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New Fall Hours!
 Morning Program 9-12:30
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 SEE OUR OPEN HOUSE AD ON PAGE A12



Shirly Siegel and Neshe Ganch getting ready for Valentine's Day orders.

Photo Andy Scheck

The Cost of Convenience

Local florists impacted by Internet orders

By Nick Marnell

A stressed-out consumer, not knowing much about flowers and feeling the extra pressure of Valentine's Day, makes for an easy mark in the floral industry, and plenty of operators are ready to pounce, many promoting online with a toll-free phone number.

"You're taking your chances," said Neshe Ganch,

owner of Floral Arts in Lafayette. "When you call one of those 800 numbers, you may not be calling a flower shop." You may be dealing with a call center, which charges service, handling, shipping or convenience fees to forward your order to a local florist. And you often have no idea whom you are dealing with.

"We call them sending florists," said Arlene Kahn, owner of King Florist and Gifts in Moraga. "They're order takers, and they are not necessarily florists. They take your order, then they come to a florist, asking it to fill the order for more than they will pay to do it."

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Civic News A1-A12

New Community Choice Aggregation program considered in Lafayette and Moraga – see stories on pages A3 and A5.

Fire Districts A8

MOFD plans to redraft its strategic plan – page A8.

Life in Lamorinda B1-B10

Pearl Harbor survivor shares stories from his past – page B2.



Sports C1-C3

Acalanes girls' soccer team continues forward push – page C2.



Our Homes D1-D16

The importance of balance in proper Feng Shui – page D4.



Open Thursday, 2/11 5-7pm
 Open Saturday, 2/13 1-4pm
 Open Sunday, 2/14 1-4pm

Lafayette Trail Neighborhood home!

Featuring 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms, this home has a swimming pool with solar heat, hardwood floors throughout, and is just a short walk from both Lafayette Elementary and Stanley Middle School.

Join us Thursday, February 11 from 5-7pm for a neighborhood preview.

Offered at \$1,395,000

Virtual Tour: www.3435LittleLn.com



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Of Life and Limb

Trees are falling, but not just from El Nino

By Cathy Dausman



A downed tree on Rancho Road in Lafayette is removed. Photo Cathy Dausman

Local trees, including mature oaks and pines, are falling and in need of removal, but the recent El Nino rain storms are only partly to blame. It is more apt to be a combination of events – call it the perfect storm – causing their demise. Recent Lamorinda examples reported by Nixle, a government emergency notification system, include downed power lines on LaCintella in Orinda and along Orchard Road due to collapsed trees, a road closure in Canyon due to a fallen tree on Pinehurst, and Miner Road closed near Camino Pablo because of a downed tree.

The World Meteorological Organization called the years 2011-2015 the warmest five-year period on record, and "trees suffered during the drought," said Jim Turner of Bruce Maciver Company. Turner should know – he's made his living climbing trees for 34 years, the last 28 working for Maciver.

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Moraga Town Hall Scheduled

State Sen. Steve Glazer and Assemblywoman Catherine Baker will provide an update on legislative priorities in 2016 and listen to thoughts on issues facing the community at the Moraga Town Hall from 7 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11 at the Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium. For information, contact Sen. Glazer's Walnut Creek office at (925) 942-6082.