good at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14 in Hagerty Lounge, De La Salle Hall, at Saint Mary's College. Free and open to the public (RSVP required, register online at http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/business-and-the-common-good-featuring-carolyn-woo-president-ceo-of-catholic-relief-services). For info, contact professor Tomas Gomez Arias, (925) 631-4928, tgomez@stmarys-ca.edu.

Trust in Education will sponsor a presentation by Royal Marine Sergeant Pen Farthing, founder of Nowzad Dogs (nowzad.org) from 7 to 9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16 at the Lafayette Library and Community Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Farthing, the author of "One Dog at a Time," "Wiley," and "No Place Like Home," will speak at the Lafayette Library about the difficulties and rewards of rescuing animals in Afghanistan, a country where dogs are not considered "man's best friend," and the Taliban remains a serious threat.

Ensuring Quality Higher Education for our Children: The Impact of Funding Cuts - A presentation and discussion with Joan Buchanan about funding for higher education in California sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17 in the Meeting Room at Pleasant Hill Co-Housing 2200 Lisa Lane, Pleasant Hill. Free.

Lecture at the Orinda Library by Dora Sorell, author of "Tell the Children, Letters to Miriam," at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 22 in the auditorium. Free. For info, visit http://www.letterstomygrandchildren.com/ or contact the library at (925) 254-2184. (See story page B3)

Berkeley Repertory Theatre docent lecture at the Moraga Library at 1 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 22. Enjoy an entertaining afternoon with a Berkeley Repertory Theatre docent who will discuss The Hypocrites' Pirates of Penzance.

Rising Above - Overcoming Obstacles In Spite of Adversity from 7 to 8 p.m. Monday, Oct. 26 at Stanley Middle School in the Multi-Purpose Room. Stephen Wampler grew up in Lafayette with his four siblings. This longtime resident of Lafayette, and graduate of Acalanes High School, returns to the Lamorinda community to tell his amazing story of grit, steel will and sheer guts as he climbed the face of El Capitan in Yosemite with the use of only one limb, his right arm. To reserve your seat to this event, please go to: signuppenguin.com/go/30E0F4CA5A8238-district.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Ponies and Pumpkins in the Pasture 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18 at 423 Canyon Rd., Moraga. Join the Moraga Horsemen's Association to purchase a pumpkin, then decorate it in the craft booth. Or decorate a horseshoe. Then participate in a costume contest (for kids, dogs and horses) and have some delicious Tri Tip sandwiches for lunch and help taste-test the club's pumpkin dessert contestants. For more information and a schedule of events visit www.moragahorsemen.org.

4th Annual Fall Harvest Celebration 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18 at the Lafayette Community Garden and Outdoor Learning located at 3932 Mt. Diablo Blvd. There will be garden tours, games, displays, refreshments, music, raffle, Native American dwelling and artifacts, scarecrow and apple doll making. Free. For more info, visit www.lafayettecommunitygarden.org.

Join the Lafayette Library and Learning Center for its Children's Book Festival, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall when five well known, award-winning authors and illustrators will sign books and demonstrate illustration techniques: Jennifer Choldenko, Thacher Hurd, Jordan Jacobs, Elisa Kleven and Michael Slack. Free.

Lafayette Reservoir Run from 6:30 to 11 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 25 in downtown Lafayette. In addition to the 5k, 10k and 2-mile run, there will be a family bike ride and Healthy Lifestyles Fair. For more info and to register visit www.lafayettechamber.org/events/reservoir-run/.

Trick or Treat Street: For a fun, safe Halloween event, children and their parents are invited to trick-or-treat on Mt. Diablo Boulevard from Oak Hill Road to Dewing Avenue and in La Fiesta Square from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30. All participating businesses will display a "Trick-or-Treat Poster" and balloons. Please come in costume to receive a special treat. Don't forget to bring a trick-or-treat bag.

This fall Lindsay Wildlife Experience will be leading hikes in Mount Diablo State Park to explore the natural habitat of tarantulas. Discover these eight-legged creatures on a local two-mile hike recommended for nature lovers ages 6 and up. Tarantula Hikes take place from 4 to 6 p.m. every Sunday through Oct. 25. The hike costs \$10 for Lindsay members and \$15 for all non-members. Pre-registration is required.

OTHER

Women Unleashed from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 8 at Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) 2890 Mitchell Drive, Walnut Creek. You deserve a Girls Night at ARF surrounded by precious pups and cute cats. Enjoy complimentary soda, wine, martinis and appetizers while you shop for clothing, accessories, beauty products, and more. Relax with a mini massage, watch demonstrations, and tour ARF. Cost: \$25 per person. Must be 16 years or older. For info, visit https://www.arflife.org/arfevents/439/women-unleashed.

Burton Valley Elementary School PTA Sponsored Blood and Bone Marrow Drive from 8:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9 in the Multi-Purpose Room, 561 Merriewood Dr., Lafayette. If you have questions regarding your eligibility to donate blood, please call 1-866-236-3276.

"East Side Sushi" director **Anthony Lucero**, producer Julie Rubio (J Colleen Boutique in Lafayette), and few cast and crew, will be participating in a Q&A at the Orinda Theatre Oct. 9 directly after the 7 p.m. screening of the movie. This special screening will begin at least a week-long run of this independent film at the Orinda Theatre. "East Side Sushi" tells the story of a young Oakland Latina chef who dreams of becoming a sushi chef. For info, visit lamorindatheatres.com.

... continued on next page

MOVIE REVIEW

'The Martian'

By Derek Zemrak

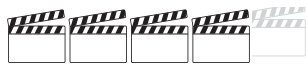


Photo courtesy 20th Century Fox all rights reserved

The Martian is a true "Real Hollywood Story" that has a great back story. Bay Area resident, writer Andy Wier, began working as a computer programmer at the age of 15 at Sandia National Laboratories in Livermore. He

originally started "The Martian" as a free serial on his website. The popularity of "The Martian" grew and Wier made the decision to make the novel available on Amazon Kindle for a fee of 99 cents. It quickly rocketed to the Kindle's bestseller

list. Crown Publishing Group came knocking and published the book, which quickly jumped to number 12 on the New York Times Best Seller's List.

What does that mean? Hollywood was next and the movie rights were sold.

"The Martian" is directed by three-time Oscar nominee Ridley Scott ("Black Hawk Down," "Gladiator," "Thelma & Louise" and "Alien"). It is Scott's best SciFi film since "Alien" and possibly his greatest film ever. The movie has a stellar cast which includes: Oscar recipient Matt Damon ("Good Will Hunting"), two-time Oscar nominee Jessica Chastain ("Zero Dark Thirty," "The Help"), Oscar nominee Kristen Wiig, four-time Golden Globe nominee Jeff Daniels ("The Squid and the Whale," "Something Wild") and the very talented actor Michael Pena ("Ant-Man," "American Hustle").

The story begins with the top NASA

crew on Mars. When a violent storm erupts, the crew must make an emergency departure from the planet. One crewmember, astronaut Mark Watney (Matt Damon), is presumed dead and left behind on Mars. Watney must call upon all his scientific knowledge to stay alive and find a way to inform NASA on Earth that he is still alive.

"The Martian" is thrilling, intense, thought provoking and it will keep you on the edge of your seat. The wit of Damon's character will assist in breaking down the occasional scientific theory in the movie. The cinematography is amazing. I am sure "The Martian" will be receiving several awards come award season.

"The Martian" is rated PG-13 for some strong language, injury images and brief nudity, with a TRT (Total Running Time) of 2 hours and 21 minutes. A must see on the big screen.

Not to be missed

OTHER ... continued

Art of Mixology Cocktail Competition and Tasting from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10 at Orinda Theatre Square. Competitors will serve up their signature cocktails to a distinguished panel of judges as they vie for the title of Mixologist of the Year, and a \$500 cash prize and trophy. Tasting tickets for adults 21 years of age and older are \$45. For more information about the Art of Mixology craft cocktail competition, to enter and to purchase tickets, go to <http://www.lamorindaarts.org/mixology>.

Brighten your October days with a new kitten or cat. Meet the adorable adoptables at Community Concern for Cats weekend showing from 1 to 4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 10 and 11 at Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, and Petco in Walnut Creek. For more information see www.communityconcernforcats.org.

The Campo Girls Water Polo team is hosting a garage sale fundraiser from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10 at 881 Camino Ricardo in Moraga to earn money to purchase field markers for the Soda Center pool. Treasures from 30-plus families will be for sale, including clothing, toys, electronics, housewares, tools, and more. Homemade baked goods will also be for sale.

Volunteers needed to prune the Fire Blight - damaged branches from the 102-year-old pear orchard adjacent to Joaquin Moraga School in Moraga (1000 Camino Pablo at Canyon) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each Saturday in October. Bring pole pruners, loppers and hand pruners, water, gloves, hat and sunscreen. Wear sturdy shoes. Reply to barbarampreston@comcast.net with which day and number of adults and kids (ages) and what tools you will bring.

Blessing of the Animals - 11 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 11 at 451 Moraga Way in Orinda. Come celebrate the Feast of St. Francis with us at St. Mark's United Methodist Church to bless our animal friends. Enjoy singing, praising, puppets, poetry, and fun. Bring your animal friends on leash or in a crate. A pot luck lunch and treats will be served after the service. For more info, email stmarksumc@stmarksumcorinda.org.

Saint Mary's College Guild presents Italian Night at 6 p.m. on Oct. 11 in the Soda Center. Live Italian music and food will be offered. \$35 per person. Make checks payable to Saint Mary's College Guild, 628 Augusta Drive, Moraga, 94556, or call Cynthia Kelly at (925) 388-0437.

Borderland hip-hop at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Lafayette from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 11 at 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. The service will include reflections from Sandhya Rani Jha of the Oakland Peace Center, live hip-hop, interactive poetry

stations for kids, and poetic readings. For info, call (925) 283-3722 or visit www.oslc.net.

The Stroke Support Group of Contra Costa County will hold its October meeting from 7 to 9 p.m. Monday, Oct. 12 in the Concord I Room at John Muir Medical Center - Concord Campus, (2540 East Street, Concord.) The speaker will be Maureen DeGarmo, who will discuss "Reorganize your life after a Trauma." For further information about the Stroke Support Group, contact Ann Dzuna at (925) 376-6218. Free.

Gather with friends, neighbors and peers to watch the Frontline documentary, "Being Mortal," from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13 at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church - Fellowship Hall, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. The film explores what matters most to patients and families experiencing serious illness. Register at: www.lamorindavillage.org/calendar.

Guided Meditation provided at 9 a.m. every Wednesday at St. Mark's United Methodist Church 451 Moraga Way, Orinda with a focus on health, healing, harmony, and wholeness. For info, call (925) 254-5965.

Uncharted - 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Oct. 16 and 17 in Downtown Berkeley's historic Arts District (2025 Addison Street, Berkeley.) Uncharted was founded in 2013 as the Bay Area's first ideas festival. It brings together some of the world's great thinkers, designed to engage and inspire. It's an interactive, eye-opening two days of discussion, debate, workshops, and good food, beer and wine. For more info, visit: <http://www.berkeleyideas.com/about/>.

The Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (OML) Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) will feature Ellen Tauscher, the U.S. Representative for California's 10th congressional district from 1997-2009, on Tuesday Oct. 20 at the Holy Trinity Serbian Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga. Coffee will be served at 9 a.m. For membership information, visit <http://oml-ca.aauw.net>.

What is human trafficking? Why should we care? What can we do? Join a presentation from Soroptimist International, "Look Beneath the Surface," at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 21 at St. John Vianney Church, Mullen Commons, 1650 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. For more info, go to www.soroptimist24-680.org.

Women's Spiral Dance - A Multi-Cultural Celebration of Our Beloved Ancestors and Crones from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 23 at the Orinda Masonic Temple, 9 Altarinda Road. Daughters of the Goddess Womyn's Temple welcomes women and girls of all ages to its annual Spiral Dance. During this multi-cultural ritual, led by Kahuna Leilani, and accompanied by spiritual elders of

Not to be missed

different traditions, we come together to honor and celebrate our loved ones who have passed away. Tickets: \$23 in advance; \$29 at the door. For tickets or info, contact Leilani at (925) 787-9247 or Leilani@DaughtersoftheGoddess.com.

The Contra Costa Women's Commission in partnership with JFK University's Entrepreneurial Leadership Center will present a dynamic panel discussion on how to become a successful entrepreneur from 5 to 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 28 at 2151 Salvio Street, Ste. 350 in Concord. Five women entrepreneur's from various fields will share their personal insights gained along the way and highlight how they became successful. For more info, or to make a reservation, go to www.womenscommission.com.

It's Medicare Open Enrollment time. Do you have questions about your Medicare plan for 2016? This is the time to understand your coverage. Contra Costa Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) will be at the Moraga Library at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 3 to talk about what's new with Medicare for 2016 and how to optimize your coverage. For more info, visit www.cchicap.org or call (925) 602-4163.

SENIORS

Sons In Retirement - Las Trampas Branch 116 welcomes guest to socialize at its monthly luncheon beginning at 11 a.m. Monday, Oct. 19 at the Walnut Creek Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive. Leigh Kjeldsen, Au.D. audiologist, with Valley Audiology, will present information regarding hearing loss, causes and remedies. She will also touch on the latest in hearing and balance research. Please call (925) 322-1160 to make lunch reservations. Cost for lunch: \$15.

GARDEN

Lafayette Garden Club meeting and program at 10 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 8. Oktoberfest and tour of the Master Gardeners' "Our Garden," led by master gardeners Janet Miller and Helen Erickson at North Wiget Lane and Shadelands Dr., Walnut Creek. Anyone interested in attending, please email Carolyn Poetzsch cpoetzsch@gmail.com.

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will hold its general meeting at 9:30 a.m. Monday, Oct. 12 at the Gardens at Heather Farm located at 1540 Marchbanks Road in Walnut Creek. The program topic is "Keeping Your Garden Habitat Friendly in the Drought." You do not need to be a gardener to join the WCGC. For more info, email mslittle44@gmail.com.

The Moraga Garden Club meeting will be held at the Holy Trinity Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga, at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 15. Guest speaker will be Jill Appenzeller, author of "Postcards from the Hedge," who will give a presentation on "Year

Not to be missed

Round Color--Flowers Can Be Fleeting." Interested parties are welcome for the 9:30 a.m. social time, marketplace table and meeting at 10 a.m.

Montelindo Garden Club will meet at 9 a.m. Friday, Oct. 16 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. Visitors welcome. Topic: Water Wisdom - Drip by Drip by speaker Roxy Wolosenko, landscape designer and owner of Roxy Designs, Moraga. For info, visit www.montelindogarden.com.

Master Gardeners present Pruning Basics from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Oct. 28 at the Moraga Library. UC Master Gardener Lorraine Frey will share the basics of healthy pruning practices for your trees, shrubs and roses: why to prune, what tools to use, how to prune, when to prune and what to prune. The focus will be on what you should be pruning late fall through early spring.

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

Service Clubs Announcements

Explore Lamorinda Rotary clubs The heart of Rotary is our clubs--dedicated people who share a passion for both community service and friendship. Learn about Lamorinda's Rotary clubs.

A global volunteer organization working to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.

Please join us at our new location
THE LAFAYETTE PARK HOTEL
on Friday mornings at 7am.
For more info, please email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com

October 9:

District Governor Ken Courville will update us on the District 5160's achievements and goals for this year!

October 16:

Robineve Cole will present the sensible principles of Universal Design to make your home "user friendly" for all ages.

Look for an upcoming Cold Weather Coat and Clothing Drive to help members of Monument Crisis Center. There will be donation drop-off locations in Lamorinda on November 6 and 7.

Lamorinda Weekly

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Light and Airy Apple Sharlotka Perfect for Fall

By Susie Iventosch



Apple Sharlotka

Photo Susie Iventosch

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, www.amazon.com, and www.taxbites.net. Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com.

This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.



Never in my entire life had I heard of "Apple Sharlotka," until my cooking buddy, Jeff, sent me his recipe for such a dessert. Apparently, it is a very common Russian sweet, and according to RussianFood.com, it is the most popular Russian sweet cake. We sometimes call it Apple Charlotte in the United States, and the Russian version is traditionally made to celebrate the apple harvest.

It is very light, moist and super easy to make, and even though most recipes I have now reviewed call for tart apples, doused in lemon juice, I much prefer it with a sweeter apple and no lemon juice added, because it is fairly tart all on its own.

The beauty of this dessert is in its simplicity and light airy texture. And, since apple season is here, it is a great time to give this one a try. Because it is so light, it would make a fabulous dessert for Thanksgiving when no one wants anything too rich after eating a turkey dinner with all of the trimmings.

The original recipe my friend sent called for baking this Sharlotka in an 8-inch spring form pan, but now I have also made it in a 9-inch square pan as well as a 9-inch pie dish, and it came out just as well each time!

INGREDIENTS

3-4 Honey Crisp apples
 ¼ cup brown sugar (for apples)
 3 large eggs
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1 cup brown sugar, divided for egg mixture and sprinkling on top of cake before baking
 ½ teaspoon cinnamon
 ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
 ¼ teaspoon cardamom
 Pinch of salt
 7/8 cup all-purpose flour
 ¼ cup powdered sugar, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Peel, core and slice apples. Place in a bowl and sprinkle with 2 tablespoons brown sugar. Allow to sit for about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, place eggs in a large mixing bowl along with vanilla and ¾ cup brown sugar. Beat on the high speed of electric beater, until thick, pale yellow and ribbons form. Fold in spices, salt and flour and mix well. Place apples in the bottom of a sprayed or greased 9-inch pie dish, or an 8-inch spring form pan. Spoon batter over the top, smoothing out as much as possible with a rubber spatula. Sprinkle remaining ¼ cup brown sugar evenly over the top of the batter. Bake at 350 F for approximately 40 minutes, or until top is golden-brown and begins to crack and a tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven, cool, and dust with powdered sugar. Serve warm or cold with a dollop of whipped cream spiced with a little bit of vanilla and powdered sugar. To make it more decadent, lightly drizzle your favorite caramel sauce or maple syrup over the top.

Day Trippin'

If You Fancy Fine Dining, Wines and More, Head to Healdsburg

By Fran Miller



Healdsburg's luxurious Hotel Les Mars is the perfect spot to end a day of sightseeing. Photos Fran Miller

Placing second on Smithsonian Magazine's 2014 list of America's Top 20 Small Towns, Healdsburg is the epitome of charm. With its central tree-shaded plaza, 'conscientious' cuisine, abundance of wineries, boutiques and galleries, visitors typically find more activities of interest than can be packed into a day, or even an overnight stay.

Central to the town's appeal is Healdsburg Plaza. Named by Travel & Leisure Magazine as one of America's most beautiful town squares, the plaza has through the years retained its importance as a central gathering spot since it was established in the 1850s. While the plaza remains largely unchanged, surrounding retail has evolved over the decades.

Gone are the hardware and feed stores from long ago, and the overall-clad farmers who frequented them. But the agricultural essence of the area remains and is found in the offerings of the area's artisan food purveyors and restaurateurs... places such as SHED, a market and eatery desiring to bring us closer to the foods we eat. Featuring a café, a pantry stocked with kitchen basics, and outdoor wood-fired grilled items on the weekend, SHED, at 25 North Street is a lively, communal gathering spot.

Every corner features a restaurant better than the next. Newcomer Valette serves creative dishes in its historic location at 344 Center Street. The realization of a dream for hometown brothers Chef Dustin Valette and Aaron Garzini, Valette is located in a building once owned by Valette's great grandfather. Chef Valette brings to his new restaurant the strong relationships with local

farmers and purveyors that he cultivated for six years as executive chef of Dry Creek Kitchen, just across the plaza.

Valette's interior features reclaimed wood tables, a spectacular redwood bar fashioned from a 300-year-old felled tree, and a scene-stealing custom-made charcuterie locker made by a third brother. Try the "Trust Me" portion of the Valette menu, and Chef Valette will surprise and delight you with creative selections from his eclectic menu. Our six courses with wine pairings enjoyed within an ambiance of warmth and soul ensured an unforgettable restaurant experience.

For more informal fare, consider Pizzardo, headed by Chef Louis Maldonado of Spoonbar fame. Guests may recognize Maldonado from his 2014 appearance on "Top Chef" where he wowed judges with his mastery of wood fire cooking, a technique that takes center stage at Pizzardo. Try his pizza, cooked to perfection with blistered edges surrounding the freshest seasonal ingredients. Pizzardo is located at 301 Healdsburg Ave., off the plaza.

Treasure hunters will love the 22 galleries and 50 boutiques in town – places such as Studio Bamdiva at 237 Center Street, a sensory-overload art gallery and bar. The large space features wire art, paintings, sculptures and eclectic one-of-a-kind collectibles.

Skip a few streets over to 30 Mill Street to quench your thirst at Sonoma Cider, handcrafted organic ciders produced from freshly squeezed organic apples by locals David Cordtz and his son Robert. Limited tastings are by appointment only. Email info@sonomacider.com to schedule.

The Plaza area has become a wine-lover's paradise with wine-tasting rooms and lounges at every turn – two per block to be exact, a limitation decreed by City Hall. La Crema, Banshee, Kendall Jackson, Thumbprint Cellars, and Ferrari-Carano are just a few of the many within walking distance.

For those desiring a sip straight from the source, visit one or more of the many wineries in the four celebrated Sonoma County wine regions nearby: Alexander Valley, Russian River Valley, Dry Creek Valley, or Chalk Hill, home of Chalk Hill Winery, owned by proprietor Bill Foley who also owns Healdsburg's luxurious 16-room Hotel Les Mars and its restaurant, Chalkboard, at 27 North Street.

Guests at Hotel Les Mars are provided access to other Foley-owned wineries, such as Roth and Lancaster. Hotel Les Mars' staff will effortlessly plan the perfect wine-centric day, including tours, tastings and a picnic lunch, followed by dinner back at Chalkboard with Chef Shane McAnelly, formerly of Va de Vi.

As one of only 520 Relais and Chateaux hotels and restaurants worldwide, Hotel Les Mars is all about service: room-delivered continental breakfast, afternoon wine and cheese, a half bottle of champagne at check-in. But the sumptuous interior is itself a draw. Furnished with stately French antiques, Carrara marble bathrooms, and hand-carved canopy beds enveloped in lush linens, Hotel Les Mars is the perfect spot to end your day or

weekend of wining, dining and sightseeing.

Charm, luxury, artisan foods, world-class wines and treasures galore – Healdsburg has it all.



Hometown brothers Dustin Valette and Aaron Garzini have realized their dream with restaurant Valette, housed in a building once owned by Valette's great grandfather.



The eclectic Gallery Bamdiva features one-of-a-kind treasures, and a very cool corner bar.



SHED is a farm-centric communal gathering spot featuring home goods, artisan grocery items, a coffee bar and restaurant.

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Football: Unbeaten Streaks Loom Large as DFAL Play Begins

By Karl Buscheck and Spencer Silva



Tim Tague Max Flower Nicholas Price Photos Gint Federas

Miramonte (6-0 overall, 2-0 DFAL)

The Miramonte football team isn't just racking up wins. The Mats are flat-out pummeling the opposition, scoring at least 40 points in each of the squad's first six contests.

For the early DFAL co-leaders, the success begins with junior quarterback Tim Tague, who has already aired out 23 touchdowns.

"Tag's doing a great job of making throws, reading defenses – just taking whatever any defense gives us," head coach Jack Schram said of the signal-caller, who has led the team to a 6-0 mark overall and a 2-0 record in league play.

Schram credits the growth and development of the offensive line for giving Tague the time to make all those plays and find all those open targets.

"The line – that was our big question," Schram said. "We have the best skilled athletes in the area. So, we thought if our line gels, we're going to be very, very good this year. And our line has done a fantastic job."

The team's wide receivers and running backs have also done a fantastic job. Senior Sutter Lindberg headlines the receiving corps, as he's hauled in 816 yards and seven touchdowns. Senior Clayton Stehr highlights the running game, rumbling for 478 yards and 11 scores.

The real danger of the offense is that Mats don't just rely on those stars, but rather have an array of weapons to chose from.

"We've got so many [options]," Schram said. "We've got a full set on the bench that we could bring in. So, we're very deep at skilled athletes."

That assortment of talent has been causing nightmares for opposing coaches all season.

"You can't simulate us," Schram said. "We're very athletic. It's very hard for a defensive coordinator [to game plan against us]."

As the DFAL schedule ramps up, the Mats have just one objective in mind.

"Oh, the goal is to win every game – just keep winning," Schram said.

To make that happen, Schram knows that the team can't afford to look too far out ahead on the horizon.

"It's not about saying who are we going to play Week 16 in the North-South Championship Bowl Game," Schram said. "It's about saying who are we going to play next week?"

There are plenty of tests looming in the upcoming weeks, as the Mats are slated to take on Dougherty Valley (5-1 overall, 1-1 in DFAL) on Oct. 9 before playing rivalry games against Acalanes (2-3 overall, 1-0 in DFAL) and Campolindo (5-1 overall, 2-0 in DFAL) to close out the month.

That road clash with Campolindo will be especially daunting, as the Cougars won the CIF Division III State title a season ago. But for now, the focus is on next week and nothing else.

"For us, it's all about preparing for Dougherty Valley," Schram said.

Campolindo (5-1 overall, 2-0 DFAL)

After winning the Division III state title in 2014, the Campolindo Cougars knew a giant target would be draped across their backs this fall. Even still, head coach Kevin Macy is surprised by the amount of animosity his team has faced in the early season. And it's not going away anytime soon.

"I always tell them – this year's team pays the mortgage on last year's success," Macy said. "Teams are waiting in line for a chance to dance on our grave."

Despite losing an enormous amount of talent, the Cougars challenged themselves with a daunting preseason schedule, chock full of Division I opponents like Hayward, St. Ignatius, Deer Valley and Napa. Each team was undefeated before its matchup with the Cougars.

They beat Hayward, St. Ignatius and Deer Valley, but lost to Napa 21-7; it was the team's first loss since Nov. 29, 2013.

After the game, a reporter approached Macy, reeling off the various streaks that had come to an end with the loss. His response, "No, no. It's okay."

For Macy, a loss this season seemed inevitable. In fact,

he went further, "it served a purpose."

The team now enters DFAL play with 26 consecutive league wins in tow. Over the last two weeks, they beat Dublin 14-10 and Dougherty Valley 41-0.

Handing Dougherty Valley its first loss, in convincing fashion, was a "desperately needed chance to take a breath."

Junior quarterback Jacob Westphal, who was already passed for 1,192 yards and 10 touchdowns, has developed chemistry with his veteran receiving corps in seniors Max Flower and Madison Young, who have combined for 715 all-purpose yards and six touchdowns.

Early in the season, Westphal, a first-year starter, bore a lot of weight with a running game that was sorting itself out. However, in recent weeks, running the ball has been one of the team's strengths.

They employ a thunder and lightning-type approach featuring senior Jack Cassidy between the tackles and push the ball outside with an elusive Matt Ringquist (Jr.). Yale-bound senior and team captain Sterling Strother anchors both sides of the line.

On defense, one of the team's surprise performers has been senior Myles Harris, who moved from the defensive back to linebacker. He's small for the position, but has shored up the Cougars' weakness against the run. The defense hasn't allowed a second-half touchdown all season.

While every game is an important one, Macy presumes many in the Lamorinda area have Oct. 30 circled on their calendars, when Campo hosts cross-town rival and DFAL co-leader Miramonte.

"For the first time in school history, we've probably got Miramonte rooting for us," Macy noted, mentioning the team's protracted DFAL-win streak. "I'm sure they want to be the ones that beat us."

Acalanes (2-3 overall, 1-0 DFAL)

Just five games in, the 2015 season has already been a long one for the Acalanes Dons. By the second week, the team lost three two-way starters to injury: seniors Tom Henderson (RB/LB), Grant Young (G/ILB), and Tyler Henderson (DB/WR/KR).

The Dons traveled to Antioch for their first game, where they faced an up-and-coming Division I program in the Panthers and star running back Najee Harris, who is headed to Alabama next year on a football scholarship. They lost 62-7.

The next week, the Dons were on the other side of a blowout, shutting out Skyline 49-0. Next, they suffered tough back-to-back losses to Heritage (Brentwood, Calif.) and Analy (Sebastopol, Calif.) before opening up league play with a 34-13 win over Alhambra last Friday night.

Coach Mike Ivankovich thinks his injury-riddled team is making progress, however. "[Alhambra] was the first time we've come out and played football the way it's supposed to be played: with intensity and the ability to overcome mistakes."

The boxscore doesn't speak to the closeness of the game against the Dogs. In fact, early in the third quarter, the Dons led by just one point.

Without Henderson, who tore his ACL playing lacrosse, but runs a sub-4.50 40-yard dash, the team can't stretch the field as much as it would like. Without a true deep threat in the passing game, the team regularly sees loaded boxes and pressure packages aimed at stopping the run.

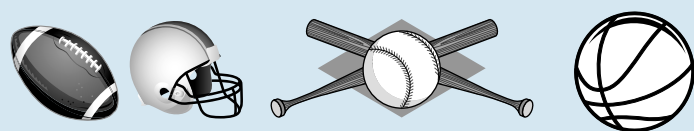
The other issue they're remediating is turnovers. Specifically, the team has lost an inordinate amount of non-contact fumbles.

The offense is led by senior quarterback Jake Berry, while sophomore Ryan Nall, who has an impressive eight sacks through just five games, leads the defense. "I've never coached a sophomore lineman who dominates like this," Ivankovich said.

At this point, the team isn't concerned with their win-loss record, but rather their effort on the field. "Ultimately, we can control effort and attitudes, not outcomes," Ivankovich explained. "We would rather lose doing things the right way than win doing them the wrong way."

The Dons face a tough Dublin team on the road Oct. 9 for their second game of league play.

Youth Sports Registration



Lamorinda Rugby Football Club



On-line Registration opens Oct 1st for the 2015 rugby season! Season runs December through March for youth, and through April for HS. Ages 6-19. Girls welcome through middle school. No prior rugby experience necessary. Practices are located at the Wilder Fields in Orinda.

Find out more about our team and how to register online at www.lamorugby.com. For middle and elementary school ages, contact head youth Coach Adam Browne for more info: adam.browne6@gmail.com. For High School, contact Recruiting Director Steve Peterson at stevepetersonhome@yahoo.com.



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Girls Volleyball: No Clear Favorite in Wide Open DFAL

By Emily Dugdale



Campolindo's Kirsten Sibley (No.10) takes a shot while Acalanes' Mimi White (No. 10) and Reilly Webster (No.12) defend the net

Photos Gint Federas



Parker Jones



Caroline Shafer

The 2015 girls volleyball season is in full swing, and Campolindo, Acalanes and Miramonte find themselves in the thick of what's shaping up to be a wide open battle for the DFAL crown. As of this past weekend, the Cougars (6-7, 3-0 DFAL) sit atop the standings, with Acalanes (5-4, 2-1 DFAL) in third and Miramonte (9-5, 1-1 DFAL) is in fifth.

Unlike previous years, virtually every team is in it. "It's a small league, but it's very competitive this season – the teams that haven't been the strongest are now competitors," Miramonte head coach Lisa Bachtold said.

After going to the finals of last year's NCS Division III tournament and winning four consecutive DFAL titles, the Cougars have a reputation to uphold.

They return a lineup full of new faces along with veteran standouts like Emma

Johnson and Kirsten Sibley. "We have a lot of kids who didn't have opportunities to play last year, and now it's their time," head coach John Vuong said.

With one of the toughest schedules in Cougar history, the road back to the NCS championship will be treacherous. "They have a lot of talent, and I want to see how far they can take us," he said.

Acalanes is back with one of the most experienced teams in the league, with eight seniors and 11 returning players from last year's NCS semifinalist. Standouts include junior outside hitter Parker Jones and a trio of seniors in setter Grace Bolen, middle Mimi White, and outside hitter Maddie Graham.

"Our goal is to compete for a league title, and build on our second place finish from a season ago," head coach Todd Travis said.

Travis echoes his fellow coaches in saying that the league has improved greatly from last season. "Anyone can get beat on any given night, so we need to be prepared each match," he said.

Miramonte boasts a veteran lineup which includes junior phenom Caroline Shafer. Shafer was a DFAL first team selection last season and, according to Bachtold, she is "definitely one to watch." Fresh off their first tournament win at the Concord Varsity Invitational on Sept. 26, the Dons are firing on all cylinders entering league play.

"Many of our girls have gotten bigger, stronger and better, so now it's just building on the success of last year with those key players," Bachtold said. "The team's togetherness comes from twin senior captains, Emily and Elizabeth Fabian, "the epitome of leadership."

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Cougars' JV Water Polo Off to Hot Start

Submitted by Kristin Miller



Back row, from left: Nick Schroeder, Matt Peterson, Aidan Jacuzzi; front row: Sean Percin, Aiden Roake, Jack Larsen, Ben Miller, Marcus Longton, Garrett Dunn, Giorgio Alessandria. Dylan Grausz, Jack Spiering, William Faoro, Sabin Moiceanu, Cole Lauritzen and Leif Carlson. Not pictured: coaches Darren Schroeder, Yurii Hanley, and Brandon Williams, Evan Gabrielson and Michael Williams Photo Bill Faoro

Coming off its third DFAL championship in a row, the Campolindo boys JV water polo team continued its success, opening the 2015 campaign with two local tournament wins. On Sept. 12, the boys won the annual eight-team Miramonte JV Tournament, beating De La Salle and Miramonte before besting San Ramon Valley in the final. The following weekend, the Cougars won the inaugural David Shortenhaus Memorial Tournament hosted by Las Lomas,

which featured 16 of the strongest local teams. The boys beat Heritage, Sacred Heart, Redwood and Bellarmine on their way to the championship game. In a thrilling final against perennial power Miramonte, the Cougars came away with a close win, keeping their undefeated record intact. The Cougars' offensive attack was led by Cole Lauritzen and William Faoro, who were named co-MVP's of the tournament. DFAL play began Sept. 30.

Local Diver Earns NorCal Diver of the Year Honors

Submitted by Barbara Reikes



Amanda Fingerut Photo provided

Amanda Fingerut was recently awarded NorCal Diver of the Year honors for 14-15 year old girls. She accrued the second highest cumulative score for the season and ended by

taking first in both the 1M and 3M at the Delta Valley Diving Invite (Sept. 26-27). Amanda dives for Sherman Divers in Lafayette and is a freshman at Acalanes.

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- MOFD and ConFire to Go Separate Ways
- Local Therapist Cracks the Speech and Language Code
- Local Physician Leads Program to Tackle Family Medicine Doctor Shortage
- Head to Head: Bikers Vs. Horses (and Hikers) EBMUD considers opening Lamorinda watershed trails to bicyclists
- Nowicki: I Followed the Rules
- Lawsuit Against the City of Lafayette
- Destination Tunisia Where no man has gone lately
- Miramonte Girls XC Poised to Break 10 Year Slump Behind Freshman Haskell
- Pooling Water Lamorinda cistern called a Nor Cal first

If you wish to view any of the stories above go to www.lamorindaweekly.com and click the link below the story.

Lamorinda Weekly Writer Plays in Second Straight Championship Baseball Game

By Nick Marnell



Photo provided

The Tribe stormed to an early lead and withstood a fierce mid-game rally to defeat the Giants 15-10 in the Tri-Valley Men's Senior Baseball League 65+ championship game Sept. 19 at the College of Alameda.

The contest pitted the division's top pitcher, Kirt Simoncini, against the leading hitter, Dale Skinner, and though pitching won out in the end, Skinner was hardly stopped, going 3 for 4 with two doubles.

"It's all a credit to my defense," said Simoncini. "They did it for me." Simoncini, one of the league's most durable pitchers, departed with the lead after seven innings. "A little fatigue, a little tightness in my shoulder," he said. The Tribe right-hander had pitched a complete game against the Seals in the division semifinal the previous weekend.

The Tribe quickly put an end to the prospect of consecutive tense, tight 65+ championship games by jumping to a 10-1 lead in the fourth inning. But those 10 runs would not be enough to secure a victory. The Giants scored seven runs to pull within 10-8, and after the Tribe added five late runs, the defending champions staged a last-gasp ninth inning rally, with the tying run in the hole as the final out was recorded.

"I was feeling deja vu out there," said Tribe reliever Rich Mangini, who gave up two fly

ball extra-base hits in the ninth inning. In the 2014 championship game, Mangini watched helplessly from the mound as a fly ball fell in the outfield in the 10th inning, allowing the Giants to score two runs and win the title. "At least this time, there was a better result," he said.

"It wasn't pretty, but we won," said Tribe manager Cy Rogers. "Our starting pitching was the difference. A bit of revenge? Yeah, sure, it was. Especially after coming so close last year."

Gerry Dasey led the Tribe offensive attack with three hits, three RBIs and two runs scored, while Dave Lewis went 4 for 4 with three RBIs and two runs scored to pace the Giants. Lamorinda Weekly's Nick Marnell went 1 for 3 with a run batted in for the Giants.

"I'm proud of our team," said Giants' manager Don de Cordova. "We got into big trouble early, but kept fighting back, and made a game out of it. The Tribe knew they were in a battle to the very end.

"I also would like to thank Steve Sigler of MSBL, and our own Mike Protheroe, for giving us the opportunity to once again play baseball at such a high level."

"I guess we're just like those other Giants across the Bay," said starting pitcher Jerry Emanuelson. "We only win in even-numbered years."

U14 Eclipse Lunar Have Timely Showing at Stockton Tournament

Submitted by Lora Easley



Photo provided

East Bay Eclipse Boys Lunar U14 went 4-0 at the annual Stockton Triad Tournament Sept 25-26. The boys had three shut out games and allowed just one

goal the entire tournament. The scores were 6-0, 3-1, 8-0 and 8-0. Despite the stellar showing, the boys finished second overall.

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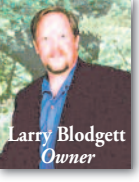
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Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 09 Issue 16 Wednesday, October 7, 2015



Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D16

Plugging In

Electric car trend leading to upgrades at home

By Chris Lavin



At Norseman it's a family affair with sons Darryl and Travis Johnson working alongside their father, Randy. Their Lafayette client sports their favorite license plate.

Photo Chris Lavin

Far gone are the days when Fred Flintstone powered a car with his feet. Also gone are the days of the giant gasoline guzzlers of "American Graffiti." Welcome, now, to the days of volts and amps.

The large national and also very

much local trend toward going electric turns out not to be as simple as running an extension cord out to the driveway. While there used to be a time when an electric car could be plugged in to just about any outlet, times have changed. Today's cars need big power for fast

charging. Most require the installation of electric vehicle supply equipment, or EVSE in the parlance of the day. And unless care is taken, the supply chain can get hot, quite literally.

"When Chevy Volts came in they were catching fire in the garage," said

Gint Federas of Lafayette, a photographer for Lamorinda Weekly who has owned a variety of electric cars. "Sometimes the most simple way to charge is not the most efficient."

While the Moraga-Orinda Fire District hasn't seen any house fires start directly because of electric car issues, special trainings about car fires have started to incorporate concerns about how people are "heating up" their garages.

"We haven't seen any fires directly because of that," said MOFD firefighter-paramedic Brittany McMahon. "But people can't plug their cars into a regular outlet. It's definitely a new thing."

When you find yourself among electricians and savvy electric car owners, it is easy to check out of the conversation. There is talk of amps and wattage. There is talk of overload. Talk of circuit breaks. Talk of bypasses and breakers. One finds oneself thinking "What's for dinner?" while talk of applications of electricity and circuitry abound. Electrician Randy Johnson breaks into this line of culinary thinking by saying, "Yeah, that can start a fire."

"What?" Turns out that, yeah, bad circuitry can start a fire.

... continued on page D4

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City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	13	\$250,000	\$3,190,000
MORAGA	10	\$420,000	\$1,800,000
ORINDA	7	\$1,032,000	\$2,000,000

Home sales are compiled by CalREsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close 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

3638 Bickerstaff Road, \$910,000, 2 Bdrms, 1127 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 8-14-15;

Previous Sale: \$749,000, 06-14-05

3676 Happy Valley Road, \$2,295,000, 3 Bdrms, 2158 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 8-14-15

1812 Hunsaker Canyon Road, \$1,200,000, 2387 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 8-7-15;

Previous Sale: \$660,000, 06-17-09

312 Maverick Court, \$1,775,000, 4 Bdrms, 3513 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-14-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 05-31-02

2 Middle Road, \$1,575,000, 3 Bdrms, 2340 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 8-17-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 05-15-07

1601 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,250,000, 3 Bdrms, 2263 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 8-7-15

1231 Rose Lane, \$3,190,000, 4 Bdrms, 4710 SqFt, 1982 YrBlt, 8-11-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 07-16-93

65 Silverwood Drive, \$250,000, 4 Bdrms, 3055 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 8-18-15

3376 Springhill Road, \$1,170,000, 3 Bdrms, 2334 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 8-17-15

3161 Teigland Road, \$1,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 2923 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 8-7-15;

Previous Sale: \$158,000, 04-01-77

21 Tiana Terrace, \$2,995,000, 5 Bdrms, 4157 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 8-18-15;

Previous Sale: \$3,100,000, 07-07-05

3320 Woodview Court, \$1,430,000, 3 Bdrms, 2784 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-7-15;

Previous Sale: \$550,000, 02-12-98

1075 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$1,310,000, 3 Bdrms, 1855 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 8-14-15;

Previous Sale: \$855,000, 10-09-09

MORAGA

633 Augusta Drive, \$840,000, 2 Bdrms, 2270 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 8-18-15;

Previous Sale: \$725,000, 09-03-14

8 Berkshire Street, \$950,000, 2 Bdrms, 1696 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 8-17-15;

Previous Sale: \$800,000, 12-20-12

1349 Camino Pablo, \$1,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 2443 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 8-11-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,050,000, 07-21-14

461 Chalda Way, \$588,000, 3 Bdrms, 1322 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 8-19-15;

Previous Sale: \$197,000, 07-16-98

2048 Donald Drive #2050, \$980,000, 4 Bdrms, 1620 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 8-18-15;

Previous Sale: \$849,000, 09-01-05

2121 Donald Drive #15, \$420,000, 2 Bdrms, 1224 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 8-10-15;

Previous Sale: \$230,000, 09-27-10

17 Francisca Drive, \$685,000, 2 Bdrms, 1211 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 8-14-15;

Previous Sale: \$600,000, 05-30-14

1513 Moraga Way, \$584,000, 2 Bdrms, 1522 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 8-14-15;

Previous Sale: \$99,500, 08-01-79

5 Teodora Court, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 3668 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-14-15

6 Wingfoot Street, \$1,290,000, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 8-7-15;

Previous Sale: \$484,000, 12-31-87

... continued on page D14

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3538 Silver Springs Road,
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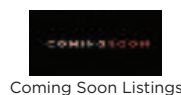
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Plugging In



Randy Johnson of Norseman Electric checks the timer for a client's electric car.

Photos Chris Lavin



An EVSE plug to a newer electric car. Electric vehicle supply equipment provides a safer way to charge up – two prongs are for power, one for a ground, one for safety so that the power will shut off if things get gnarly, and one to communicate with the car's computer.

... continued from page D1

"It's a learning curve," said his son, Travis Johnson, who works for the family business. An electric car driver must traverse that curve. Some cars might have the battery capacity to drive for a day, but the supply on the home end will require two days to charge. Early electric cars with the smallest batteries would limit their range to a 50-mile radius.

"You really had to plan the trips," Federas said.

Now there are bigger batteries, and more complicated computer systems. Whether one chooses a Tesla, a Nissan LEAF, a Volt or other brand, new electric cars come with a charging package that may well require rewiring a garage, an outside charging port, or both.

A new electric car owner today has to know how big and how strong his or her battery is and how long it will last. Onboard computers help owners know how much and how long they have left, and the computers let them know when they need to dock in. But again, it is not just a plug in the wall.

"It's a lot like plugging your phone into its docking station," said Federas. If the phone runs out of power, no calls come in. If the car runs out of power, no turning the ignition; you are dead in the road.

By using EVSE, the whole system will monitor how much charge the car battery can take, as well as how much power there is to be had. In many cases plugging in at Whole Foods or the hardware store, at BART or stores that offer free charging while shopping will be different than plugging in at home.

"It depends on where you are," Randy Johnson said. "Different docks come with different specifications." Some Tesla owners, he said, carry a plethora of adapters to be able to plug into whatever outlet is available.

Another thing to consider is when to charge the car. Pacific Gas and Electric Co. has peak hours. Even though driving by electricity is cheaper than buying gasoline, charging the car during peak hours can cost twice as much as charging on the off hours – so most electric car owners charge the car while they are asleep. Some owners use timers on the systems themselves; the more modern cars utilize on-board systems to know when to "turn on" to charge.

Other drivers have applications on their personal devices that will allow them to monitor the use of their electricity by the minute. "Yay!" they will say while watching Netflix, when a window appears in the corner of the screen. "The car just came on."

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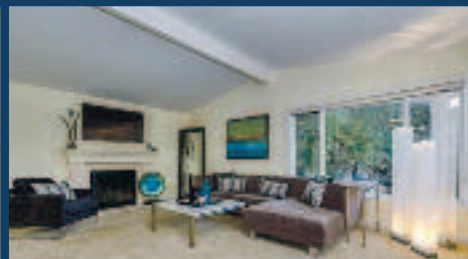
A Darling Home with Character & Charm

This 2 bed/2 bath home has been meticulously cared for and has all the charm you could ever want. Set back from the road, including a circle driveway surrounding a fruitful citrus tree, the home sits on over 1/3 of an acre with views from the front and back of the property. The moment you walk in you are enchanted by high ceilings, an open floor plan, and a newly added loft running the full length of the living area. Situated close Downtown Lafayette, great schools, and recreation, if you are looking for character and charm, this is it!

953 Oak View Circle, Lafayette



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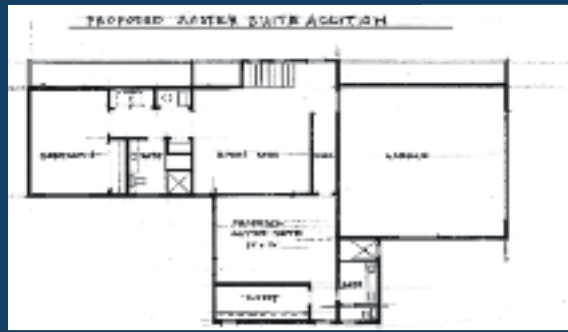
3720 Highland Court, Lafayette

Home Buyer's Dream in the Heart of Lafayette

(Now with a master suite addition plans!)

Location, location, location! Nestled into a 1/4 acre of nature, this 3 bedroom, 2 bath home is a peaceful retreat in the heart of all the action in Lafayette—only minutes to Downtown and Bart. It boasts approx. 1,988sqft and is light, bright, and airy, featuring an updated kitchen, and views from almost every window in the house! There are plenty of closets for storage, a bonus space downstairs, open for entertaining. The large 2 car garage comes with a work bench area and more room for storage. All of this and your own private entry surrounded by beautiful landscaping. It's everything you'd want in a home!

Offered at \$1,050,000



Amazing Estate with Spectacular Views

This magnificent new home sits atop a lush Happy Valley hill with views from all sides. With over 4,200sqft, 5beds/3.5bath, and 5 acres, this home beckons to all! Covered patios, courtyard, outdoor kitchen—this home has room for family, friends, and indoor/outdoor entertaining. A stand alone guest house is perfect for in-laws, an au-pair., or guests. Ask to see plans now, and have it built to suit your needs!

931 Sunnyhill Road, Lafayette



Call for Price



Fall Feng Shui and the Metal Element

By Michele Duffy



This table setting incorporates elements of wood, earth and fire for the perfect Thanksgiving feast.

Photos provided

It's raining and so lovely today as I write this from my porch in Lamorinda and the wish to reach for a cozy sweater reminds me it is fall.

Typically, the dining room needs a feng shui makeover this time of year as we tend to gather in to warmer spaces with family and friends, lingering over meals on shorter days.

Design with an appreciation of the five elements (water creates wood, wood creates fire, fire creates earth, earth creates metal and metal creates water) integral to Chinese culture, Chinese medicine and feng shui requires a basic understanding of the feng shui Bagua (see diagram on page D12). Overlay the BAGUA map over the floorplan of your residence, and use the actual elements, representative shapes and colors to make the five elements come alive and ignite a nourishing energetic

in your home. One of the best places to focus your attention during fall is the dining room and the bounty of the harvest found at the dining room table.

Dining rooms can often become a dumping ground for the entire household's daily accumulations, or worse, a makeshift office. How can we gather with friends and family at the dining room table if it is piled high with household clutter?

Part of getting a handle on clutter anywhere in our homes is by simply observing where stuff tends to accumulate and pile up. These are potentially areas of stagnation, so note what Bagua areas on the diagram are affected.

Fall is ruled by the metal element, and includes metallic colors as well as gray and white. You can balance the metal element with bits of red (fire) and green

(wood), both of which present many delightful opportunities for someone with a creative eye.

Highlight and incorporate edgy metal baskets to collect some of the dining room clutter, or add metal yard sculptures or other metallic items in your dining room décor. Sophisticated scented soy Anthropologie candles in silver finish, gleaming silver serving dishes and mixing silver and gold metals with evergreens, red cyclamen and rosemary centerpieces will bring a sparkle to your table.

Be playful, artfully display what you like, and create an abundance of fall reminders with actual harvested items like pinecones for table place card holders, abundant candlelight for glowing conversations, strewn gourds for a casually elegant table, and warmer tones for table linens. Create intimacy since generally only our closest friends and family are invited over to our homes for dinner.

... continued on page D12



Use gourds in your décor to highlight the harvest season.

Listing Lamorinda...

5 Burton Vista Ct. ~ \$6,595,000



23 Sessions Rd. ~ \$3,550,000



1154 Camino Vallecito ~ \$1,700,000



40 Dos Osos ~ \$489,000



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Fall Feng Shui and the Metal Element

... continued from page D10



Deep reds of fall can balance with the metal element in home décor.

Remember to warm up the area, too, and be seasonal in terms of what you are serving and sharing around your dining room table to balance the cooler weather.

Fall offers us a chance to reflect and gain clarity on the lessons of this harvest, and to ask ourselves what worked and what did not. The vision of that thought may be enough inspiration to start creating a fresh dining room approach that you are inspired to entertain in and that also includes the subtle and ancient art of feng shui.

If the holidays (and clutter) are stressing you beyond imagination, and who isn't stressed in anticipation of multiple fall holidays, use organizing professionals (ask me who) to help clear out, sort and organize. It's win-win way to get your home in tip-top shape for the holidays, clear out the superfluous so you can imagine how you can create fresh holiday glimmer for a truly fresh take on your personal fall holiday design and décor.

WEALTH & PROSPERITY "Gratitude" REAR LEFT <u>Wood</u> Blues, purple & reds	FAME & REPUTATION "Integrity" REAR MIDDLE <u>Fire</u> Reds	LOVE & MARRIAGE "Receptivity" REAR RIGHT <u>Earth</u> Reds, pinks, & whites
HEALTH & FAMILY "Strength" MIDDLE LEFT <u>Wood</u> Blues & Greens	CENTER "Earth" Yellow & earth tones	CREATIVITY & CHILDREN "Joy" MIDDLE RIGHT <u>Metal</u> White & Pastels
KNOWLEDGE & SELF CULTIVATION "Stillness" FRONT LEFT <u>Earth</u> Black, blues & greens	CAREER "Depth" FRONT MIDDLE <u>Water</u> Black & dark tones	HELPFUL PEOPLE & TRAVEL "Synchronicity" FRONT RIGHT <u>Metal</u> White, grey & black



Michele Duffy, BTB M.F.S. is an Orinda resident who, since 1999, enjoys creating "Space as Medicine" Feng Shui one space at a time, as well as hiking in nature, cooking, and spending time with her family; Canyon Ranch Feng Shui Master, International Feng Shui Guild (IFSG) Red Ribbon Professional. To schedule a professional 2015 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to spaceharmony@gmail.com.

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Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

... continued from page D2

ORINDA

8 Aspinwall Court, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 1951 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 8-19-15

67 Barbara Road, \$1,120,000, 4 Bdrms, 2373 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 8-19-15;

Previous Sale: \$250,000, 07-07-93

59 Cedar Lane, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 3931 SqFt, 1992 YrBlt, 8-7-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,420,000, 04-13-04

134 El Toyonal, \$1,032,000, 3 Bdrms, 1547 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 8-11-15;

Previous Sale: \$570,000, 02-04-02

11 Estates Drive, \$1,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 3252 SqFt, 1940 YrBlt, 8-11-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,125,000, 08-06-10

674 Moraga Way, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2497 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 8-19-15;

Previous Sale: \$940,000, 05-21-04

97 Oak Road, \$1,515,000, 4 Bdrms, 2846 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 8-7-15;

Previous Sale: \$1,059,000, 06-05-08

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15 Hilldale Court, Orinda

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Digging Deep - Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Water Wise Dreams

By Cynthia Brian

"If something you are doing is not working, doing more of it won't work any better." – Unknown



Agave and succulents thrive in dry conditions.

Photos Cynthia Brian

Spring, summer and fall have always been my most favorite seasons because I thrive in the sunshine, relish the warmth and indulge my senses in the lavish, lush beauty of the landscapes of California. This year has been an exception to my predilection as my garden is straining to survive in this thirsty environment. As I was writing this column, the skies sprinkled droplets of rain and I was so excited I stood outside with my face to the darkened heavens blissfully grateful for this tiny bit of moisture. Water, our most valuable resource, is becoming increasingly precious as our climate changes. The way we have been functioning in our gardens isn't working any longer.

I was privileged to be a speaker at the recent National Gardening Symposium held in the horticultural wonderland of Pasadena where the temperatures ex-

ceeded 100 degrees on a daily basis. It was hot, hotter, and hottest as the thermometer hit 107. Although considered a Mediterranean climate, it felt more Saharan. Attendees hailed from all around the United States, Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, as well as a few other countries with the most discussed topic being H₂O. Trees were at the top of the list of plantings that must be saved. The world is watching California as we struggle to find a path to water conservation.

On a behind-the-scenes tour of the Los Angeles County Arboretum, I learned about an age-old technique used in Eastern Europe called "hugelkultur." Translated from German, it means "mound culture," because the practice involves salvaging limbs, branches, and debris to make raised beds that will improve drain-

ing and grow gardens without irrigation or fertilization. The Arboretum team removed a large lawn from an area where they are now experimenting with various ways to save and harvest water by slowing it down, spreading it out, and filtering it. Hugelkultur is something that many of us could embrace, especially with our compacted clay soil. For large properties with slopes or trees that have fallen or need to be cut down, hugelkultur could be a godsend. The process to design a hugel is simple.

1. Choose an area where you want a mound.
2. Gather logs, branches, twigs, other wood debris and leaves to line the area. Don't use wood from Black locust, walnut or cedar because of toxicity. Rotted wood is great.
3. First lay the big logs, add a layer of branches, then twigs, then leaves and grass clippings. Make the mound a minimum of three feet; seven feet or more is best. The mound will compact and shrink.
4. Water the layers.
5. Add kitchen scraps, compost, and mulch. Wood is high in carbon and could leach nitrogen from the soil. Compost is a necessary ingredient.
6. Add two inches of topsoil and more mulch.
7. Prepare your beds now in the fall so they will cure for a spring planting.

... continued on next page



Growbags are the latest development in moisture retention for container plantings.

My hugelkultur trial will start soon as it is definitely more environmentally friendly to utilize the wood debris that I encounter in my gardening maintenance than putting it in the green bins. Plus, I love the look of rounded hills in landscapes.

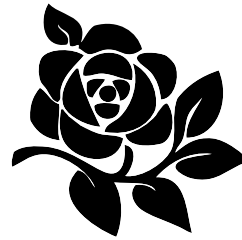
Another exciting discovery was a lawn seed that claims to “seldom or never need water or fertilizer once established.” This seed is an all-natural product with 100 percent native and adaptive grasses, no genetically modified seed, and 99.9 percent weed free – a result of 10 years of product research and testing. I have ordered it for my lawns and as soon as I know the results, I’ll be reporting it to you. Stay tuned.

As we drive around our neighborhoods we notice that most lawns are brown and the surrounding landscapes look dull and dry. Maintaining a beautiful, productive, verdant garden is becoming more complicated as our water bills continue to escalate even though we are consuming less than in previous years.

... continued on page D18



A hugel is born with logs, branches, and twigs.



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Water Wise Dreams

We can be water wise by implementing these steps:

1. Add organic material to your soil. Compost and mulch improve the water-holding capacity. Mulch cuts down on weeds, holds in moisture and maintains the temperature.
2. Use soaker hoses when possible as they are the most efficient irrigating system delivering water directly to the roots.
3. Prepare to collect rainwater. In Bermuda, all buildings have an underground cistern that collects rain from the limestone roofs. It may be time for Californians to start thinking about cisterns, or like the Aussies, install storage tanks in our crawl spaces. A 1,000-square-foot roof will harvest 625 gallons of water from one inch of rain.
4. Before planting, study your garden. Know where the sun and shade are at all times of the day.
5. Group plants with similar needs together and choose drought tolerant species that are known to thrive in our environs.
6. Maintain, monitor and weed. Be alert for pests.

Instead of drowning in denial, it is time to save our selves with water-wise investments. I'll be your guide on the side to dream with you.



A sensible suggestion for heat and drought tolerance.

... continued from page D17



A recirculating fountain adds coolness to hot environs.



A pile of mulch is ready to be added to the hugel.

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing.



A century-old olive tree is drought tolerant. Save the trees.



Cynthia Brian at The Huntington Gardens in the contemplative Chinese garden.

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Cynthia Brian

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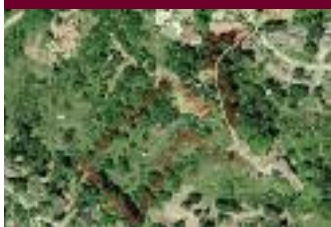


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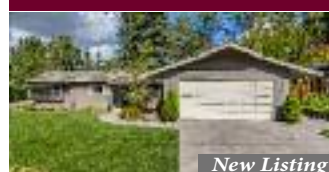
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LAFAYETTE



1141 Vallecito Court Treasured Happy Valley estate custom built in 2006 w/finest craftsmanship. Chef's kitchen, gorgeous master, ofc, fam rm, home gym. Pool, spa, firplc & level lawn w/views. Detached guest house. **\$3,900,000**

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1440 Dumaine Street Newer two story 2032sf, 3+bd/2.5ba home w/vaulted ceilings, spacious family rm & dining open to kitchen, large master suite. Fenced level yard & patio. Near shops & schools. **\$625,000**

OAKLAND



4902 Broadway #201 Fantastic penthouse loft w/direct access from unit to deeded rooftop deck, fabulous views of SF Bay. Hwd flrs, granite counters. Near BART, fwys, bus commute. Deeded parking space. **\$627,000**

WALNUT CREEK



3311 Rossmoor Pkwy #4 A rarity! Fantastic, level in (no steps) Cascade model on golf course w/views of hills & course from most living spaces. Granite kitchen w/breakfast nook, plantation shutters, view deck. **\$659,000**



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