

# LAFAYETTE LAMORINDA



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FREE



The Javandel family: dad Kamran holds Delaney, center, and mom Kristen milks the occasion for all its worth.



Participants large and small dress for success at Orinda's Halloween parade for tots.

Photos Cathy Dausman



A foursome of toddlers arrive decked out for fun as a strawberry (Claire McDevitt, left), jack o'lantern (Anya Deems), skeleton (Jameson Pruess) and duck (Cary Phillips).

## Tiny tots trick-or-treat at Orinda park

By Cathy Dausman

Mickey and Minnie Mouse, a cowboy, fresh fruit, animals, a skeleton, Harry Potter and firemen, super heroes galore and a castle full of princesses turned out for the Orinda Halloween Parade for Tots Oct. 26 and stayed for snacks and a meet-and-greet with real Orinda police and firefighters at the Orinda Community Park.

The parade is a long-running and much beloved Orinda tradition, attracting between 75 and 100 toddlers, says Recreation Supervisor Jennifer Weiss. The event originated years ago through the now defunct Orinda Community Center Auxiliary, and is held each year, rain or shine (rain moves the parade indoors).

Participants with adults in tow toddled after Glinda the Good Witch (Weiss in a dress of pink chiffon, topped with a silver crown) as she looped the length of the park pathway, stopping to greet Chewbacca (Jackson Stearns) and pumpkin Josh Hays, both of whom offered treats to Glinda's entourage.

...continued on page A6

Advertising

Community Service	B4
Not to be Missed	B6-B7
<b>HOW TO CONTACT US</b>	B7
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## Moraga revenue measure survey causes some confusion

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Town Council will review the results of a survey Nov. 8 that was ordered to gauge the community's support for new taxes. The results are in and indicate that without additional information, a majority of residents are willing to tax themselves to maintain the storm drains, but are less likely to do so to address other financial needs of the town.

Other questions remain unanswered: How much is really needed from residents to compensate the unfunded infrastructure maintenance (roads and storm drains)? What other unmet financial needs does the town have besides its infrastructure? Will the council feel it can garner the community's support to address some or all of these needs?

It is not really a question of "if," but of "what" and "how much." The results of the survey that the town conducted a few weeks ago show that a majority of residents would support a storm drain fee per parcel in the \$144

a year range, an amount that is grossly insufficient to address the storm drain issue in its entirety, and that would do nothing to improve all of the other unfunded needs of the town.

Seven months ago, SCI Consulting Group made a presentation to the town's leadership during a storm drain plan workshop and estimated the per parcel taxation needed to address the problem at \$312 a year; \$144 per parcel would cover the high priority projects and legally mandated expenses, but not the medium priority ones that are the largest category with a funding need of \$11.4 million. There were talks at the meeting of what amount would be supported by the community. Vice Mayor Roger Wykle said that Moraga residents were intelligent people who could support a full cost measure, if provided with a complete and reliable picture of what exists, as well as the plan for moving forward. He noted that trust between the residents and their government was key

to ensure success on a ballot.

The storm drain tax would not begin to address the town's unfunded asset replacement, or improve the town's reserves. At the end of 2014, a subgroup of Moraga's Audit and Finance Committee presented the results of its study of the town's asset replacement plan. The subgroup calculated that the town should set aside more than \$600,000 a year to replace its assets – not including the roads, drains and building frames. Since then the asset replacement fund has been completely depleted and no savings have been made. At the mid-year budget revision meeting, Administrative Director Amy Cunningham noted that the total unfunded needs for this budget cycle equaled approximately \$517,000. The director added that Moraga is not the only community that has not sufficiently saved for asset replacement and infrastructure maintenance; it is a problem that plagues the entire country.

... continued on page A12

## Lafayette City Council approves three-year extension for city manager

By John T. Miller



Steve Falk at this year's Reservoir Run  
Photo Gint Federas

After fielding many objections, particularly from the Save Lafayette contingent, the Lafayette City Council voted 4-1 to approve a three-year contract extension for longtime City Manager Steven Falk. Council Member Ivor Samson cast the lone op-

posing vote.

The overall salary was \$246,294 per year, representing a 3 percent raise. The severance package was reduced to 12 months – down from 18. This was due to the city attorney bringing the contract in line with state law.

Michael Griffiths, president of Save Lafayette, opposed such a high compensation package and presented a list of grievances, which blamed the city manager for his handling of the Planning Commission and Design Review Board investigations (see accompanying article), citizen lawsuits against the city, cost overruns on the parking lot on the old East Bay Municipal Utility District pumping plant site and many other items.

...continued on page A8

**Civic News A1-A12**

Drug use on high school campuses discussed – page A6

**Fire Districts A8**

Station 16 permit approved – page A8

**Life in Lamorinda B1-B8**

New Art Moves Project wows crowd – B1



**Sports C1-C4**

Miramonte girls varsity water polo team dominates – page C1



**Our Homes D1-D12**

This house of straw ain't a lot of hay – page D1





**Public Meetings**

**City Council**

Monday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Planning Commission**

Monday, Nov. 6, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Design Review**

Monday, Nov. 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, Nov. 1, 7 p.m.  
AUHSD Board Room  
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette  
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

**Lafayette School District**

Wednesday, Nov. 15, 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. 24-30**

Alarms	78
911 Calls (incl hang-ups)	3
Noise Complaints	13
Traffic Stops	206
Suspicious Circumstances	9
Suspicious Subjects	38
Suspicious Vehicles	29
Service to Citizen	40

**Auto Burglary**

3000 Block Old Tunnel Rd.  
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
800 Block Mountain View Dr.

**Battery**

3600 Block Bickerstaff St.

**Civil Problem**

900 Block Moraga Rd.  
3300 Block Victoria Ave.  
1100 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
10 Block Dollis Park Rd.

**Civil Standby**

3600 Block Happy Valley Ln.  
Police Department

**Disturbing The Peace**

Reliez Station Rd./Olympic Blvd.  
3200 Block Stanley Blvd.

**DUI Misdemeanor**

Mt. Diablo Blvd./Lafayette Cir.  
Glenside Cir./Glenside Dr.

**Forgery**

10 Block Quail Run

**Found Property**

3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Glenside Dr./Michael Ln.  
Police Department

**Fraud Credit Card**

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Fraud False Pretenses**

1300 Block San Reliez Ct.

**Grand Theft**

500 Block Silverado Dr.

**Hailed By Citizen**

Terrace Way

**Harassment**

1000 Block Carol Ln.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
El Nido Ranch Rd./Acalanes Rd.

**Hit And Run Misdemeanor**

3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
1000 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Greenvally Rd.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Identity Theft**

3200 Block Glenside Dr.  
3900 Block Rancho Rd. (2)  
3200 Block La Canada Rd.  
50 Block Los Arabis Cir.

**Loitering**

3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Springhill Rd.

**Lost Property**

800 Block Skywood Rd.  
Police Department

**Misc Burglary**

100 Block Camellia Ln.

**Ordinance Violation**

4100 Block Hidden Valley Rd.

**Petty Theft**

1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.  
200 Block Camellia Ln.  
600 Block Michael Ln.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Prom Shoot**

3100 Block Cordova Way

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**No relief on Reliez Valley Road**

By John T. Miller



The morning commute on Reliez Valley Road.

Photo Gint Federas

A barrage of speakers from the Reliez Valley Road area addressed the Lafayette City Council at its Oct. 23 meeting, complaining about delays and unsafe driving conditions and pleading for solutions to the problems.

The morning commute has be-

come so bad on the two-lane road that traveling two miles can sometimes take 20 minutes or more. Students trying to get to school at Springhill Elementary, Stanley Middle School, or Acalanes High School have to leave earlier and earlier to avoid tardiness.

Some residents experience 10-minute waits to get out of their driveway, while children trying to cross the street to their school bus stop have to wait equally long before there is a break in the traffic.

The traffic either moves at a crawl, or, when possible, drivers speed recklessly. Residents report drivers passing school buses with their flashing lights on, and others using the left hand lane – going in the wrong direction – to pass long lines of cars.

One speaker said, “I can’t believe the brazenness of some of these drivers. It’s only a matter of time before there will be a tragic accident.” Others claim to have seen many narrow misses.

One local resident reported that taking Bear Creek Road to Stanley Middle School was two minutes faster than enduring the backups on Reliez Valley, while more than one speaker said that getting downtown has become so difficult that many residents head to other cities to shop.

Transportation Planner James

Hinkamp, who delivered the report on conditions, said, “A point of contention has been mobile navigation applications like Google Maps and Waze.” Drivers are learning that Alhambra Valley Road to Reliez Valley is the quickest route in the morning to Highway 24 (even with the backups), and more and more commuters are traveling this way.

After listening to nearly two hours of testimony, the council considered some of the solutions, including no right turns allowed at certain spots, speed bumps, and increased police surveillance and ticketing.

Also suggested is to discuss jurisdiction issues with the county and the city of Pleasant Hill, finalize term count movements, take a further look into data and counter measures, and convene a circulation committee meeting to receive further public input and potential remedies. The council authorized staff to proceed with these next steps.

**EBMUD land swap deal with Lafayette reaches an impasse**

By John T. Miller

As the East Bay Municipal Utility District closes in on finishing the new pumping station near Mt. Diablo Court in the eastern part of Lafayette, cost overruns have caused the city council to consider its options on how to proceed with the land swap agreement made with the utility district.

According to City Manager Steven Falk’s report to the council at its Oct. 23 meeting, EBMUD approached the city in 2011 with the need to replace its pumps that sat next to Ace Hardware.

The two staffs negotiated a land swap that allowed EBMUD

to build a new pumping plant at the current location, in exchange for putting in a parking lot at the old site. They also worked together to generate estimated costs to complete the improvements.

Falk reported that the economy and competitive bidding environment have significantly changed since that time, causing both the pumping station and parking lot to go over budget.

“We entered into a series of frank conversations between

EBMUD and Lafayette staffs to find the right balance of how much each should pay,” Falk said. “We’ve reached a tentative agreement where everyone is mutually dissatisfied.”

EBMUD will claim responsibility for approximately \$90,000 worth of the parking lot project, while the city of Lafayette will need to come up with about \$158,000 more.

The lot would hold about 16 cars and bring relief to a part of downtown in great need of park-

ing, especially on the weekends.

One option suggested would be to accept the \$90,000 in credit and have the city take over the project, but Mayor Mike Anderson echoed concerns of the staff that that option might end up costing the city even more.

There was also concern regarding deadlines. Once EBMUD is through with the pumping station and releases its contractor, the city would be left with an unfinished lot.

... continued on page A8

**Public Nuisance**

3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
1000 Block 2Nd St.  
Woodview Dr./St Marys Rd.  
Camino Colorados  
Hidden Valley Rd./Arbor Way  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Oak Hill Rd.

**Reckless Driving**

Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Pleasant Hill Rd./Springhill Rd.  
3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
900 Block Moraga Rd.  
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.  
St Marys Rd./Glenside Dr.  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Willow Dr.  
Glorietta Blvd./Acalanes Rd.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Risa Rd.  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./2Nd St.  
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
Lafayette Cir./Hough Ave.  
Mt. Diablo Blvd./1St St.  
Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Threats**

3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct.  
1000 Block 2Nd St.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Trespass**

900 Block Reliez Station Ln.

**Trespass with Vehicle**

4100 Block Happy Valley Rd.

**Unknown Problem**

3300 Block N Lucille Ln.

**Unwanted Guest**

3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.  
50 Block Lafayette Cir.

**Vandalism**

3400 Block Moraga Blvd.  
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Vehicle Theft**

Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.



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# Rez runners start, finish in sunshine this year

By Cathy Dausman



From left: Beck Cate and Jonathan "ACE" Katayanagi Photo Cathy Dausman

What a difference a year made for the Lafayette Reservoir Run. Race day this year dawned sunny and mild with a light breeze; a great improvement over the rainy skies of 2016.

Marshall Eames, one of several Oakwood Athletic Club volunteers biking the course for the last several years remembers "it rained a good portion of the race" last year.

This year, master of ceremonies Tom Stack offered ongoing play by play, while Stanley Middle School's combined symphonic bands pumped out music to race by.

Mere steps from the starting line where Oak Hill Road meets Lafayette Circle, vendors at the Healthy Lifestyles Fair vied for customers lured astray by the diet-busting aroma of pancakes on the griddle served by The Lafayette Rotary Club.

Approximately 1,650 participants competed in one of three races—a certified 5K and 10K run and the stroller and dog friendly 2-mile fun run. They came from around

the Bay Area. The young and fit triumphed in the 5K race as Nick Hutson, 15, finished in 17:22 for the 5K. Less than three minutes and 10 runners separated Hutson from the first female to cross the 5K finish: 11-year-old Makena Weberski clocked a time of 19:57. It was the seventh 5K run in three years for the Walnut Creek resident.

J.D. Kieffer, 22, of San Mateo powered through a 5:30 pace to finish first in the men's 10K at 34:08. Orinda's Alison Zamanian finished first in the women's category with 42:46.

Now in its 25th year, the Lafayette Reservoir Run for Education is a benefit for the school district's Lafayette Partners in Education and the Lafayette Chamber.

"A truly beautiful day in downtown Lafayette," said the chamber's Executive Director Jay Lifson.

Eames, who remembers "being really wet" last year, could hardly disagree.



Photo Gint Federas

# Council postpones action on conflict of interest policy

By John T. Miller

Much to the consternation of the Save Lafayette group, the City Council at its meeting last week delayed action on the conflict of interest issue dealing with committees and commissions.

The issue particularly involves members of the Lafayette Planning Commission and the Design Review Commissions advocating illegally for their clients before their own and other city commissions, violating the California Political Reform Act.

The proposal before the City Council was a continuance from the Sept. 11 meeting when council members Ivor Samson and Cam Burks were tasked with creating a new policy to eliminate conflict of interest within the city's commissions.

Much discussion centered on whether commissioners should recuse themselves or be forced to resign over conflicts of interest, and whether or not it would apply to all commissions or just the two in question.

Samson and Burks favored resignation, with Samson saying, "We may lose a lot of good knowledgeable hard-working people, but a black-and-white distinction is easier to apply to all commissions."

During public input, one Lafayette resident addressed the issue of qualified people, saying, "I prefer an unbiased layman who can read

and apply the Lafayette municipal code to a real estate lawyer or an architect that thinks the planning commission is a business opportunity."

Council Member Mark Mitchell favored recusal as an incremental step: "It's better than going further with resignation; it's difficult to go backward."

Mayor Mike Anderson agreed, saying, "If we're going to tighten, let's tighten the recusal policy. We need to communicate clearly that there is state law, and, in our policy, we want to go beyond state law."

Bob Cleaver, who resigned as a commissioner, approved of the proposal. "I couldn't comfortably serve on a commission and serve my clients at the same time," he said.

The council voted 3-2 for recusal rather than resignation. Anderson summed up the next step, sending it back to the subcommittee and the city attorney to look at the details of the policy and applying it for all commissions and committees. The report is due back next month.

Burks, who along with Samson will head the subcommittee, said, "Maintaining, preserving and protecting the integrity of the public process is important. When we see a fundamental erosion of trust in the way we run our city we need to act swiftly."

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## Moraga

### Public Meetings

#### City Council

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### Planning Commission

Monday, Nov. 6, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### Design Review

Monday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### School Board Meetings

**Moraga School District**  
Thursday, Nov. 14, 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 Report

Summary covers Oct. 10-22



- Alarm Calls 15
- Traffic Stops 33
- 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 7
- Suspicious Circumstances 8
- Suspicious Subjects 3
- Suspicious Vehicles 3
- Loud Noises 3
- Abandoned Vehicle  
2000 block Ascot D.r
- Barking Dog  
400 block Stonefield Pl.
- Burglary, auto  
500 block Moraga Rd.  
10 block Willow Spring Ln. (2)  
40 block Miramonte Dr.
- Corporal Injury to Spouse  
10 block Francisca Dr.
- Death, non-criminal  
20 block Tai Place
- Disturbing the Peace  
200 block Paseo Bernal
- Domestic Disturbance  
Larch/Camino Pablo
- DUI  
Rheem Valley Shopping Center
- Excessive Speed  
Larch/Canyon Rd.  
Corliss/Moraga Rd.  
Moraga Commons Park (2)  
Rheem/Stuart
- Fire/EMS Response  
Moraga Way/Glorietta Blvd.  
900 block Camino Ricardo
- Fraud  
reported to police
- Mentally Ill Commit  
1700 block Spyglass Ln.  
Campolindo High School  
70 block Corliss Dr.
- Missing Adult  
500 block Augusta Dr.
- Phone Harass  
1000 block Larch
- Promiscuous Shooting  
Camino Pablo/Larch
- Reckless Driving  
70 block Sanders Ranch Rd.
- Shoplift  
500 block Moraga Rd.
- Stolen Vehicle Recovery  
Draeger/Devin
- Theft, petty  
Campolindo High School  
40 block Warfield Dr.  
CVS
- Vehicle Theft  
Saint Mary's College  
1300 block Camino Peral
- Vandalism  
Campolindo High School  
Moraga Country Club
- Verbal Dispute  
location n/a
- Violation Restraining Order  
reported to police
- Warrant Service  
Sears, Antioch

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## Commercial Planned Development zoning now available in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini

It just took a few months for staff, advisory groups, and the town council to agree on a new commercial set of rules that should make upgrading and redeveloping Moraga's shopping areas an easier and more predictable process. A few disagreements on permitted uses split the council members opinions on Oct. 15, but it did not stop the approval of the new zoning tool.

For years commercial property owners and business owners have complained of Moraga's very lengthy, costly and intricate process to make any change to a retail space in Moraga. It finally took Jay Kerner of U.S. Partners Realty, and his desire to improve his newly acquired portion of the Rheem Shopping Center to galvanize the energies that led to the approval of the creation of a new category in the municipal code: the planned development commercial – PD-C.

A PD-C is like creating a blueprint for what an area of commercial property will look like. The property owner typically will make such an application. Once approved, the new PD-C will allow for changes within its boundaries with a simple administrative process to make sure that the change matches the blueprint.

Up until now, any change to a retail space would require a complete process with the necessity to meet a series of regulatory standards, or findings. The process was subjected to review by the Design Review Board, which meets once a month. Many business owners have found this process long and costly, with unpredictable results, the worst deterrent for anyone wanting to start a business in Moraga.

Now the process to get a PD-C

approved may be a bit of a steep climb: the findings will have to be met at that level and it will have to be approved by the town council. But once approved, new businesses will have a list of criteria to follow to get an easy approval.

The new regulation lists what commercial use can be included in a PD-C and which ones should be excluded. Tobacco was first taken out, but the planning commission had agreed that a cigar lounge would be acceptable, a use that Kerner was said to be interested in considering for the Rheem Center. The council members debated the issue, some wanting to protect public health, while others said that it was not their prerogative to dictate what people should or should not do. The final decision was to ban all tobacco-related use.

Firearms commerce was simi-

larly discussed by the council members. They decided that the topic would be better addressed when the town studies firearms ordinances later this year. A PD-C has to abide by all the town's rules, including those on firearms, if any is approved.

The PD-C regulation allows for space to be added – up to 15 percent of the total area – or demolished to accommodate a new business. The council members agreed to include regulations to protect the inside and outside of buildings with historic significance.

The minimum size of a PD-C is two acres, but smaller contiguous areas can be included in an existing PD-C at a later time. The mechanism applies only to commercial zones of the town, not the residential areas.

## Moraga School District transforms an incident into a learning opportunity

By Sophie Braccini

When a couple of students a few weeks ago drew a swastika at lunchtime, which was discovered and erased within five minutes, on Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School grounds, principal Joan Danilson reported the incident to Moraga School District's Superintendent Bruce Burns, who, as soon as the facts were ascertained, sent a note to all MSD parents. The district balanced the risk of creating unease and negative publicity with the need of transparency and recognizing that there was an opportunity to improve the education provided to the students.

The school board met on Oct. 13, and at public request, adopted a resolution, not limited to the incident. One of the statements affirms the absolute necessity of a school-based ethos rooted in respect of differences. It also condemns the display of hate symbols as inconsistent with the district's values.

JMIS immediately turned the challenge into an opportunity for learning and all the students participated during first period in an activity about the meaning of symbols. After being given several examples and thinking about meaning, the students engaged in creating their own symbols, by themselves or in a group.

The drawings are now displayed in the school's library. Danilson commented that she was impressed by the insightfulness of the students. The symbols vary in size and intricacy and mostly focus on equality, fighting hatred, and respect of differences, but also solidarity with regions that have been hit by natural disasters.

At the Oct. 16 Cultural Proficiency Committee meeting, which was created by Burns in January, the superintendent recounted the swastika incident and added that what happened led to the district seeking to better itself and look at best practices across the nation. He noted that, so far, Alaska seems to be leading in the area of cultural awareness. He invited representatives of the No-Place-For-Hate school program to make a presentation to the approximately 30 parents and teachers at the meeting.

... continued on page A9



Parents and teachers gather at the Oct. 16 Moraga School District Cultural Proficiency Committee meeting.

Photo Sophie Braccini

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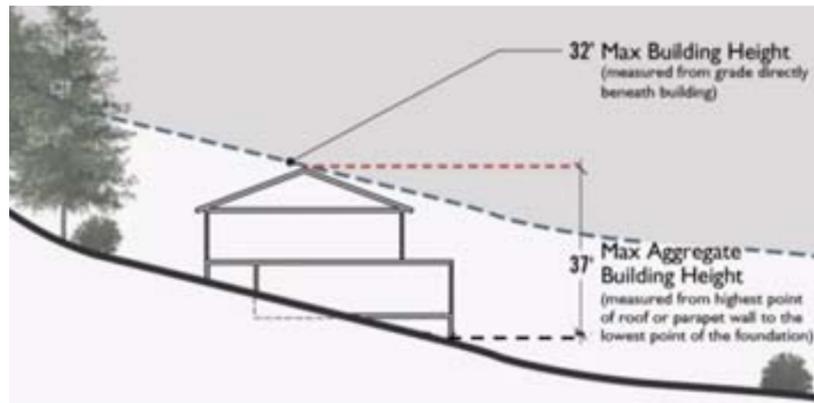


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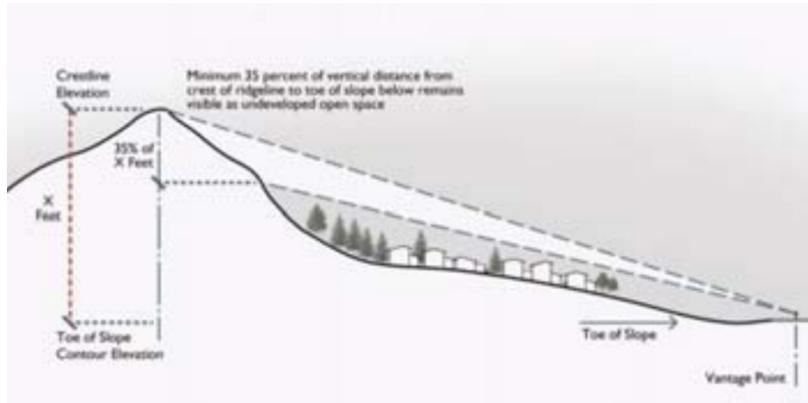
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## Planning Commission has doubts about changes to hillside and ridgeline regulations

By Sophie Braccini



Hillside ridgeline 1: Building height calculation on a slope



Images provided Hillside ridgeline 2: Protection of hills views.

Planning commissioners were reluctant to support a new proposed rule limiting development in high-risk areas to one dwelling unit per 20 acres, even when hazards such as landslides have been mitigated. This change is a cornerstone for those in town who seek reinforcement of the protection of

Moraga open space. But a majority of the commissioners felt that it would lead to property owners never improving high-risk areas. The proposed changes were nonetheless forwarded to the Moraga Town Council for final review, with a comment regarding the commissioners' concerns.

The town has been working on amending its hillside and ridgeline regulations since 2014. Planning Director Ellen Clark explains that the purpose of this work is to increase certainty for development, clarify the rules and make them consistent across the different planning documents. She adds that this

is in keeping with the community's wish to protect the town's character.

The regulations that are now in the final phase of approval have been developed following a comprehensive outreach and study process, including several community meetings and work by a steering

committee, as well as consultative boards and commissions.

Some of the proposed new rules were supported by the commissioners. For example, making sure that new developments on hillsides leave at least 35 percent of that hill untouched, as seen from scenic corridors. ... continued on page A10

## Moraga Women's Society's swan song, a fond farewell to an ending era

By Sophie Braccini



Past Moraga Women Society presidents, from left: Roberta Klapproth (current president), Nancy Comprelli, Bea Cunningham, Jean Glaser, Ree Hardy, Jackie Reising, Judy Ayres, Donna Sumner, Rachel Riddle, Colleen Lund, Judy Butler, Beverly Matthews, Jean Macy, Roberta Cohn and Louise Milford. Photo Cindy Cattell

It was a bittersweet 50-year celebration. Tea and desserts, lovely smiling faces of some 60 women, and shared memories filled the nicely decorated hall of a local church on Oct. 16, but there was a tinge of sadness since this was the final meeting of the Moraga Women's Society. Because the members have aged and did not attract a new generation of women, the longtime friends that remain will continue as a social group only, stepping back from their work as a vibrant and generous nonprofit that gave to community schools, the library, parks and organizations.

Many of the women present

were in their 70s or 80s, members who joined the society in the 1970s; they were active before the town was incorporated and during the early days of the incorporation. These were times when many new homes seemed to spring up from the ground and the town was being formed. But it is now a different period, as past president Roberta Klapproth put it: a generation is saying goodbye and fading into the background. The ladies did it most gracefully.

During this final tea, Colleen Lund retold the history of the society. She focused on the very first years in the winter of 1966-67,

when a group of ladies who volunteered at the Moraga newcomers' club wanted to create more stimulating programs serving the community. Since the club did not accommodate their desires, the women chartered a new group in the spring of 1967: MWS. The objective was to further the development of Moraga – a county unincorporated area at the time – and find ways to raise money for the schools, parks and recreation, and local nonprofits. Moraga, unlike today, was developing at a fast pace. The women also wanted a place to make friends.

The MWS became a place to

become involved when moving into one of the many new Moraga homes. Nancy Comprelli, who joined in 1978, remembers that rules were strict and that she needed two sponsors to be admitted, as well as an immediate commitment to one of the three committees: ways-and-means, service or social.

From the start, MWS created some signature events that enlivened the social life, such as the Holiday Homes Tour and Boutique that continued until 2009. Comprelli, who remembers working with friends on building intricate dollhouses that were big auction items, says that nowadays people hesitate opening their homes for visits.

One of the signature events that the MWS created was the Honorary Mayor Races that were held before the town incorporated. Each "candidate" fundraised to "buy" votes at 10 cents a ballot; the funds were raised to subsidize the future library and parks. The campaign led to the creation of multiple fun events where candidates made outrageous speeches. Lund told how the community brimmed with energy and fun as each candidate created occasions to collect "votes." Elinor Dickenson, Postmaster, was the first Moraga honorary mayor. Some \$6,000 was raised during the campaign.

Lund remembers how the society was filled with creativity when

all the members put on a variety of fundraisers. They established the dog parade that still goes on for the Fourth of July, an arts and crafts festival that was quite vibrant until Lafayette started its own, a fashion show, a Bridge-brunch and Bunco event, and more. A total of \$400,000 was raised that helped fund the Campolindo football field, equipment at the Commons, computers at Campolindo, the outdoor garden at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate, the Walk through California and Walk through the Revolution programs in the elementary schools, refurbishing the fireside room at the Hacienda de las Flores, books and programs at the library, and more. There was also a lot of hands-on volunteering, such as the decorating of the Christmas tree at the Hacienda, something that the MWS will continue.

Over the years, friendships were strengthened, but after a period, no new members signed up. A 2014 newspaper article reported that service club memberships had been dwindling nationwide, the main reason being that people are busier than ever.

Comprelli says that her own daughter, who lives in Moraga, was a member of the Moraga Juniors and that upon leaving that group, all her energy was geared toward the schools; she says that today's parents are worn out.

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**30 Lancaster Ct., Alamo**

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**1202 Thomas Dr., Martinez**

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## Orinda

### Public Meetings

#### City Council

Tuesday, Nov. 8, 6 p.m.  
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

#### Planning Commission

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.  
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

#### Citizens' Infrastructure

##### Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 6:30 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,  
22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

#### School Board Meetings

##### Orinda Union School District

Monday, Nov. 13, 6 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
8 Altarinda Rd., Orinda  
www.orindaschools.org  
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### City of Orinda:

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#### Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

#### The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



### Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report

#### Oct. 8-21

<b>Alarms</b>	74
<b>Noise Complaints</b>	12
<b>911 Calls (includes hang-ups)</b>	5
<b>Traffic Stops</b>	75
<b>Suspicious Circumstances</b>	6
<b>Suspicious Subjects</b>	13
<b>Suspicious Vehicles</b>	15
<b>Accident Injury</b>	
Moraga Way/Coral Dr.	
<b>Abandoned Vehicle</b>	
San Pablo Dam Rd/Bear Creek Rd.	
<b>Animal Cruelty</b>	
Bevmo	
<b>Barking Dog</b>	
10 block Parkway Ct.	
<b>Burglary, Auto</b>	
10 block Moraga Way	
<b>Burglary, Residential</b>	
100 block Camino don Miguel	
70 block Oak Rd.	
40 block Crest View Dr.	
<b>Civil</b>	
300 block Glorietta Blvd.	
40 block Barbara Rd.	
<b>Custody Violation</b>	
Shell gas	
<b>Dependent Adult Abuse</b>	
40 block Donald Dr.	
<b>Disturbance, Juvenile</b>	
40 block Muth Dr.	
<b>Dispute, Verbal</b>	
10 block Richard Court	
10 block Greenwood Ct.	
Rite Aid	
<b>Fraud</b>	
40 block Barbara Rd.	
10 block Chelton Ct.	
<b>Health &amp; Safety Violation</b>	
Donald/Hall Dr.	
<b>Hit &amp; Run</b>	
Camino Pablo/Monte Vista	
<b>ID Theft</b>	
100 block Silver Oak Terrace (2)	
70 block Overhill Rd. (2)	
60 block Davis Rd.	
<b>Medical Police Needed</b>	
200 block Manzanita Dr.	
<b>Medical, hospital</b>	
100 block Moraga Way	
Wanda Ln/Tahos Rd.	
<b>Misdemeanor, other</b>	
Safeway (2)	
Library	
<b>Possession Controlled Substance</b>	
20 block Northwood Dr.	
<b>Prowler Heard</b>	
100 block Scenic Dr.	
<b>Reckless Driving</b>	
Hwy 24/Camino Pablo	
Camino Pablo/Orinda Way	
Hall/Donald Drives	
Camino Pablo/Clairemont Ave.	
Cal Shakes	
100 block Orchard Rd.	
Camino Pablo/Monte Vista (2)	
Moraga/Glorietta	
Moraga Way/Brookwood Rd.	
Camino Pablo/Monte Vista Rd.	
<b>Shoplift</b>	
Rite Aid	

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## Allegations surface of open drug use on high school campus; parent education planned

By Sora O'Doherty

At a drug and alcohol abuse forum held Oct. 19 at the Lafayette Library, six members of the Orinda Teen Advisory Council shared that marijuana is being used openly on the Miramonte High School campus, in the bathrooms, in the parking lot early in the morning, even at the back of classrooms. The students described Miramonte students smoking e-cigarettes or juuls in their cars before school or in the bathrooms during school hours. One student said it was even possible to conceal a device in a girl's blouse to enable her to vape in the back of the classroom.

When asked about the teens' comments, Miramonte Principal Julie Parks said, "I know about most of these things," admitting that Miramonte struggles with this issue like other schools in the Acalanes Union High School District.

Acalanes Principal Travis Bell stated that he was sure that there are similar things happening at all high school campuses. "If you were to interview our teens they might share similar things," he said, but the places might be a little different. "This is definitely an issue that all high schools have to deal with," he agreed. Principal John Walker of Campolindo High School did not respond to inquiries about that campus.

Orinda Police Chief Mark Nagel, when informed of the allegations of drug use on the Miramonte campus, stated that this

"sounds like something we definitely need to partner with the school on and we are certainly willing to do that, to partner in any way possible." While he said that he had no reason to doubt the reports, he said that this was the first that the Orinda Police Department had heard these allegations, which he acknowledged, cause him some concern.

According to Parks, the last healthy kids survey reported 88 percent of Miramonte ninth-graders had never used, but by the time they get to 11th grade that number dropped to 58 percent. School officials are asking, apart from growing older, what might be happening to cause this uptick in drug and alcohol use between ninth and 11th grade?

The TAC students at the forum suggested that students feel a lot of pressure to be the "perfect Lamorinda person," successful, getting good grades, doing extra-curricular activities, being accepted by really good colleges. They described how some students are turning to Adderall, a potent stimulant drug prescribed for ADHD, which is being abused by students who think they can enhance their test scores.

Parks believes that there is a moment between ninth and 11th grade that is the time to intervene. Miramonte offers freshman seminars of 10 sessions during academy period focusing on topics such as decision making and coping with stress. "Addressing

root causes" of substance abuse "is part of our strategy for interrupting the jump," Parks said.

Miramonte students also get a full quarter of mindfulness training to learn some tools to find balance in their lives, she added. New this year is a comprehensive health curriculum that includes one required semester of human and social development that looks at issues of identity, mental health, drug and alcohol use, as well as sexual health education, relationships, communication and other life skills. Miramonte will also be holding a parent education night in early November.

Students don't know about addiction as a disease, the TAC students reported, and think that alcohol and drug use is just fun. It was generally agreed that more education at the schools would be very helpful, perhaps as part of the new health classes being adopted for sophomores.

The sophomore year is critical to addressing systemic stress levels and helping arm students, said Parks, and deficits promote drug use.

Parks added that they would like to dig a lot deeper but haven't yet had time. Miramonte is working with Jaime Rich of ADAPT Lamorinda on various programs (see related story page A9), including Red Watch Band training for all sophomores where teens get some comprehensive training on signs of drug and alcohol abuse and how to re-

spond if someone might be in an emergency situation, including first aid and CPR training.

Sometimes preventive measures are not enough, Parks said. "When we catch a child using they are suspended 100 percent of the time," she added. There have been no suspensions at Miramonte this year.

Miramonte continues to put little things in place. Kids are not allowed to bring bags into football games. Generally we do not allow water bottles, Parks said, using them for alcohol is an old trick. Away games are harder to supervise.

Miramonte is currently working with their parents' club to get more cameras on campus, as well as partnering with the Orinda police department. Parks stated that officers are often on campus to get to know the kids so that the kids feel comfortable with them, adding, "They've been a great support."

Parks concluded, "I'm glad that we're talking about it, glad that the whole community is talking about it. Student leaders are brave and powerful. We all need to be talking about this and working together. While we remain vigilant and focused and are actively working with the police department to continue to tackle this issue, we feel strongly that the best approach is a collaborative one that involves all stakeholders. It takes a village to raise our kids!"

## Tiny tots trick-or-treat at Orinda park

... continued from page A1



Participants in the Orinda Halloween parade for tots scoop up surprises from pumpkin Josh Hays.

Then they did it again. The highlight for Dean Bennett, 3, of Orinda was meeting real police and fireman, says mom Lauren Geeves. In his own fire costume, Dean was a natural posing on the Moraga-Orinda

Fire District truck with MOFD Engineer-Paramedic Jon Ford and Capt.-Paramedic Mike Lacy.

"Orinda sure makes it fun and easy for the little ones to get dressed up and have a good time," Geeves said, adding that although this was Dean's first parade, "he will be back!"

A friendly inflatable Frankenstein proved a popular photo backdrop after the tots finished their crafts and noshed on cupcakes washed down with apple juice. "The families love the small-town city sponsored event," Weiss said.

The tots wore the costumes, but the parents and caregivers were covered in smiles.



Nanny Tina Schumacher is all smiles with Thomas (banana) and William. Photos Cathy Dausman



Dean Bennett, 3, of Orinda sits with MOFD Engineer-Paramedic Jon Ford, left, and Capt.-Paramedic Mike Lacy, right.



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## Second annual Doggone Fun Fest fundraiser set

By Sora O'Doherty



A few pics of pooches from last year's event.

Photos courtesy Tom Lavin

The Orinda Park and Recreation Foundation, raising money for park and recreational activities in Orinda since 1975, is holding its second annual Doggone Fun Fest from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 5 at the Orinda Center Community Park. The free event was originally scheduled in October, but had to

be rescheduled owing to poor air quality caused by the North Bay fires. The fun fest will feature demonstrations in dog obedience and agility plus a demonstration by the sheriff's canine unit. Contests will feature best in obedience, best trick and the best human/canine duo costume.

A raffle will be held to help raise money for park and recreational needs in the community. Raffle prizes will include gift certificates from Pet Express, a gift certificate from Orinda Grooming (limited to dogs of less than 60 pounds), a gift basket full of fun pet items and a gift certificate for

either a free night of overnight care (minimum 7 nights) or 20 percent off dog walking (for one dog) for up to two walks, and a book by local author Ginger Wadsworth, "Poop Detectives." Other prizes will include \$50 gift certificates from Wild Magnolia Restaurant, The 4th Bore Restaurant, and a gift

certificate from Loard's Ice Cream for a double scoop cone once a month for a year.

Peet's Coffee and Tea will be providing cool drinks for everyone and Loard's will be in attendance with their mobile ice cream unit.

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CalBRE#01221247



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Maureen Wilbur  
CalBRE#01268536



**Moraga**  
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Walter Nelson  
CalBRE#01461463



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### Fire Districts

#### Public Meetings

**Moraga-Orinda Fire District** Board of Directors  
Wednesday, Nov. 15, 7 p.m.  
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit [www.mofd.org](http://www.mofd.org)

**ConFire** Board of Directors  
Tuesday, Nov. 14, 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 accelerates pay down of its long-term liabilities

By Nick Marnell

Continuing on its march toward financial sustainability, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District board voted to contribute the largest payment yet to its retiree health benefit trust fund and to lower the plan discount rate, accelerating the reduction of its liability for other post-employment benefits.

Battered by financial woes from earlier this decade, the district rose from the canvas in 2015 and created a trust account to accumulate reserve funds to pay off its unfunded retiree health care liability. MOFD later created a similar pension stabilization trust to pay down its unfunded pension liability.

As of June 30, the district recognized \$15.2 million in net OPEB liability. In its retiree health benefit trust sat \$473,000 as of the same date. Determining that unfunded liabilities pose a threat to the district's financial condition and its ability to provide service, MOFD decided to accelerate the reduction of the OPEB liability and agreed to a 6.25 percent discount rate over an amortization period of 20 years.

"When you have a liability, the worst thing you can do is stretch it way out so that it never gets paid off," said Director John Jex. Gloriann Sasser, district administrative services director, said that financial

experts recommend to not go beyond a 20-year amortization.

As a result, the contribution to the OPEB trust jumped from a budgeted \$280,000 to \$374,000 for the current fiscal year. The district also increased its contribution to the pension stabilization fund by the same amount.

Capt. Mark McCullah, district union representative, questioned what operational funds were to be cut to pay for this increased contribution to the OPEB trust, but according to figures Sasser presented to the board, the extra money would come from a projected surplus in the district general fund.

The lone dissenting vote against increasing the trust fund contribution was cast by President Kathleen Famulener, still bristling over the budget cuts the board ordered earlier this year.

"The \$375,000 which was cut from this year's operating budget was supposed to give the district a comfortable general fund reserve for unforeseen expenses," Famulener said. "In three years, the district will have the money to make large contributions to reduce future unfunded liabilities, but right now we need the money in our general fund."

## Station 16 permit approved and ConFire ready to build

By John T. Miller

After a wait of nearly six years since the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors closed down Station 16 in Lafayette, plans to rebuild are currently going through the permit process, and the station at the corner of Upper Happy Valley Road and Los Arabis Drive is about to be rebuilt.

Lafayette residents in the area will likely be relieved to hear the news, as their homes are surrounded by the same type of brush that led to the 1991 Oakland Hills fire.

The station will cover approximately 3,800 square feet and reopen on the same site as the previous one. It will have three bedrooms instead of one, and will include a workout area, an extractor machine to remove carcinogens from the firefighters' gear, and other more modern amenities.

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Deputy Fire Chief Lewis Broschard, at the Oct. 18 Lafayette Emergency Services Task Force meeting, said, "With the improved economy and the current finances, we no longer have to look at having to borrow to finance the building. We've got the capital to build it right now."

Plans were approved last week by the building department and the permit was issued. Broschard and the construction management firm met last Wednesday to start the bidding process.

"There are five contractors already prequalified to bid," said Broschard, "so it should happen

quickly. We can then take it to the board and get some shovels in the ground."

The demolition of the existing building should take place soon and be completed by the end of the year.

The station was originally slated for closure when mold contamination resulting from rodent infestation was discovered, and in December 2012, the county board closed Station 16 along with stations in Clayton, Martinez and Walnut Creek, saving the district \$3 million a year at a time when ConFire was \$17 million in debt with no reserves.

In 2012, voters struck down Measure Q, a \$75-per-parcel bond issue, so the station never got the anticipated rebuild.

At one point the city of Lafayette threatened to detach from ConFire and join the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, but ConFire Chief Jeff Carman explained that the resources of ConFire, a much larger district, were far superior to MOFD.

Broschard met with the construction management firm Kitchell, which will manage the project from the bidding process through closeout. It will take until January to finish specifications and documents before going to bid, and the construction should be completed, barring unexpected delays, by February of 2019 at the earliest.

At the Task Force meeting, City Manager Steven Falk said, "The

city will work very closely with ConFire to make sure the station gets built as soon as possible. We'll

do everything in our power to expedite the process."

## Grass fire shuts down Moraga Road



Photo Vaughn Luthringer

Moraga Road between Corliss Drive and St. Mary's Road was closed to traffic for nearly 12 hours Oct. 19 after a car crashed into a utility pole and started two grass fires.

According to Moraga-Orinda Fire District Interim Chief Jerry

Lee, the crash caused extensive damage to the pole, and because of the heat and the dry conditions, sparks ignited a 400 square foot grass fire. A second utility pole was damaged resulting in another small grass fire across the road.

No injuries were reported.

## Lafayette City Council approves three-year extension

... continued from page A1

Several of the council members who approved the package indicated that many of the grievances should be directed at the council, since Falk's role is to carry out its plans, not to make policy.

In regard to the salary, Council Member Mark Mitchell pointed out that Lafayette is one of only 10 cities out of 649 in California that is not in a CalPers retirement plan. "The costs (for retirement) are real, and this should not be compared to a salary that includes a retirement package."

Mayor Mike Anderson pointed out that Falk has been doing a good job for 21 years, and how rare it is for a city to have that kind of conti-

nunity.

Council Member Samson commented that he had no problem with the financial portions of the contract, but his "no" vote centered around some objections to the non-financial components.

Asked about the three-year extension, Falk answered, "I'm gratified the council is interested in me serving three more years. I've enjoyed every single day of my 27 years working for the city of Lafayette (21 as city manager). I have the finest staff on the planet and one of the best city councils in California to work with."

## EBMUD land swap deal

... continued from page A2

The council voted 5-0 to continue the discussion until the next meeting to review the six-year-old land swap agreement, the parking needs survey and how to argue the case. The council also agreed to call an emergency meeting earlier, if necessary.

Several members of the community spoke on another issue concerning the roadway near the EBMUD power plant, questioning the

length of the median proposed on Mt. Diablo Boulevard somewhere near the cemetery in the east end of Lafayette.

Three speakers were concerned about the length of the median - EBMUD claimed it needed to be 4 feet long to protect an air valve, while the city plans indicated 50 feet. They requested that the council be aware that it would affect their end of town in a negative fashion.

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# Forum focuses on combating high prevalence of alcohol and drug abuse in teens

By Sora O'Doherty

According to the California Healthy Kids Survey, which is administered every two years at every school in the state of seventh, ninth and 11th grade students, Lamorinda outpaced the rest of the county and even the state on substance use prevalence, with over 40 percent of Lamorinda 11th graders reporting use of alcohol or drugs within the past 30 days, and 20 percent reporting episodes of binge drinking within the past 30 days. In addition, over 20 percent of 11th graders reported that they had been "very drunk" seven or more times in their lives.

The Lamorinda Regional Community Forum on Alcohol and Other Drug Services met Oct. 19 in the Lafayette Library for the purpose of garnering community feedback on updating the five-year Strategic Plan for Contra Costa County Alcohol and Other Drugs Prevention. The current plan was adopted to cover the period 2013 through 2018 and identified three major goals: to reduce underage drinking, to reduce marijuana use, and to maintain the capacity of sustainability of the AOD prevention system.

The presenters included Jaime Rich, director of ADAPT, and from the Contra Costa County Behavioral Health Department Fatima Matal Sol, AODS program chief, and Isabelle Kirske, prevention coordinator. Others in attendance included a variety of professionals in the field, members of the Orinda Teen Advisory Council, and inter-

ested members of the public.

The group viewed a Power-Point presentation that included statistics of Lamorinda substance use, prevalence, and access and availability of marijuana and alcohol. Three breakout groups at the forum discussed goals, the main trends, issues or problems that deserve focus; recommended prevention programs or strategies.

One reported trend was that parents are sometimes asking schools for the return of drugs and alcohol confiscated from their children. While parent education and teaching parents what to look for is the key, it was said, it can be difficult to get parents to attend educational events. To engage parents, it was suggested that presentations should be like TED talks: succinct and mildly entertaining. It is also important to keep on top of emerging issues, such as prescription drug use. One breakout group noted that some parents think that marijuana is less damaging than alcohol, but that they may be unaware of the changes to modern marijuana, which is more potent and dangerous than it was decades ago. The focus should be on the degree of harm, as opposed to abstinence, and peer-to-peer counseling was considered ideal, but difficult to achieve.

In regard to drug use on high school campus, the sense of the group seemed to be that there should be consistently applied consequences, although it was also noted that kids are not afraid of

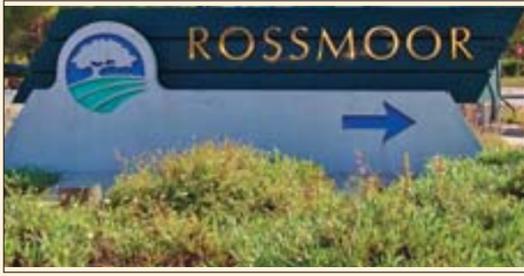
consequences. Diversion programs and counseling were favored, with an emphasis on how to make diversion useful instead of punitive.

The problems include the easy

availability of marijuana, which is also very easy to conceal (See related story on page A6). The availability of edible marijuana was also discussed. Parents, it was felt, are

very unaware of the problems. A major goal should be to continue to raise awareness, especially among parents.

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## Moraga School District

... continued from page A4

When the committee was formed at the beginning of the year, its first task was to amend the district's mission statement and include cultural awareness. The text can be found online on the MSD governing board page (<http://www.moraga.k12.ca.us/govbd>). Jessica Meeks, an MSD parent and chair of the committee, explained that it is now working on developing standards to meet this statement, and is seeking parent input. To illustrate that need, Burns asked, "Where do we draw the line? Do we do it when Johnny pushes Mary? When someone makes a comment on someone's weight or ethnicity?"

One district parent talked about her daughter, who is the only child in the district registered as of

American Indian origin, and how the celebration of colonial days was difficult for the family as these episodes are reminiscent of how American Indians were nearly exterminated. Burns responded that this comment reinforced the fact that all voices needed to be listened to with an open mind, and reflect the best ways to prepare the children for their future.

A first action will be to increase the amount of books in school libraries that support cultural awareness with age appropriate material. Before the next meeting, members will start fleshing out high-level concepts. The next meeting will be held at the Joaquin Moraga Intermediate library on Nov. 27 at 3:30 p.m., it is opened to the public.



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## Lafayette entrepreneur creates unique jewelry inspired by love of water

By Kara Navolio



Resin jewelry designs by Marisa Tashima

Launching a business takes planning, smarts, creativity, and an entrepreneurial spirit. It's rare to find all those qualities in a 21-year-old. But Lafayette resident Marisa Tashima has done it with her own brand of jewelry, which she designs and creates herself.

Tashima's business name, Kainoa Designs, is Hawaiian for "endless sea." As a former Walnut Creek Aquanaut and synchronized swimmer for Stanford University, many of the designs are inspired by her love of the water and her family's connection to Hawaii.

The 2013 Acalanes graduate studied product design engineering at Stanford and graduated with her bachelor's degree this past June. Her major, which combines art and science, allowed her to take art classes as well as courses in manufacturing, engineering and design. She has always loved making things.

"I am passionate about sharing my artwork with a larger community," Tashima said. "I love creating jewelry and am inspired to see my craft worn and admired by others. Starting my own business was a daunting idea at the beginning, but once realizing that I could conquer it little by little, I was excited to face the challenge."

The pendants and earrings are made of resin, a type of substance that starts out as a liquid, then hardens into a clear plastic over a 24-hour period. Tashima embeds different materials in the resin to create unique looks. She usually starts with a background color by adding acrylic paint; then she layers things like iridescent paper, glitter, metal leaf, tiny shells, charms, and even candy sprinkles. With her Etsy shop and personal sales, she has sold over 100 pieces. Lafayette resident Mary Ilyin, who purchased a pendant, said, "The piece I pur-

chased was beautiful and the packaging was clever and creative."

Tashima was inspired by fused glass jewelry and liked the vibrant colors and designs, but working with fused glass takes an investment in equipment that was prohibitive. She found that she could get a similar look using resin and taught herself to use it.

She plans to continue designing and making jewelry even as she pursues a career with a consumer product company in product design.

Her products can be found on Etsy (an online shopping website of handcrafted items) and retail for \$22-\$28.

Lafayette resident Carol Escajeda is a fan. "I gifted the rainbow earrings to my sister who lives in Iowa," she said. "On a recent visit she wore them every day, and I could see why, they're very eye-catching!"

## Business symposium focuses on 'getting back to basics'

Submitted by Kathe Nelson

Four distinguished panelists will examine various trends, challenges, solutions and opportunities in the current retail and business environment at a free business and community symposium sponsored by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14 at the Saint Mary's College Soda Center.

Sneha Patel is the operations manager with The UPS Store, Inc. supporting franchisees in Northern California and Nevada based in Sacramento. The UPS Store is a leading franchise and has over 5,000 locations with one each in Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. Sneha is a former franchisee and focuses on growing top line revenue and bottom line profits, while increasing efficiency.

Jay Kerner, the president and CEO of U.S. Realty Partners, a

regional commercial real estate operating company which is the new owner of the Rheem Shopping Center, will share his experience creating successful high-quality retail shopping centers and his vision for revitalizing the Rheem. A UCLA grad, Kerner has almost three decades of experience in acquiring, operating, developing and leasing major retail and mixed-use properties.

Tom Frainier is CEO/president of Semifreddi's Bakery. He has a BS and MBA from UC Berkeley's Hass School of Business and spent seven highly successful years at Clorox in finance and accounting before joining his sister and brother-in-law at Semifreddi's in 1988. Semifreddi's fresh bread is a staple in Lamorinda. Frainier, a Moraga resident, will share the philosophy and vision that keeps it all hum-

ming.

Lena Waters, vice president, integrated marketing with DocuSign leads cross-functional teams that orchestrate digital and in-person experiences that drive demand for sales teams, build brands, grow revenue and delight customers. Lena and her family live in Moraga.

"The Customer Experience" symposium will begin with refreshments at 6:30 p.m. followed by the formal program at 6:45 p.m. There will also be an opportunity for the audience to submit questions to the panelists. The event is a Lamorinda-wide tri-chamber event presented by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce and is made possible by generous sponsorships from Saint Mary's College, Republic Services and Wells Fargo Bank.

## Planning Commission has doubts

... continued from page A5

A first version of the text had proposed that any place along the scenic corridors be used to check the 35 percent undeveloped rule, but instead, staff proposed that certain specific vantage points be defined around town from which the views will need to be protected. Clark explained that this approach made it more predictable and fair to developers.

The commissioners also discussed the maximum height permitted on a hillside lot. Currently the maximum height for a building is 35 feet measured from the top of the highest part of the building to the grade below that part, and a 45-foot aggregate, measured from the highest point to the lowest point of the foundation. The new maximums would be 32 feet and 37 feet for the aggregate.

The commissioners were concerned, however, with a rule that would limit in perpetuity development in high-risk areas to one home per 20 acres, even if the developer

remediates the site to a non-hazardous status. Until now, if a developer amended the site, it would become eligible for a one home per 5 acres rule. Staff indicated that this change would be compliant with the Moraga Open Space Ordinance that was approved by voters. Commissioner Steve Woehleke said that this would be non-compliant with the General Plan and could not be supported by the commission. Chair Christine Kuckuk agreed and was followed by most of the other commissioners present.

Several property owners and developers spoke in opposition of the new text. David Bruzzone, whose family owns most of the open space undeveloped in Moraga, said that the process was destructive to the future of the community, that it would create a more convoluted process for developers, and that the only certainty was that the town would have to face a lawsuit. He added that these changes

would preclude development in the downtown as well.

Michael Carradine, who also owns a lot in a MOSO area, asked the town to stop the process. He said that in 2008 the residents rejected at the November ballot strengthening the open space development regulations, and that staff or elected officials had no mandate to change what the voters did not want to touch.

Other residents expressed their support of the change, including Suzanne Jones for the Protect Lamorinda Open Space and former mayor Lynda Deschambault.

New commissioner Karl Davis wanted to study the proposed regulations de novo, but his colleagues did not support his request. The commissioners approved forwarding the proposed amendments to the town council, adding that a majority did not support changing development density rules in high-risk areas.

# Saranap Nostalgia: Digging into the past

By John T. Miller



Leo's Mobil Service Station opened in 1958.

With Hall Equities Group set to begin work on the new Saranap Village, we take another nostalgic look back to dig up old memories before the backhoes arrive.

Last issue recalled the old LaRossa Market site, which went from chicken ranch to batting cages. This issue looks at the old Sufism Reoriented Center – with an equally multifaceted existence – and the lot across the street where Leo's Mobil Service Station once sat. Off to the side, we visit Danny Van Allen's bar, where most of the folks who worked in the area gathered after work.

Beginning in 1895, according to Dorothy M. Ligda's book, "Saranap Then and Now" (2006), many Portuguese from the Azores jumped ship in San Francisco and made their way to the area. With them they brought a fraternal and beneficial society, which translated to the Holy Ghost Association.

Each year they held Festas do Espirito Santo (Festivals of the Holy Spirit), which involved a parade with participants carrying baskets of bread on their heads, the crownings of queens and a community meal.

In the 1950s, they purchased land for their building and used it for their celebrations. David Dacus, president of the Saranap Community Association, recalls hearing that they would often slaughter bulls in the parking lot. They rented it out for functions such as weddings, dances, the Kiwanis, and to a local Sunday School class.

Beginning in the mid-60s, a group called Golden Records rented the Hall to feature the many rock bands in the area, often in a Battle of the Bands with a \$50 prize.

Members of Beggars' Opera, a local group, recall the HGH as a desirable place to play. Dave McCullough, a Saranap resident who played lead guitar, says, "If you got to play at Holy Ghost, it meant you were good."

People came from as far as Antioch and Pittsburg, and there were often skirmishes in the parking lot. "Once," recalls their organist, Bret Smith, "there was trouble starting and someone shot a hole in a car with a .35-caliber pistol."

Smith's girlfriend fancied herself as the band's go-go dancer and would dance with anyone in exchange for the ticket, which she would then use to stuff the ballot box to help Beggars' win the Battle.

Their drummer Mike Greene, who also resides in Saranap, once had to flee from members of another band who were mad at the

methods employed to win the contest, and went on a zigzag tour of the county in his Volkswagen van to outrun his pursuers.

Residents recall that the Grateful Dead and Sonny and Cher each played there.

After the concerts died out, the Hall was made over into the Iron Gate Restaurant. Dacus reports that it was decorated with chandeliers made from old wagon wheels, with a dark bar and a dance floor.

Sufism Reoriented bought the Iron Gate Restaurant in December, 1974, gutted the inside and made it over into their temporary meeting hall.

Across the street is a vacant lot that was once a gas station run by Leo Frank. The Franks opened Leo's Mobile Service in 1958.

Frank's son, Dave, recalls the details of buying the station: "The previous owner got tired of running the business and just wanted out, so he told my dad he could have it. My father wanted a legal contract, though, so he arranged to buy it for one dollar!"

Dave Frank started working at the station as a freshman while at Las Lomas High school, pumping gas and washing cars, and was soon joined by his brother, Brian.

Dave recalls going with his father to fix Stanley Dollar's tractor at his large ranch (pre-Rossmoor). "One of our customers rode horses with Stanley's daughter," he said. "They'd ride way out Ygnacio Valley Road, before there was anything there."

In 1988, the Franks sold the property to a developer, who wanted to build medical offices, but a lack of parking and other issues forced them to sell back to the bank.

Leo Frank moved their car repair business to the Texaco station run by Norm Borgwardt at the corner of Tice Valley Boulevard and Olympic Drive, where they leased space for 15 years. Now, Frank's Auto Repair is back on Boulevard Way next door to the Saranap Village site.

The business, nearing its 60th year, will pass down to Douglas Frank, who currently lives in his grandfather's old house, just around the corner from the new development. In May of 2002, Sufism bought the empty lot from Nazari Trust.

While Danny Van Allen's bar was just to the side of the Saranap Village site, nestled below what is now Belmont Hardware, some of the residue from when it burned down in the late-70s may be removed with the new construction.

Photos John T. Miller

Dacus recalls that it was like an urban corner bar stuck in a suburban setting, and Valley Glass office manager Sherry Elliott says it was known as The Social Club: "All the merchants in the area would go there after work to unwind."

The owner had caricatures drawn of each of the local business owners and hung them on the walls, much like a downtown bar might feature famous celebrities on theirs.

According to an HEG spokesperson, the company hopes to begin grading work by mid-2018 or Spring 2019, depending on county permits and the weather, and Saranap will enter a new era.

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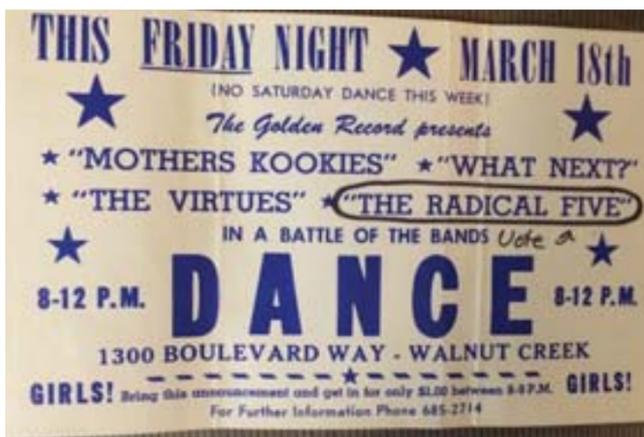


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Giving Dreams an Address

## Moraga revenue measure survey

... continued from page A1

The survey that will be discussed on Nov. 8 was conducted by Godbe Research and was facilitated through different types of media: emails, land lines and cell phones. Cunningham explains that there were different iterations of the survey, some testing negative views of the town, some testing positive views, and that it had been constructed by Godbe using surveying best practices that she says are based on scientific methods.

Cunningham explained that the survey combined two types of questions: Would residents support a utility users tax, or would they support a parcel fee for storm drains? She said that the double set of questions could have made the survey somewhat confusing, but that the town combined it in order to save money.

The fee could be put on a March mail-in ballot requiring only a 50 percent majority. The funds garnered would be restricted to storm drains only and would not improve the state of the town's reserves. The UUT would have to be put on a regular ballot, such as in the November 2018 election. The survey results indicated that residents would not support this option, and Cunningham indicated that for this reason staff would not recommend this option at this time.

One troubling fact that emerged from the survey was that 43 percent of the population believes that the town is "not going in the right direction," twice as many people responding this way over last year, when a majority trusted the town. The question was vague, however, and did not provide an explanation about what was wrong and what should be changed.

The results of the survey will be presented to the town council on Nov. 8, and can be found online at <http://www.moraga.ca.us/StormDrainProject>. It is not certain that the council will make any type of decision on that day. As usual, the meeting is public and residents are encouraged to participate. The meeting can also be seen live online at [livestream.com/moraga](http://livestream.com/moraga).

## Facts about UUTs and a storm drain fee

User utility taxes are taxes that a city or county can impose on utility bills such as electricity, gas, water, sewer, telephone (including cell phones), sanitation and cable television. In California the rate varies from a low of 1 percent to a high of 11 percent. A UUT is either a general tax placed on a regular ballot that requires a simple majority vote, or a special tax restricted to the purpose stated in the measure; it can then be proposed at any election and needs a 2/3 majority. About half of the residents of California pay a UUT. The survey proposed a UUT that would generate \$1.9 million annually to the town, an increase of about 20 percent of its current budget, equating to approximately \$316 per household per year. The revenue could be used for other purposes than storm drains. Because utility bills can vary greatly from residence to residence, however, the estimated tax burden for one household could be sizably different from another.

The storm drain fee would not be the same for different properties; it would vary depending on how much that property impacts the storm drain system. It would be calculated contingent upon the amount of impervious surface around houses or commercial properties. Size of a property and aerial pictures can be used to determine the fee. If someone replaces a concrete driveway with permeable pavers, that person could appeal for a lower fee. Residents part of an HOA who already pay a fee for the private drainage in the HOA would pay a lower fee.



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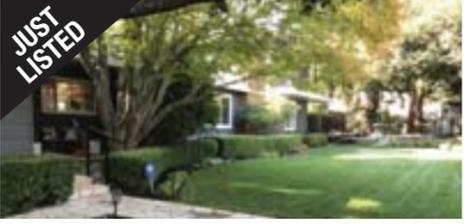
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# ~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

## Lafayette experiences art on the cutting edge with Art Moves Project

By Sophie Braccini



Dancers perform Oct. 20 at the Coffee Shop on Lafayette Circle. Photo Sophie Braccini

Something new and fresh recently swept into Lafayette Circle like an invigorating breeze.

People sitting at the outside tables under the trees at the Coffee Shop, as well as passersby, suddenly became a part of a live art experience, which combined visual art and dance. It lasted for 20 minutes and then it was gone. Ravishing, surprising, thought provoking. "Edifice: Uncovered" was a gift to the community Oct. 20 as part of the Art Moves Project, led by three Lafayette artists, and supported by several local organizations.

Yukie Fujimoto, Christy Mack and Lissa Resnick met through their kids' schools and swim teams, and were part of parents-led activities before they realized they had a passion in common: art.

Fujimoto is a dancer and teacher, Resnick is a choreographer, and Mack is an art activist and supporter. They all expressed the same regret that they were able to practice and create art outside of their Lamorinda community, but that nothing really cutting edge was happening here in terms of events. They decided to take it into their own hands.

The idea is to create a live art experience in a public space, combining different art forms. The public is invited to witness and enjoy the art, but also to participate. At the Coffee Shop people were offered paper and pens to express their emotions and thoughts after the performance on a writing wall.

This first public event created a dynamic between visual artist Marcia Barrow Taylor and Resnick's No Strings Attached Dance Company. Their work delved into "What's Inside?" Barrow Taylor is a fiber artist who created a life-size paper mannequin and an intricate yarn display for the performance. The dancers, following Resnick's choreography appropriated and incorporated the displays in their movements, while modern

and evocative music played. The ensemble of 10 dancers expressed a quest and a struggle, looking behind appearances.

It was both unsettling and moving to be so close to the artists, feeling their emotions, sensing the work and the gracefulness, immersed in beauty.

Fujimoto, Mack and Resnick were pleased to see how many people came. Some knew this was going to happen, others just stopped, intrigued by the preparations.

Lots of work, of course, went on before the performance. First the three women needed to raise the money to make it happen, adamant that the artists should be paid for their work. AMP is supported by the Lamorinda Arts Council's Arts Incubator Program, the Lafayette Community Foundation and private donors. Last May, a similar event was performed at a private residence as a fundraiser.

The three founders discovered that many local actors, involved or not in the arts, were behind the project. The owner of the Coffee Shop at 50 Lafayette Circle saw the ladies exploring the site one day gave and them free access; Jennifer Perlmutter, who owns an art gallery on Mt. Diablo Boulevard, put Mack in touch with Lawrence Kohl, the president of LAC that became the project's fiscal sponsor.

"The AMP performance at the coffee shop took me away for a brief period of time. The choreography held a strong narrative for me and following the dancers and artist, I was transported," said Perlmutter afterward. "This experience was a gift to guests and even better when simply stumbled upon in the middle of your day. It is transformative to witness art in action!"

Fujimoto, Mack and Resnick also found an early supporter in Jay Lifson at the Chamber of Commerce; Tom Taneyhill on the Lafayette Public Art Committee

shared information about the Lafayette public art scene; the Art Room across the street from the café gave the space for the dancers to get ready; the Coffee Shop gave 10 percent of its proceeds during and after the event to the project.

The Art Moves Project ladies say that they will look for grants for the next event. For more information, visit [www.lamorindaarts.org/artsincubator](http://www.lamorindaarts.org/artsincubator) or the AMP Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/ArtMovesProject](http://www.facebook.com/ArtMovesProject).



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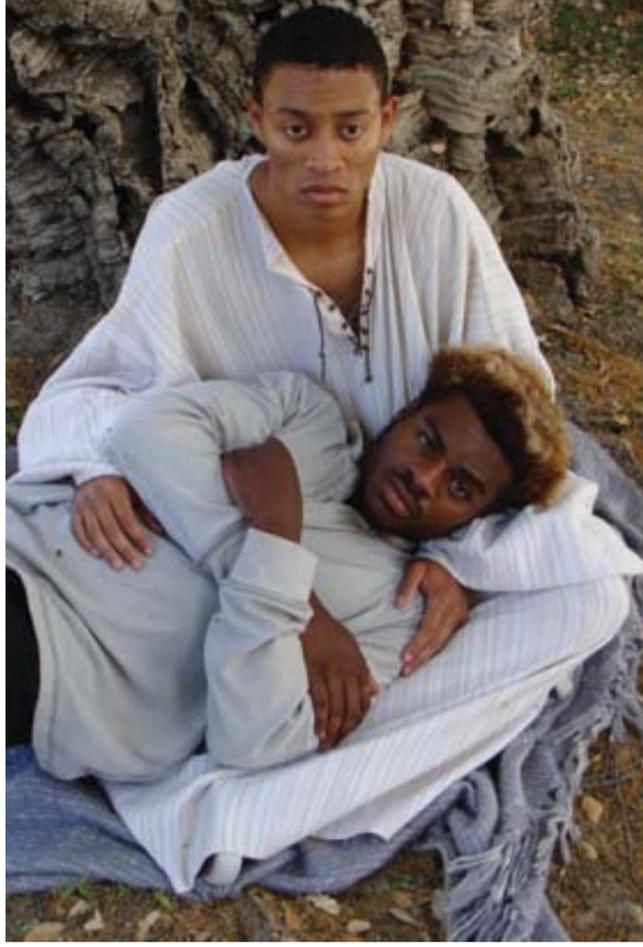


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**'Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi' opens at SMC tonight**

By Lou Fancher



Justin Howard and Angelo Chukwudebe

manistic love, respect for other people's dignity and family relationships reborn after barren, "winter periods," the play suggests that empathy requires imagination. Through empathy and imagination, transformational futures have potential to be realized. "When I was growing up, for a real-life example, I was told there would never be a Black president," says Prestininzi. "It was a failing in my imagination that I accepted that. Lo and behold: Barak Obama. Imagination isn't fantasy or pretend, it's a way of creating a future that we want. Marcus doesn't see imagining as escape. It's learning how to create the future that should be here, could be here. Theater is a public square, a safe place where we come together to imagine, to practice our emotions as a group."

People also come to theater to be entertained and "Jesus Moonwalks" provides multiple mechanism, most visibly in the character of Mississippi the River. Embodied in more than one person in the Saint Mary's iteration - Gardley gave Prestininzi full permission to "play" with the play - three actors are joined onstage by vocalists Michelle Jacques and members of her five-person a capella ensemble, Chelle's Juke Joint. "The songs are a living presence; the music is like a coded telegram," says Prestininzi. "You sing 'Wade in the River' because you are telling runaway slaves to go into the river to escape the dogs who are following the scent." In songs other than known, published spirituals, Gardley provided the lyrics and the actors created an original, melodic line.

In rehearsals, the students have worked to master Gardley's athletic language that demands agility to capture the musicality and specificity of various textures, tones of physical manifestations and other attributes. Prestininzi has chosen at times to voluntarily give up authority. "I'm a white man and don't know how a line will feel to a young black woman, for example. I need to allow her to try it out and tell me how it feels. Having Marcus's spirit present in the room reminds me that you can have imaginative, transformative energy. That's affirmative for me."

If there is paradox in Gardley's work, it is this: For history and people to move forward and capture reconciliation and healing, we must acknowledge and live with loss. Hope requires as much imagination as does empathy, which is why the best imagined future is one in which the work of Gardley and writers like him is preserved.

If there is a 21st-century voice that continues to be heard for centuries or decades, we might hope it is the voice of Oakland-born playwright Marcus Gardley. Like the writing of William Shakespeare, Anton Chekhov, Eugene O'Neill, John Steinbeck, James Baldwin, August Wilson, Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou and others, Gardley's layered language carries the heft of mythology, history and imagination while capturing the lexicon of an era, a community and a culture. Characters in Gardley's works for theater express with uncommon grace and without ostentation the power and poetic prose of conversation. Well-designed but organic-to-the-ear phrases exhibit human nobility, dignity, humor, pain, poisonous prejudice and most often, relentless pursuit of connection to a spiritual or actual "other." The African-American experience in the United States is deeply embedded in Gardley's work.

Lamorinda had the opportunity in late summer 2017 to experience Gardley's poignant, explosive re-envisioning of Homer's "The Odyssey" in California Shakespeare Theater's West Coast premiere, "black odyssey." Performances at Orinda's outdoor Bruns Amphitheater set attendance records; sold-out shows and audience response prompted the company to announce a return of the production as part of the 2018 season.

Upcoming, Gardley's "Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi," is presented Nov. 1-5 by the Performing Arts Department at Saint Mary's College. Written in 2010, the play retells the story of the goddess Demeter, who in mythology longs for her daughter, Persephone, who was taken from her by Hades to be his wife in the Underworld. Transposed, the narrative has a father searching in 1863 on the banks of the Mississippi river for his daughter, Po'em. Wrapped within the Civil War and Black experience - a frame that reverberates from

early slavery to the 1960s to current social and civil rights justice issues - "Jesus Moonwalks" features a distinctive score that includes traditional spirituals and gospel music.

The Saint Mary's production is directed by guest artist Ken Prestininzi, who during the 2017-18 term teaches playwriting and performance at the college. Prestininzi is an associate professor of theatre at Connecticut College and former artistic director of the Brown/Trinity Playwrights Repertory Theatre.

"Marcus and I had a meeting with the students in this production," says Prestininzi. "He talked about our responsibility to bring these stories forward. How we heal and imagine something by the way we tell and claim the story. You have a reckoning while you bring the truth forward. He told them that every day you must love a stranger and forgive a friend. That's his mantra, every day. He stressed every day."

Based on a story told to Gardley by his great-grandmother, the play bears the imprint of generational storytelling. "Like his 'black odyssey,' it's a continuous public dreaming," says Prestininzi. "Myth is not a throwback. He uses myths, his religious upbringing and family storytelling - and then adds a part of himself to the story."

With themes that include hu-



# Campo grad Danielle Wong makes her literary debut with 'Swearing Off Stars'

By Sophie Braccini



Danielle Wong at her book signing in Emeryville.

Danielle Wong graciously presented her first book, "Swearing Off Stars," at the Emeryville Barnes and Noble bookstore Oct. 3 in front of an audience of about 50 people. It was the young woman's first time doing such a thing, she was not put off by the various questions and was pleased to see that her first readers had understood what she wanted to do: defend her values and affect change through her writing.

A young open-minded Californian, Wong wrote a passionate love story where the heroines have to fight against prejudices. Drawing on the young author's passions and knowledge, the multitude of topics addressed in the book is a testimony to Wong's large array of interests, her desire to defend good causes, and her already varied and sometimes painful life experiences. As she begins writing her second book, Wong has also learned to navigate another aspect of an author's life: promoting her work.

In post World War I England, young American girl Amelia (Lia), has come to Oxford to study. It is the early 1920s and women are authorized to listen to lectures, but not to matriculate or actively participate in class. Soon, enthralled by beautiful and smart Scarlett, Lia will participate in the early English feminist movement and realize that her attrac-

tion to Scarlett is more than just as a friend. Their story is far from simple and spans several decades and continents, ending tragically but beautifully on an island in the Bahamas in the 1950s.

Wong's 30-year saga is tightly penned in just 250 pages. The book is well crafted in a vivid style. Although Wong is heterosexual, she was always interested in oppressed minority groups and their fight for equal rights. The heroines of "Swearing Off Stars" have to fight to exist as women and as lesbians, in the context of both the society and their own families.

It took Wong a year and a half to draft the book, and then another two years of research to complete it. The fiction is infused with the knowledge she gained in college, taking classes about the LGBTQ movement, and during long hours in the library in Washington, D.C., where she lived a few years ago before coming back to Moraga with her husband.

Wong defines herself as a feminist, meaning that for her, men and women have equal rights and should be treated the same. She does not shy away from the term feminist; some of the young women in her age group do not like to use the term because they see it as aggressive toward men. It is not this young woman's view. Her feminism is based in a quiet recognition of women's courage,

first among them her mother, who was the pillar of their family after her father suffered a massive stroke when Wong was a freshman at Campolindo and died of immune diseases after several years of rehabilitation.

This tragic family drama nourishes Wong's prose, in a romanticized way of course, but when she writes about anger and grief, the young author's words ring true. The family tragedy also taught her that life is short, that everything can change from one day to the next, and that it is urgent to live to the fullest and get things done.

Her brief time as a flight attendant and her travels all over the world also inform the story.

After finishing the novel, Wong contacted small editors that accept unsolicited books and decided to work with She Writes Press, a hybrid publisher, meaning that the author has to cover some of the marketing costs, but controls the production aspects and retains the rights to the manuscript. Ingram Publisher Services has started distributing the book, including on the Barnes and Noble network and Amazon.

Wong wants to be a full-time writer. The next book she is writing is part romance, part thriller for young adults. She plans to do more presentations of "Swearing Off Stars" in local bookstores.

Photo Sophie Braccini



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# Hiroshima survivor speaks at St. Mark's

Submitted by Linda Doran



Takashi Tanemori

Photo provided

Takashi Tanemori of Berkeley, author of "Hiroshima: Bridge to Forgiveness" will speak at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Orinda at 10 a.m. Friday, Nov. 3 to share his survivor story of the bombing of Hiroshima during World War II, as part of "Kindling New Fires for Peace, World Community Day."

Tanemori was seven-tenths of a mile from ground zero during the bombing on Aug. 6, 1945. Six members of his family lost their

lives that day, and he struggled for many years to forgive the Americans for the bombing. Not only has Tanemori now forgiven, but he puts forth ongoing efforts to promote peace.

"Even though I am now almost completely blind due to the late embers of the naked sky of Hiroshima," Tanemori states on his website, "when I first saw with the 'vision of the heart,' I finally understood that I am at last, truly able to see. When I had an epiphany two

decades ago, I was convinced that forgiveness is the first step toward peace, as it defines our relationship with the Divine Creator and sustains all human relationships."

There will also be a question and answer period with the Hiroshima survivor at the event. For information about Tanemori, visit [www.hiroshima-forgiveness-tanemori.com](http://www.hiroshima-forgiveness-tanemori.com).

Submit stories and story ideas to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

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## Troop 204 Scout's Eagle Project Benefits Shelter, Inc.

Submitted by Stephanie Reilly



Jackson Reilly at work with friends on the shed.

Photo provided

When Jackson Reilly, a member of Lafayette's Boy Scout Troop 204, was looking for a potential project last spring for his Eagle Scout requirement, he asked if Shelter, Inc. might have a need for his services. He was introduced to Shelter, Inc.'s volunteer coordinator Teresita Gonzalez, and he learned about a need at Mountain View Family Shelter to replace two old, metal storage sheds.

Reilly likes to build things and has learned about building from his dad, a general contractor, and in his design and fabrication class at Acalanes High School.

There was a great deal to do before actually starting the building, and Reilly soon realized he would need lots of volunteers and

to raise money to cover all the building costs. He started contacting various businesses, including Dolan's Lumber, Kelly-Moore Paint Company, Cresco Express Tool and Equipment Rental, Skyline Roofing and Diamond K. Supply, and with help from fellow Scouts Mike Roux and Michael Williams, along with his good friends, Ian Ferrer, Ezra Zimmer and Mateo Terrien, Reilly got to work. The project took over 150 hours of actual hands-on work over a two-week period.

The result? A beautiful, useful 10 foot by 10 foot shed that Shelter's Mountain View Family Shelter will put to good use storing seasonal equipment, extra bedding and furniture, and some food and cleaning supplies.



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](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com) with the subject header In Service to the Community.

### 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](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com), and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.

## Climate change discussion focuses on moral issues of our lifetime

By Pippa Fisher



Image provided

Residents will have a chance to consider the moral questions around climate change and discover ways to help at a free event hosted by Temple Isaiah's Environmental Committee in Lafayette.

The forum will focus on the science of climate change, the moral imperative for action and how individuals can get involved alone or with others from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12.

Billed as a "community and interfaith event" the committee emphasizes the community's shared responsibility to protect the environment so that the planet and its diverse species continue to thrive, and says that the work of the committee includes fighting climate change, supporting greenhouse gas reduction, clean air, water, and protecting public health and safety.

The forum will feature three speakers: Andrew Gunther, Ph.D. – the executive coordinator of the Bay Area Ecosystems Climate Change Consortium and board of directors of the Union of Concerned Scientists; Wei-Tai Kwok – a solar technology expert and the president of Sustainable Lafayette, who is a trained speaker with Al Gore's Climate Reality Project; and Rev. Canon Sally Bingham – Canon for the environment in the Episcopal Diocese of California and lead author of "Love God, Heal Earth" (2009), who was awarded the Audubon Society's Rachel Carson Award in 2012 for environmental leadership. She is also the founder and president of the Regeneration Project, which is focused on an Interfaith Power and Light campaign.

Kwok will be focusing on local solutions. "Most Lafayette residents and businesses now have MCE as our electricity provider. What residents aren't aware of is that this change now allows each household to go from MCE's default level of 50 percent renewable energy content and 'opt-up' to 100

percent renewable energy," says Kwok. He points out that the cost to get household electricity "carbon free" is, on average, \$5 more per month for a typical family to run their home on 100 percent California-generated solar and wind power.

So, is the climate crisis one of the greatest moral issues of our lifetime?

Kwok says, "If we accept the scientific fact that the earth is warming (2016 was the hottest year ever measured by weather instruments, eclipsing the previous record of 2015, which eclipsed the previous record of 2014), as well as the scientific consensus that human activity is the principal cause, we must stop to ask ourselves the moral and ethical questions. Is it morally acceptable to continue 'business-as-usual' habits, which pollute our air and oceans to the point where 50 percent of species could be lost by 2100, and to the point where extreme weather events increasingly devastate segments of our society, particularly the most vulnerable in our communities?"

Kwok is encouraged that faith communities, including Temple Isaiah, have taken up the dialog and notes that Pope Francis in 2015 called on people of all faiths to come together and take urgent action. "I thank him for his clarion call to other faiths and I'm proud that Temple Isaiah is taking a lead in our community. I look forward to sharing the stage with the Rev. Canon Sally Bingham, a climate leader in the faith community."

"Awareness levels are low," says Kwok, "so only 2 percent of Lafayette residents have opted up to MCE's 100 percent 'Deep Green' level, but I have a vision of a Lamorinda which is powered by carbon-free electricity. And that's not in the Jetsons' timeframe, it's something we can actually do right now."

The free event will take place at Temple Isaiah, 945 Risa Road in Lafayette.

### Teen Talk

## The war on females

By Alexandra Gold

Political catastrophe strikes. Again. And I fall into a dream. A dream where the future is unabashedly female.

Donald Trump has had his sexist moments. In my opinion, he is rash, misguided, and frankly fails to consider the greater picture. And that's coming from a 16-year-old. Recently, however, Trump has approved a choice that further divides America's females from the rest of the population – a decision that I believe must be reversed at all costs. Donald Trump has begun the war on contraception.

In a population that is exponentially growing at a pace our resources cannot sustain, one would think that maintaining a birth rate that will not strain our cultural carrying capacity would be principal, correct? In Donald Trump's eyes it is, apparently, not so.

Friday, Oct. 6 marks the date that the President revealed his plan to remove the contraceptive coverage in the Affordable Care Act. More than 55 million women have access to birth control without co-payments because of the mandate, says a study performed by the Obama administration. These are millions of women who deserve to live without added worry of unexpected pregnancy or lack of the pills that are medically key to their functioning role in civil society. However, the problem is not only contraception, it is what politicians will do in subsequent years that is so concerning.

Safe access to Planned Parenthood and abortion are already on the line. Consider the LGBT+ community. Consider the minorities. Consider the women who cannot

yet afford birth control on their own, and are forced to rely on the risky possibility of a partner. Raising the status of women worldwide is the only way to save the future of our planet.

Women are 50 percent of the population after all; I think the involvement of these independent ladies in civil society is priority.

So my hope is the people of this country get educated and get outside. It does not matter how young you are, or what party you identify with. Speak out with confidence, and do not let this time in our government's history pass you by without a second thought.

I dream because I have seen what my generation can engender: harmony, zeal, and a future everyone can believe in.



Alexandra Gold is a junior at Acalanes High School. She volunteers for the Teen Advisory Board, the Lafayette Library, and enjoys literature, the environment, and politics.

# Campo grad sees extended uses for computer gaming

By Sora O'Doherty



2015 Campolindo graduate Sam Lee Photos provided  
**M**oraga native Sam Lee is interested in video games because, as he explains, for the longest time games were just a diversion, but now they are something more. He is using a scholarship awarded by the Entertainment Software Association Foundation to attend UC Davis where he is a third-year computer science and engineering major.

Lee was one of 30 students representing women and minorities granted \$90,000 in scholarships for degrees in video game arts by the ESA. The scholarships for the 2016-17 academic year were awarded to high school seniors and undergraduate students, who each earn \$3,000 to study subjects such as computer programming, video game design, animation, and digital graphic art at a four-year college or university. Although he hasn't had any games published, he is the president of the Games Development and Arts Club at Davis.

Lee sees potential for using games as learning tools and for therapy. Beginning last June, Lee had a summer internship at Cognivive, a Davis-based digital neurotherapeutics startup that, according to its website, creates "evidence-based treatments in virtual and augmented reality video game form to reduce specific cognitive impairments that are experienced by the healthy aging, many stroke and brain injury patients and individuals with one of several neurogenetic disorders." Lee helped make the games that they used as therapy with a game engine called Unity and learned how performing an activity in a game, like swatting a fly, helped people focus and drew their attention.

Lee says, "It is hard to explain what I think games can do, it's not what most people think." He sees games as allowing people to connect and bond over experiences, as ways to help people, even with therapy. Games are breaking out of the stigma that they are something for slackers, he says. In his opinion, "as much harm as games can do, I also believe that they can do even more good."



Screen shot of one of Lee's video games

A 2015 graduate of Campolindo High School, Lee developed his interest in games in the summer of his sophomore year when he attended the Cosmos program at UC Santa Cruz, which has a game design major. Lee, who had no coding until he took AP computer science as a junior, learned that Games is actually a field of study.

Making education into games makes learning fun for people of all ages and genders, he says.

Lee acknowledges that concerns about the addictive quality of video games are valid, pointing to the fact that developers recognize that they can nab children at a young age. However, he believes that the principles behind gamification can be used for good.

As president of the Games Development and Art Club, Lee organizes weekly workshops for other Davis students to learn about the different aspects of game development from programming to art. He also goes out to underserved elementary and middle schools, including a bilingual school, and teaches students basic computer science through the CS4K program, Computer Science for Kids.

Lee is still deciding whether or not to go to on graduate school, possibly for a master's in computer science or game development.

Right now he is concentrating on his studies and striving to make the game club as high quality as possible. But all work and no play wouldn't be good, so Lee also belongs to a dance club called Popping, where he enjoys a robotic style of dance similar to the performers on Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco.

# Saint Mary's College Dance Company Presents 'Counterparts,' Nov. 16-18

Submitted by Leslie Montano



Choreographer, Shaunna Vella.

"Counterparts," choreographed, performed, and produced by the senior class of SMC students, is a statement on how each individual choreographer's expression becomes a part of the larger, diverse and intricate whole that is the Saint Mary's College Dance Company.

Emerging choreographers from the senior class – Kionna Costello, Julia Fajardo, Kelsey Foraker, Lea McGhee, Elizabeth Panella, Shoopie Panholzer, and MacKenzie Shine – will showcase their unique styles and demonstrate the technical and artistic skills of the Saint Mary's dance program. The concert will also feature new choreography by other undergraduate and graduate students of dance: a tap piece by Micah Sallid, a hip-hop solo by Michael Montinola, and a duet by two graduate students Lacin Keles and

Andrea Pardi. All pieces in "Counterparts" share the common theme of exploring human nature and its underlying opposites, and how that impacts the greater community.

A new work is also being commissioned by guest artist KJ Dahlaw, a current graduate student in the SMC MFA in Dance program, who has taught at University of Nevada Reno, Illinois Wesleyan University, Sierra Arts Foundation, and more. Dahlaw's work explores the queer and living body, with this specific piece focusing on an exploration of the senses and the sensing body.

"As the concert director, I have the great honor to be supporting these young and talented emerging artists as they present new work to the greater public. 'Counterparts' is a spectacular dance show that demonstrates the phenomenal artistry

and technical abilities of the Saint Mary's College Dancers Company, and illuminates themes that matter to young artist today such as human nature, community, oppositional forces, oppression, self-reflection and self-determination," says Shaunna Vella, artistic director, LEAP director, and adjunct faculty member.

The seniors are incredibly excited to share their work for the first time and are looking forward to this step into the professional world of dance and a huge step toward graduation. Counterparts will take place at Lefevre Theatre at Saint Mary's College at 8 p.m. Nov. 16, 17, and 18, with an additional matinee at 3 p.m. Nov. 18. Tickets are free for SMC students and \$5 general admission.

Photo Jen Phillips

# Find unique pieces by local artists at Orinda's Artisan Faire

Submitted by Lynda Chapman



Glass designs by Cynthia Whitchurch

Photos provided

An exciting variety of work offered by local artists makes this year's 11th annual Artisan Faire a must see, with ceramics, glass, jewelry, paintings, fashion, photography, fiber art, cosmetics and culinary products displayed by some returning favorite artists and new artists, whose work will capture your imagination.

Talk with the artists and learn more about their inspiration and their work while enjoying complimentary wine tasting and samples of culinary products from 4 to 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 10 at the Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante.

One of the much-loved returning artists is Joan Ragno of Upmarket Design. Her fiber art jackets and coats are so unique that each is a beautiful canvas, designed to be worn and admired. Ragno loves to combine colors and fabric in original ways, and each year brings new designs to the Faire.

Another perennial favorite is Orinda's Gerry Wallace, an accomplished artist whose imaginative and whimsical painted ceramic pieces are true collectors items to brighten to any home.

Cynthia Whitchurch's glass designs are characterized by unique combinations of color and design. "Each piece has its own texture, character and visual qualities," said Whitchurch, whose wide variety of original creations include stunning

decorative bowls and plates, as well as smaller items such as coasters, wine stoppers and nightlights.

The Faire will also highlight charitable organizations including the Rescue One Foundation, which supports the vital emergency services of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. Also, the sale of children's books written by former Golden State Warrior, Adonal Foyle, will benefit his Kerosene Lamp Foundation, which empowers youth to become healthy and well-educated leaders. A group from Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church will bring their handmade necklaces to benefit needy schools in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

For more information, call (925) 254-6698.



A Joan Ragno jacket

# Celebrations

## SMC's Tim Farley receives prestigious state relations award



The Council for Advancement and Support of Education Oct. 17 announced the recipients of its 2017 Service Awards in State Government Relations. SMC's Director of Community and Government Relations Tim Farley is being honored for his advocacy work and leadership in elevating Saint Mary's College's profile among California legislators and staff. Prior to his work at SMC, Farley served in elected office and on the

staff for California state legislators and has successfully leveraged these relationships to advocate for issues important to his institution. According to Christopher Sindt, vice provost for academic affairs at Saint Mary's, Farley has "built an impressive program of community outreach and partnerships" and that the institution's government and community relations program is considered "one of the most effective in the state of California and has become a model for other colleges." And one community leader recently commended Farley's work, saying "Tim Farley's extraordinary gifts as a communicator and problem solver make him such an asset to our region. His passion and dedication to higher education are unrivaled."

The honorees will be recognized at an awards luncheon Dec. 7 at the 2017 Higher Education Government Relations Conference in San Diego, California.

## The Holiday Marketplace

Beautiful handcrafted items, gourmet goodies, and works of art.

**Friday, Nov. 10 11 am - 7 pm**  
**Saturday, Nov. 11 9 am - 6 pm**



**ELK'S LODGE**  
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10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | [www.orindachurch.org](http://www.orindachurch.org)

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Join us Sundays at 10 a.m. | Sunday School 10 a.m.



### Lafayette United Methodist Church

955 Moraga Road 925.284.4765 [thelumc.org](http://thelumc.org)  
Sunday 10am Worship and Faith Formation for all ages

Opportunities to Love God, Love Others,  
and Serve the World

### 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](http://www.stanselms.ws)

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- Programs for all ages
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**Sunday Service and Sunday School 10 - 11 am**  
Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm  
Reading Room/Bookstore M - F 11 - 4; Sat 11 - 2

[www.christianscienceorinda.org](http://www.christianscienceorinda.org)

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new! » Sunday evenings, 5 pm



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[www.mvpc.today.org](http://www.mvpc.today.org)  
925.376.4800



### St Stephen's Episcopal Church

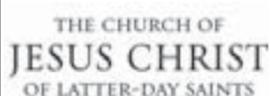
66 St. Stephen's Drive, Orinda  
254-3770. [www.ststephensorinda.org](http://www.ststephensorinda.org)  
Sunday 8am, 10am

### Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church

433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422  
[www.holyshepherd.org](http://www.holyshepherd.org)



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



### Sunday Sacrament Service at 10AM

Scripture Study &  
Youth Programs

Everyone welcome!

3776 Via Granada, Moraga

## ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

### ART

The Moraga Art Gallery presents "Impressions-Expressions," highlighting Asian-accented jewelry by K. de Groot, enticing light-infused paintings by Carol Tarzier, and a bounty of artistic gifts for the holidays. The exhibit, which also includes work by the gallery's 13 member artists and several guest artists, runs through Jan. 6. For more information, visit [www.moragaartgallery.com](http://www.moragaartgallery.com) or call (925) 376-5407.

**Sculptor Doug Heine will speak and give a presentation** of his art from 7 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 1 at the Lafayette Christian Church Community Hall, 584 Glenside Drive, Lafayette. He will show a PowerPoint presentation of his art career. LAA members and their guests are invited to attend.

**Valley Art Gallery's new exhibition "Art, Naturally"** runs through Nov. 11. From objects found to impressions visualized, artists have been busy creating the new fall 2017 show of more than 300 works of art for sale or for rent.

### MUSIC

**Crowden Music Center presents Sundays at Four:** Alexander String Quartet from 4 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 5, at Crowden Music Center, 1475 Rose Street, Berkeley. Mozart, Shostakovic, Brahms. Free Reception. Cost: Free to \$25. For more info see <http://www.crowden.org/concerts-and-events/sundays-four> or call (510) 559-6910 or email [concerts@crowden.org](mailto:concerts@crowden.org).

**Songs and Stories to Benefit Terry's Kids** beginning at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 6 in the Orinda Library Auditorium. This evening will raise funds for our Cuban friends in need, as well as support Terry's Kids music programs in underfunded schools in the Bay Area. Tickets: \$35. [tm-kids.org](mailto:tm-kids.org) (925) 285-0996

**Amici Lyric Opera presents Russian Romances**, a concert featuring soprano Elena Yakoubovsky at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 19 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall. Beloved songs by Russian composers will be included in the program, including Rachmaninoff's Spring Waters, In the Silence of the Night, and It is a Fine Here, Rubinstein's Night, Tchaikovsky's None But the Lonely Know, and Pimpinella, among others. Tickets: \$30 general, \$25 Seniors/students, children under 12 free. [www.brownpapertickets.com/events/3121354](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/events/3121354)

### THEATER

**The Acalanes High School DramaDons Present:** "She Kills Monsters" by Qui Nguyen at 7 p.m. Nov. 1 through 4 in the Acalanes Little Theatre 1200 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette. "She Kills Monsters" tells the story of Agnes Evans as she leaves her childhood home in Ohio following the death of her teenage sister, Tilly. Tickets: \$7 students; and \$12 general. Tickets available at AHS.

**Saint Mary's Performing Arts Department presents** "... and Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi" by Oakland-based playwright Marcus Gardley. Directed by Ken Prestininzi, the play weaves the Demeter myth and American Civil War into a tapestry of redemption Nov. 1-5 at the LeFevre Theatre, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga. Tickets: \$15. For exact times and to purchase tickets see <https://www.stmarys-ca.edu/performing-arts>.

### LECTURE & LITERATURE

**Temple Isaiah's Environmental Action Committee** is sponsoring an interfaith climate action forum at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 12 at Temple Isaiah (945 Risa Road, Lafayette, CA 94549). Free and open to the public. "LEARN, ENGAGE, ACT" Is a forum that will inspire people of conscience by presenting the science of climate change, the moral imperative for action that is firmly rooted in and shared by all faith traditions, and how each of us, can participate and make a difference. For more information visit [www.temple-isaiah.org](http://www.temple-isaiah.org)

### KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

**Searching for the right preschool for your child?** Lamorinda Moms is hosting its 20th Annual Preschool Fair at Oakwood Athletic Club from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9. At this free community event you'll interact with directors and teachers of over 30 local preschools to learn more about their programs and offerings.

**Mindful Littles: Peace Kits and Gratitude for Veterans** from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Nov. 10 at the Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Fellowship Hall. Mindful Littles is very excited to partner with Veteran's PATH, an organization committed to helping veterans find meaning, purpose and healing through mindfulness and outdoor experiences. Please click on the Eventbrite link for more information and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/peace-kits-gratitude-for-veterans-tickets-39024096122>

**Bring your family, bring your friends and enjoy the start of your Thanksgiving Day** with the First Annual MCC Turkey Trot Fun Run at 8:30 a.m. Nov. 23. As you are running/walking the 1.5 miles of road and paths of the beautiful Moraga Country Club you will be working up an appetite for Turkey and the fixings you will know that you are helping others less fortunate. Your race contributions go to the Food Banks of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. Registration: \$20 before Nov. 20; \$30 after. <https://runsignup.com/moragaturkeytrot>

### HOLIDAY BOUTIQUES

**Santa's Smokestack Boutique from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Saturday, Nov. 4, Creekside Hall, 1475 Creekside Drive, Walnut Creek (off Main Street near Kaiser Hospital). Unique handmade gifts, food and decorations for fall, Christmas, seasonal and every day. Venue is wheelchair accessible.

**11th Annual Artisan Faire from 4 to 7:30 p.m.** Friday, Nov. 10 at the Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante. This popular Faire showcases over 30 talented artists selling their unique and original works in jewelry, ceramics, painting, photography, glass, fiber art, woodwork and clothing plus cosmetics and culinary products. Enjoy complimentary wine tasting and delicious samples of artisan chocolates and food items.

**Holiday Marketplace Boutique will feature** beautiful handcrafted items, gourmet goodies, and works of art from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Nov. 10 and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Nov. 11 at the Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive, Walnut Creek. Free to attend.

### OTHER

**Burton Valley Elementary PTA Blood and Bone Marrow Drive** from 8:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Friday, Nov. 3 in the BVE Multi-Purpose Room. To sched-

ule your appointment or for more information visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) (Sponsor Code BURTON) or call 1-800 RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Learn more about the bone marrow registry and eligibility at [bethematch.org](http://bethematch.org). If you are unable to attend but would like to order a swab kit, go to [join.bethematch.org/burton](http://join.bethematch.org/burton).

**Downtown Berkeley Association presents Dia de los Muertos Celebration** from 5 to 10 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 2 at Downtown Berkeley, Kittredge and Harold Way, Berkeley. Build a community altar, wear costumes, free skeletal face paint, DIY art projects, food, beer & wine, and a sidewalk candle light procession. Free. For more info see <http://www.anotherbullwinkelshow.com/day-of-dead/> or call (510) 334-6523 or email [Lisa@AnotherBullwinkelShow.com](mailto:Lisa@AnotherBullwinkelShow.com).

**ESL Conversation Circle at 1 p.m. every Thursday** at the Orinda Library. Practice speaking and listening to English in a casual group guided by trained ESL instructors. No registration required and free of charge.

**World Community Day will be hosted by St. Mark's United Methodist Church** from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Friday, Nov. 3. Sponsored by Central Contra Costa County Church Women United, 451 Moraga Way, Orinda Mr. Takashi Tanemori will speak on Peace and Forgiveness, a survivor of the bombing of Hiroshima.

**Lafayette Juniors 24th Annual Rummage Sale** from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 4. Special Early Bird Entrance fee \$5 per adult from 7 to 8 a.m. at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Dr., Lafayette. Pre-loved designer clothes, baby and kid clothes, toys, children's gear, furniture, household goods, and much more. Visit [www.lafayettejuniors.org](http://www.lafayettejuniors.org).

**Miramonte Cultural Faire from 6 to 8 p.m.** Wednesday, Nov. 8 in the Miramonte High School cafeteria (performances will also be taking place in the theater.) The purpose of the fair is to showcase the diversity of Miramonte and Lamorinda as a whole with booths for different cultures, live performances, and more.

**Discovering Opera: Puccini's La Rondine** presented by Bradford Wade from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9 in the Lafayette Library, Arts and Science Room. An operetta by Puccini? With waltzes? And no one dies? Yes, it's La Rondine (The Swallow). Lecturer Bradford Wade will give a guided tour of La Rondine, with a description of the plot interspersed with musical examples. This lecture is given in conjunction with Opera San José's production of La Rondine, Nov. 11-26. Fee: members free; non-members \$10.

**Hospice East Bay's 31st Annual Tree of Lights.** Moraga Tree at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 12, at the Moraga Country Club, 1600 St. Andrews Drive.

**Lamorinda Business Symposium from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** Tuesday, Nov. 14 at the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College. A panel discussion on "The Customer Experience - getting back to basics in today's ever changing retail and business environment." Free event for all, but please RSVP to [kathe@moragachamber.org](mailto:kathe@moragachamber.org) as refreshments will be served.

... continued on next page

**Please submit events:**  
[calendar@lamorinda-weekly.com](mailto:calendar@lamorinda-weekly.com)

# Special events scheduled this month at Lamorinda theatres

By Derek Zemrak

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Image provided

The leaves are changing and winter is coming, so now is a great time to head to your local movie theatres to see the latest blockbusters and other events at the Rheem and Orinda theatres.

On Nov. 3 at 7:30 p.m. head to the Rheem Theatre for the finals of the Comedy Noir Competition. During the past four months, 32 comics from around the Bay Area have been battling it out to advance to the finals. Now the top nine comics have 10 minutes each to win over the judges and win your vote to be crowned the first annual Comedy Noir Champion. Don't miss this amazing lineup which includes first-round winners Krista Fatka (San Francisco) and Michael Brandon (Oakland), second-round winners Dan Linley (San Francisco) and Ira Summer (Oakland), third-round winners Clay Newman (San Francisco) and Chad Optiz (San Francisco), and fourth-round winners Geneva Rust-Orta (Oakland), Noah Gain (Fremont) and

Paul Conyers (Concord). These comics have performed all over Bay Area, including some of the top comedy clubs in San Francisco: Punch Line and Cobb's Comedy Club. Tickets are \$15.

Nov. 3 is your chance to see the best local comics all performing one night, on the same stage, right here in Lamorinda.

Free Movie Night at the Orinda Theatre will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9 and will be a tribute to the late Academy Award-winning actor, Martin Landau, who was a great supporter of the California Independent Film Festival. The movie will be Alfred Hitchcock's classic, "North by Northwest," which was one of Landau's early breakout roles. Gary is an innocuous New York advertising executive who is mistaken for a spy. "North by Northwest" is one of Hitchcock's greatest thrillers which also stars Eva Marie Saint and James Mason.

Moraga Movers' Classic Movie afternoon will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 15. Larry Swindell will be hosting the classic film, "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre." Fred Dobbs (Humphrey Bogart) and Bob Curtin (Tim Holt) are two Americans searching for work in Mexico and convince an old prospector to help them mine for gold in the Sierra Madre Mountains. The Treasure of the Sierra Madre is one of the first Hollywood movies to be filmed on location outside of the United States and is directed by the great John Huston. Tickets are \$7.

It's time to sing along at 7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 18 at the Rheem Theatre as Patti Leidecker performs Hollywood's Greatest Songs for Kids of all Ages. The evening will include video clips and talks by Derek Zemrak. A few of the songs include "A Whole New World" from "Aladdin," "Circle of Life" from "Lion King" and "Somewhere Out There" from "An American Tale." Tickets are \$15.

See you at the theatres!

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## ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

### OTHER ... continued

**Saint Mary's College Guild is having its annual Rummage Sale and Thanksgiving Luncheon** at the SMC Soda Center 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14. There will be a preview of fabulous items 4 to 7 p.m. on Monday evening, Nov. 13. The luncheon is \$35 per person. Please make checks payable to SMC Guild and mail to Dolores Mc Gonigle - 828 Crossbrook Court - Moraga, CA 94556. Questions? Call (925) 376-4339. All proceeds go to scholarships for Saint Mary's students seeking financial aid.

**Celebrate the completion of the Rheem Boulevard Sinkhole and Storm Drain Replacement Project** scheduled from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 16 at Rheem Boulevard/Center Street. Public parking will be available behind the Rheem Theatre. Event sponsors will provide activities for all including a mini-sinkhole photo opportunity, informational booths, project timeline displays, giveaways, and more! The Chamber of Commerce will host a booth to accept canned food donations for the North Bay fire victims and Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

**The 39th Annual Lafayette Community Thanksgiving Breakfast** will be held from 7 to 8:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 17 at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Center. Keynote speaker will be Deanne Pearn, MPP Executive Director of Contra Costa Interfaith Housing. The event will be catered by Jeff Assadi of La Finestra! Music provided by Wendy Tamis, harpist. Please make your reservations by Nov. 15 at [www.LafayetteChamber.org](http://www.LafayetteChamber.org).

### POLITICAL GATHERINGS

**Join the Lamorinda Democratic Club** from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center for a panel discussion on criminal justice to hear

about what is happening at the local, state and federal level. We have an exciting panel of speakers including our new District Attorney Diana Becton and Contra Costa County Deputy Public Defender Ellen McDonnell. Cost is free for members and \$5 for guests. For additional information, contact [ldclubpr@gmail.com](mailto:ldclubpr@gmail.com) or visit [www.ldclub.org](http://www.ldclub.org).

### SENIORS

**Free Peer Counseling - Contra Costa Health Services** offers free one-to-one counseling with trained senior counselors who use their life experiences to help other older adults (55+) cope with life changes, problems, crises, and challenges from 10 a.m. to noon, the second Tuesday monthly. Confidentiality is strictly observed. Appointment required. Please call Lafayette Senior Services to sign up for one of the 60-minute appointments: (925) 284-5050.

**Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)** provides free and objective counseling and advocacy services to Contra Costa Medicare beneficiaries and their families who need assistance with Medicare enrollment and issues involving Medicare and associated insurance programs, including prescription drug coverage at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., or noon first Wednesday or third Tuesday monthly in the Lafayette Community Center. HICAP does not endorse or sell insurance products. For an appointment, call Lafayette Senior Services at (925) 284-5050.

### GARDEN

**Botanical Drawing Workshop at 10:30 a.m.** Thursday, Nov. 9 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Botanical artist and instructor, Catherine Watters, will introduce you to botanical art and guide you through hands on exercises to experience the practice of botanical drawing. Materials provided. Space is limited. Register online,

by phone or in person at the Orinda Library.

**Lafayette Garden Club General Meeting** from 9:45 a.m. to noon Thursday, Nov. 9 in the Lafayette Veteran's Building located at 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Lafayette Garden Club is excited to present Laurie Callaway, a Lafayette Garden Club member, who will share her "Secrets of a Four Season Garden." She will tell us how to have flower and leaf interest using color, texture, and shape throughout each season, here in the Bay Area. Visitors are welcome! Please email Carolyn Poetzsch, [cpoetzsch@gmail.com](mailto:cpoetzsch@gmail.com).

**The November theme of the Walnut Creek Garden Club** is "Holiday Decorating with Flowers" - Stephen Brown AIFD, Environmental Horticulture and Floral Design, City College of San Francisco Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Road, Walnut Creek. 9:45 a.m. - Business Meeting; 10:30 - Social; 11 a.m. Program on Nov. 13. Questions: [mslittle44@gmail.com](mailto:mslittle44@gmail.com)

**The Moraga Garden Club will hold their next meeting** at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 16, at the Holy Trinity Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga. The guest speaker will be Ann Leyhe, co-owner of Mrs. Dalloway's Books in Berkeley. The store features an extensive collection of garden books, which will be the topic of her discussion. Interested parties are welcome to attend the 9:30 a.m. social hour, 10 a.m. meeting, and the presentation by Ann Leyhe immediately following the meeting.

**Montelindo Garden Club Meeting** (third Friday of every month, September through May) will be at 9 a.m. Friday, Nov. 17 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. Everyone welcome. Presentation: Floral Design: A Demonstration by David Mulkey. [www.montelindogarden.com](http://www.montelindogarden.com).

## Service Clubs Announcements

**BREAKFAST MEETING:** Friday mornings, 7:00 am. The Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa, Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. More info. at [www.lamorindasunrise.com](http://www.lamorindasunrise.com)

November 3	November 10
It's Baseball Season with featured speaker Dan Feinstein, Assistant General Manager, Oakland Athletics	Follow "The Yellow House" story as owner James Wright tells how he converted this old "railroad house" into a rare NetZero home.

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## Lamorinda Weekly

is an independent publication, produced by and for the residents of Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda, CA 26,600 printed copies, delivered to homes & businesses in Lamorinda.

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# Buffalo wing flavor with a veggie twist

By Susie Iventosch



Buffalo Cauliflower

Photo provided

I just spent a week in New York City with my daughter, and we discovered a new twist on Buffalo wings that uses cauliflower in place of chicken wings. It's such a great idea and it is popping up on menus everywhere throughout the city — from wine bars to sports bars. This is a wonderful version of Buffalo wings that will please everyone, including vegetarians and those with gluten intolerance. It is so easy to make and it's pretty too, with curly ribbons of shaved carrots and celery used either as a base, or as a garnish on top, or both.

Because it's fall, I opted to use the orange cauliflower, but any color cauliflower will do. Also, most of the versions we tried dusted the cauliflower with flour before baking, but I don't find

that necessary at all. It's delicious simply seasoned, tossed with olive oil, and baked. The key is to bake the cauliflower at a high temperature for a short amount of time. This allows the florets to brown nicely, while maintaining an al dente character to the vegetable. You can certainly use store-bought blue cheese dressing, but this recipe (below) for yogurt blue cheese dressing is very easy and has far fewer calories and less fat than traditional blue cheese dressing.

Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://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.



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If you wish to view any of the stories above go to [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) and click the link below the story.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 head orange or white cauliflower, cut into bite-sized florets
- 1 tsp. seasoning salt of your choice
- 1/2 tsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. Buffalo wing sauce
- 2 celery sticks, peeled into ribbons with a potato peeler
- 2 carrots, peeled into ribbons with a potato peeler
- 1/4 cup blue cheese crumbles
- Yogurt blue cheese dressing, recipe below

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 450 F. Break the head of cauliflower into small, bite-sized florets. Rinse and allow to dry for a half hour. Place in a large bowl or a baggie and sprinkle with seasoning, paprika, salt and pepper. Toss or shake to coat. Now, drizzle with olive oil and toss again. Lay cauliflower out onto a large baking sheet, oiled or prepared with cooking spray. Bake for approximately 15 minutes, turning once, until able to pierce cauliflower with a sharp knife, but still al dente, and beginning to brown. Remove from oven and place on or under a bed of the carrot and celery ribbons and sprinkle with blue cheese crumbles.

### Yogurt Blue Cheese Dressing

#### INGREDIENTS

- 5 oz. plain low-fat Greek yogurt
- 3 oz. crumbled blue cheese
- 1 Tbsp. Olive oil

Mix well until yogurt and blue cheese are well integrated. Refrigerated until ready to use.

## Veterans Day to be celebrated inclusively, and mindfully, in Lamorinda

By Sophie Braccini



Sharing at a former Mindful Littles event.

Photo provided

The town of Moraga will hold its traditional Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11 with the inclusion this year of Girl Scout members along with Boy Scout troops and music at this adult ceremony, which also welcomes children. In Orinda on Nov. 10, the Lamorinda group Mindful Littles has invited veterans from Veteran's PATH, a local nonprofit, to join children during an event of compassion and sharing.

Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda remembers how moving last year's Veterans Day celebration in Moraga was, but she said that as she left, she felt something was missing; she realized it was girls' involvement.

Onoda met with retired U.S. Navy Capt. John Haffner who has been instrumental in getting the veteran's memorial stone installed in the Moraga Commons. Haffner was enthused and two months ago everyone met, including the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Onoda said it was easy to have all the Scouts work together with the organizers.

Karl Davis, a retired U.S. Army Special Operations Command engineer officer, assisted Haffner in organizing the Moraga event and said the Girl Scouts were eager to participate, and didn't ask

to change anything. Cadette, Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts from Orinda Moraga Service Unit #327 will be at the event, according to Mary Friese; Wendell Baker indicated that Moraga Boy Scout Troops 212, 234, 246, and 249 will attend. Davis said there will be a pass and review of the Scouts by officials — something new for the Girl and Boy Scouts — that will be performed without rehearsal.

Music will also be part of the event: Bagpiper Steven McElhaney will play the uplifting tune, "Highland Cathedral," and two buglers will perform "Taps," a beautiful, sobering piece often performed to honor veterans. The ceremony with state and city officials will be held at the Moraga Commons Park from 9 to 10 a.m., followed by a social gathering until 11 a.m.

On Friday, Nov. 10, Tanuka Gordon and the leaders of Mindful Littles will facilitate an event from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at the Orinda Community Church for young children to help them understand why we celebrate Veterans Day. The leaders decided to take advantage of the Friday being a school holiday and suggested following the same principle as other activities proposed by the group: providing hands-on ways to be present, and reflect on a

topic adequate for young children.

Gordon did some research and found the group Veteran's PATH, a nonprofit designed to support veterans dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder, which through practical tools of meditation and mindfulness, physical and outdoor experiences, and a community of camaraderie, helps veterans "rediscover peace, acceptance, transformation and honor in a new journey forward of strength and service" — something that immediately resonated with the Orinda resident.

Gordon contacted the group, which was enthusiastic about creating a sharing time with children. Participants will make objects for the veterans, such as worry stones or soothing bracelets. A couple of veteran alumni from the program will come to interact with the children. Gordon explains that the event will be an expression of compassion and will lead to more meaning. She expects that by the end of the morning, the children will have learned more about veterans and will have an opportunity to express their gratitude.

The cost for the event is \$40 per family to cover expenses. To register, visit [Mindfullittles.org](http://Mindfullittles.org).

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# LAMORINDA SPORTS

## Miramonte girls water polo dominates in season play

By Jon Kingdon



The Miramonte Varsity Women's Water Polo team won this year's NorCal Invitational for the first time in their history.

Photo Pam Drake

Prior to the 2017 season, first year Miramonte girls water polo head coach Lance Morrison did not hold back in his appraisal of his team's strength: "Our offensive power is huge. I've never seen a team at this level with so much power. We can score from any position in the pool."

If anything, he was not optimistic enough. With a 23-0 record this season, the Matadors have outscored their opponents a combined 342 to 103. They have scored over 20 goals six times this season along with two shutouts.

Morrison and his assistant coaches, John Felix, Noel Murphy and Chris Lloyd, do not allow themselves or their team to live off their laurels. Says Morrison: "Keeping the team focused is the timeless challenge for any team that is as dominant as this one. To keep them hungry, for us, it's a proactive effort for the coaches and the girls. We approach every practice and every game the same way. We don't rely on our opponents to get us up for games. We approach each opponent with the same intensity, mental approach and process regardless of the level of competition. We practice with the same high pressure situations as we do in the games."

The closest game for Miramonte this season was against Davis High School with Miramonte winning 7-6 despite giving up five goals to Davis in the fourth quarter. Morrison turned a near negative into a positive. "I appreciate a game like this because it provid-

ed us with the opportunity to learn from our mistakes," he said. "We studied the game as a team. We reconsidered our approach in the fourth quarter and were able to identify what we did wrong that cost us."

With so many runaway games, many of the substitutes have been able to play alongside the starters. Morrison does not want to see a drop off. "When we bring in our subs, they have to maintain the same pace as the starters and for the most part they have done so, either as backups or stepping in for injured starters. They are in a tough position in that this may be the best water polo team in Miramonte history and our backups could be starters for many other teams. This should certainly pay dividends for them and us in the future."

As dominant as the team's offense has been, Morrison knows that that is only one aspect of the game. There are games when the offense is not what it should be. Knowing that, he places as much emphasis on his defense: "We take pride in ourselves in having a top defense. Offense is great but defense is what wins championships. Our practices are heavily focused on defense. Our defense has been giving up fewer than five goals a game."

Junior goalie Savannah Sherwood has shown constant improvement. Morrison appreciates how fortunate he is to have a goalie of her caliber. "Savannah has been great running the defense," he said. "She is a true

student of the game and learns from her mistakes which is a great attribute."

Miramonte has five senior co-captains, all who have been starters since their sophomore year:

Grace Tehaney and Skylar Savar, both who will be playing for USC next year; Carson Broad, who will be playing for California; Katrina Drake who will be playing for UCLA; and Kelly Murphy, who has yet to choose where she will play in college.

Morrison has come to rely on them in many ways. "All five captains have been great leaders in their own way. They do a great job in pushing the tempo in practice," he said. "They enforce my rules and policies

in pre and post game; they get together to coordinate outfits on game days and get the players pumped up; they do a lot of personality management aside from the coaches; they stay on top of each other and I trust them with this; they are the intermediate management for the coaches; they provide tremendous chemistry for the team. These girls are all class acts and very receptive and coachable with the freedom to give feedback."

Morrison is simply enjoying the ride. "It may be a long time before I will coach a squad as talented as this. They're enjoying this very much. It's an incredible experience. By no means are we taking anything for granted."



Kelly Murphy



Savannah Sherwood



Katrina Drake



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## Acalanes outlasts Campolindo, 35-28

By Jon Kingdon



Photos Gint Federas

Playing in front of a sold-out, homecoming crowd, Acalanes quarterback Robbie Rowell scored the winning touchdown late in the game, running the ball in from 3 yards out in a game that will be long remembered by the Acalanes faithful. Campolindo head coach Kevin Macy could not remember going into a bigger game against Acalanes over his career and he proved prescient.

Campolindo came out and dominated Acalanes from the start behind quarterback John Torchio and running back Shaun Ishida. Ishida, converted several first downs, rushing 26 times for 167 yards and one touchdown, allowing the Cougars to dominate in time of possession as they jumped out to a 14-0 lead. Campolindo controlled the ball for 29:40 minutes to 18:14 for Acalanes.

Acalanes began the game with a series of misplays – penalties and inaccurate and dropped passes. Quarterback Robbie Rowell did not allow his team to lose their focus: “We came out and played nervous. Yet we knew that we could come back.”

Acalanes coach Floyd Burnsed echoed Rowell’s analysis: “We were too hyped up at the start of the game. I told the team to settle down and play our game.”

Uncharacteristically, Rowell won the game more with his legs than his arm, rushing 16 times for 181 yards, many of these runs coming after not finding an open receiver. Acalanes ran for a composite 258 yards. Still Rowell completed 17 of 24 passes for 215 yards and three touchdowns, tying the game at 14-14 with a 34-yard run late in the first half, which would prove to be a portent of things to come.

Burnsed saw his quarterback take what was given to him: “Campolindo dropped their defenders into coverage, which forced Rowell to run after dropping back to pass and he had a lot of room to run.”

Torchio completed 18 of 31 passes for 217 yards and two touchdowns and rushed for 58 yards. Besides playing quarterback, Torchio played free safety, making

several big hits and had an interception as well. However, it was an interception thrown by Torchio late in the first half that would come back to haunt the Cougars. On the Acalanes 2-yard line with 31 seconds left in the first half, Torchio tried to force a pass into coverage and was intercepted by Bryan Merken (who also had four receptions and two touchdowns).

The second half became the shootout that had been anticipated between Rowell and Torchio. The teams alternated scoring touchdowns, starting with a Rowell to Chris Rogers from 3 yards out. After Ishida ran for a 30-yard touchdown, Rowell hit Merken for a 24-yard touchdown. Torchio then led Campolindo on a six-minute drive to tie the game on a 6-yard pass to Vincent Mossotti.

Acalanes began their final drive with 2:35 left in the game. Passing and running the ball, Rowell led the Dons to the Campolindo 3-yard line. Taking the ball himself around the right side, Rowell barely crossed the goal line to score the winning touchdown with 6.7 seconds left in the game.

Still the game was not over. After an Acalanes kickoff that went out of bounds, Campolindo took over on their 35-yard line. On the last play of the game, Torchio scrambled to the 50-yard line and as he was being forced out of bounds he threw the ball across the field where Parker Windatt, behind a wall of blockers, made it down to the Acalanes 19-yard line before being tackled. A sea of blue then enveloped the field as the Acalanes fans charged onto the field, emptying the stands in celebration of their first win over Campolindo in eight years, improving their record to 7-1. Campolindo’s record now stands at 6-3.

Acalanes closes the regular season Nov. 3 against Miramonte. Campolindo concludes their regular season against Clayton Valley.

The game was played with only four game officials as one of the officials was injured in the earlier JV game.

## Friday’s rush onto field reminiscent of “The Play”

By Jon Kingdon

Covering the Campolindo-Acalanes game the other night brought me back to the Stanford-Cal “band on the field” game from 35 years ago. I was scouting for the Oakland Raiders at that time and was sitting in the stands with my friend Scott Righthand. People never remember a key mistake committed by Stanford at the end of the game; quarterback John Elway called timeout with about 10 seconds to go in the game to set up the field goal. I said to Scott that he should have waited to call timeout because if they make the field goal they will still have to kick off to Cal.

As everyone has seen numerous times, the insanity of that kickoff ensued with Cal scoring the touchdown and the band running out on the field. After the touchdown, the officials met for what seemed like an eternity and the stands were deathly silent. When the umpire signaled touchdown, the stadium exploded with an amazing cacophony of cheers.

That Campolindo’s quarterback John Torchio’s father played for Cal and was at that game is more than a little ironic. As for the final play at the game on Friday, Torchio’s throw across the field from the right to the left, throwing across his body to give Campolindo a final chance to score should not be overlooked.

I’d like to know if anyone besides Torchio’s father and I can claim to have attended both of these memorable games.



John Torchio

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# St. Perpetua 7th Grade Boys victorious at 2017 MVP Flight Classic

Submitted by Greg Zegarowski



From left: Justin Zegarowski, Evren Rose, Aidan Beers, Maddex Mastrov, Jackson Berry, Miller Smith, Drake DeBiasse, Santiago Sirios, and Colin Norstad (not shown). Photo provided

The St. Perpetua seventh-grade boys basketball team Berry won the 2017 MVP Flight Fall Classic in Walnut Creek. The tournament took place over two successive weekends in October and the team demonstrated great energy and teamwork on their road to victory.

# Miramonte freshman finishes 1st runner-up at USTA national event

Submitted by Drew Diefenbach



From left: Connie Ma, Dublin, and Amber Lee, Orinda. Photo provided

Amber Lee, a freshman at Miramonte High school, finished first runner-up out of 32 nationally ranked players at the United States Tennis Association's National Level 2 event (Girls 16 & under division) held in Stockton on Oct. 9.

After the tournament, Lee said, "Overall, I had a very good tournament, and I'm delighted finishing second in the competition. At the same time, I am aware of the gap between the top players in the country and myself. I have to improve on the tactical and mental aspects of the game in order for me to compete more effectively against this top group of players in the future. I look forward to improving on my focus and concentration."

Lee will now turn her attention back to high school tennis in November, as the Miramonte girls tennis team tries to finish strong in one of their best seasons ever under Coach Michael McCollom.

# Oakland Strokes Athletes medal at Head of the Charles Regatta

Submitted by Rachel Yates



From left: Kate Miles (8 - Campolindo HS), Martha Yates (7- Acalanes HS), Amanda Alessandria (6 - Campolindo HS), Bridget O'Kelly (5- College Preparatory School), Caroline Ricksen (coxswain - Miramonte HS), Lilly Mei (Dougherty Valley HS), Anna Elmgren (Oakland Tech HS), Sarah Coufal (2- Miramonte HS) and Caroline Birdsall (1 - San Ramon Valley HS) Photo Renata Sos

It was another successful year for the Oakland Strokes youth rowing club at the Head of the Charles fall rowing classic in Boston, coming away with a third and a fifth place in the Youth Women's and Youth Men's V8+ and with both teams breaking previous course records.

Attracting Olympians, world champions and international athletes of all ages, the Head of the Charles Regatta is the world's largest two-day rowing event with over 11,000 athletes from around the world competing.

Against stiff competition from 85 of the top high school rowing

teams from North America and the UK, the athletes once again demonstrated the strength of the Oakland Strokes program, with eight Lamorinda athletes in the lineup.

The women's team put on a powerful display to capture the bronze medal, navigating the winding three-mile course to post a time of 16.35.5, beating the previous course record by an impressive 14 seconds.

Their head coach, Allison Dobb Ray, noted: "Achieving a top three finish in such a competitive field with the top five crews beating the previous course record is an outstanding achievement. The re-

sult was fantastic, but it's how we achieved it that is most fulfilling. How hard the V8+ trained, how focused they remained despite the air quality limiting the final weeks of practice, and how bought in they were to the process is what we are most proud of."

The Women's Varsity 8+ was crewed by Kate Miles (Campolindo HS), Martha Yates (Acalanes HS), Caroline Birdsall (San Ramon Valley HS), Amanda Alessandria (Campolindo HS) Sarah Coufal (Miramonte HS), Anna Elmgren (Oakland Tech HS) Lilly Mei (Dougherty Valley High School), Bridget O'Kelly (College Prepara-



From left: Jack Woll (1- College Preparatory School), Richard Reid (2- SJND), Andrew Simpson (3- Berkeley High), Cameron Kumagai (4- Acalanes HS) Audrey Gates (Coxswain - Miramonte HS), John Mark Ozaeta (5- Miramonte HS), Spencer Dettlinger (6- San Ramon Valley HS), Noah Kim (7- Independent Charter High School) and Kai Hoite (8 - Berkeley HS) Photo Courtney Dettlinger

tory School) and Caroline Ricksen (Miramonte HS) coxswain.

The quality of the competition and excellent course conditions were also on show in the Men's Varsity 8+ competition, where the Oakland Strokes men gained fifth place, again beating the previous course record.

"The boys rowed a solid race, three seconds under the previous record. Unfortunately, on Sunday you had to go 35 seconds under the record to win. With three of last year's winners aboard it was a disappointing result, but we know that it's early in the year and there is plenty of work left to be done.

We are looking forward to improving our speed through the rest of the fall and preparing ourselves well for a productive winter," said Men's Head Coach Brian de Regt.

The Men's Varsity 8+ boat comprised Kai Hoite (Berkeley HS), Noah Kim (Independent Charter High School), Spencer Dettlinger (San Ramon Valley HS), John Mark Ozaeta (Miramonte HS), Cameron Kumagai (Acalanes HS) Andrew Simpson (Berkeley High), Richard Reid (SJND) Jack Woll (College Preparatory School) and Audrey Gates (Miramonte HS) coxswain.



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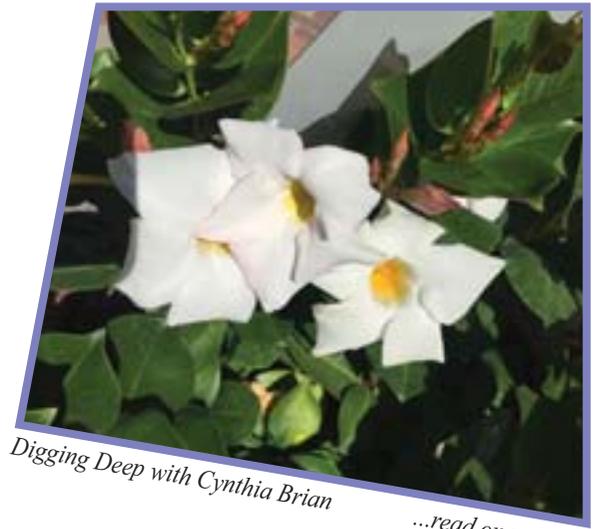
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# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 11 Issue 18 Wednesday, Nov. 1, 2017



*Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian*

*...read on page D8*

## Building a house of straw

By John T. Miller



*Amber and Norman Remer smile inside their house of straw, while under construction.*

*Photo John T. Miller*

While Norman and Amber Remer of Saranap are feeling no threats from the Big Bad Wolf, their efforts to build a house of straw have been beset by many obstacles, including county permits, the recent winter monsoons, concerns of neighbors, and the stress of time and space constraints.

When the Remers moved back to the Bay Area after spending five years in Washington, D.C., they

realized they could not afford to live in the community of their choice on the teacher salaries they both earn. Norman is a high school English teacher and Amber teaches elementary school. The couple are also expecting their first child in January.

Norman's creative solution was to call on Mom and Dad – Lilli and Nick Remer – who were willing to take out a loan on their existing home and transfer the mortgage payments to their son and daugh-

ter-in-law so they could build a living quarters in their backyard.

They first began planning in July, 2015.

“We realized we could take advantage of this amazing opportunity to build something unique, beautiful and eco-friendly,” said Norman Remer. “I researched adobe structures but realized it wouldn't work in earthquake country. My research led me to straw bale construction and I fell in love with the soft curves and undulating walls of the design. Luckily, Amber was willing to go along with my crazy scheme.”

Straw bale homes have thick walls like adobe, are insulated with an agricultural waste product, and are perfectly suited to California's earthquakes and hot summers. Once the tightly packed bales are enclosed, there is no room for oxygen, rendering the house practically fireproof.

An advantage to the straw insulation is efficiency in heating and cooling. Amber Remer points out, “It takes 12 hours for changes in outside temperature to reach the inside. The house stays cool without air conditioning even on 100-degree days.” The house can also support a green roof, with over 500 square feet of potential garden outside the upstairs bedroom window.

“When we first went in for the permitting process, the county officials were like deer in headlights with the concept of a building with straw walls,” said Norman Remer. “Despite the fact that people have built like this for hundreds of years, the county wasn't sure how to deal with it. They worried that the house might collapse.”

*... continued on page D4*

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## Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	11	\$794,000	\$2,665,000
MORAGA	9	\$443,500	\$1,900,000
ORINDA	10	\$750,000	\$2,970,000

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

- 866 Birdhaven Court, \$1,426,000, 3 Bdrms, 1669 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 10-9-17  
 617 Burton Drive, \$1,950,000, 5 Bdrms, 3038 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 10-6-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$252,500, 06-23-80  
 1670 Foothill Park Circle, \$1,167,000, 5 Bdrms, 2596 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 9-29-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$250,000, 08-07-87  
 561 Francis Drive, \$794,000, 3 Bdrms, 1548 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 9-27-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$658,000, 07-16-04  
 3111 Gloria Terrace, \$1,199,000, 4 Bdrms, 2390 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 9-29-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$905,000, 09-27-16  
 3486 Moraga Boulevard, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 1592 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 9-27-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$275,000, 10-12-95  
 580 Silverado Drive, \$1,558,000, 3 Bdrms, 2088 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 10-6-17  
 3416 St. Marys Road, \$2,665,000, 5 Bdrms, 3369 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 9-25-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$850,000, 04-16-13  
 3294 Sweet Drive, \$1,075,000, 3 Bdrms, 1278 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 9-29-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$669,000, 08-29-08  
 1750 Toyon Road, \$864,000, 3 Bdrms, 1710 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 10-6-17  
 1106 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$2,195,000, 4 Bdrms, 2371 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 9-29-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$1,680,000, 02-17-15

### MORAGA

- 867 Augusta Drive, \$850,000, 3 Bdrms, 2148 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 9-29-17  
 292 Birchwood Drive, \$1,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 2258 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 10-2-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$565,000, 12-12-95  
 10 Brandt Drive, \$1,608,000, 5 Bdrms, 3692 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 10-6-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$893,000, 08-30-01  
 66 Carr Drive, \$1,349,000, 4 Bdrms, 2410 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 9-29-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$805,000, 08-02-02  
 2145 Donald Drive #10, \$443,500, 2 Bdrms, 952 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 10-5-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$393,000, 12-15-05  
 1157 Larch Avenue, \$975,000, 4 Bdrms, 1829 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 9-27-17  
 1722 St. Andrews Drive, \$910,000, 3 Bdrms, 2079 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 9-29-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$879,100, 04-11-16  
 15 Tia Place, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2121 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 10-6-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$1,155,000, 10-24-06  
 176 Willowbrook Lane, \$1,900,000, 3 Bdrms, 3003 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 9-29-17

### ORINDA

- 12 Chelton Court, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 2314 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 9-26-17  
 429 El Toyonal, \$1,425,000, 5 Bdrms, 4159 SqFt, 2008 YrBlt, 10-6-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 06-21-12  
 1 Hidden Lane, \$1,435,000, 4 Bdrms, 2351 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 10-3-17  
 270 Holly Lane, \$1,275,000, 3 Bdrms, 3031 SqFt, 1981 YrBlt, 10-3-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$675,000, 10-26-01  
 502 Miner Road, \$2,970,000, 5 Bdrms, 4193 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 9-29-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$2,190,000, 06-08-12  
 129 Rheem Boulevard, \$750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1778 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 9-29-17  
 554 Tahos Road, \$2,800,000, 3 Bdrms, 1915 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 10-6-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$1,340,000, 06-03-16  
 221 Village Gate Road, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 2130 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 10-6-17  
 33 Whitehall Drive, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 1579 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 10-6-17;  
 Previous Sale: \$793,000, 06-27-08  
 16 Wilder Road, \$2,247,500, 4 Bdrms, 4149 SqFt, 2016 YrBlt, 9-27-17

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# Building a house of straw

... continued from page D1



From left: Architect David Arkin and contractor Keith Kuhlmann at the straw house building site.

Photos provided

In the Remer's corner, however, was architect David Arkin, AIA, who is one of the founders and current director of the California Straw Building Association. Arkin and his wife, Anni Tilt, are partners of Arkin Tilt Architects in Berkeley.

"Arkin arranged a meeting with the lead planner and engineer with the county to present the project and address any concerns and provide the extra data required by them," Norman said. In all, the research and application process took over six months.

A major obstacle was the design. Space restraints limited the structure to 1,000 square feet, and they wondered how they could design a two-story home to get a living space worth building. They were able to get a square footage calculation allowance on the thickness of the walls. The straw bales require 21 inches of thickness, whereas standard walls are only 6 inches thick. Everything else was treated like a conventional building.

They also anticipated and tried to address potential neighbors' concerns over the two-story structure by limiting the downstairs ceilings to 7.5 feet high and slanting the roof from 6 feet high upstairs.

Their first task was to dig the foundation, but the severe winter rains cost countless delays. In addition, a deluge dislodged a newly installed sump pump and a tractor submerged in a quagmire of mud took an entire day to extract.

Once the walls were erected, one of the most satisfying days was the "bale raising." Similar to the tradition of a barn raising being a community event, the Remers called on family and friends to help. Over 50 people came, including many they didn't even know as a result of calling out to the CASBA organization. Within three and a half hours, the tightly bound bales of hay were loaded into the walls and secured with wire.

Since the school year began, Norman Remer has spent weekends plastering



Local artist Evan Gerardo lends a hand.

the outside walls. He is using a lime plastering mixture, applied slowly, so it will dry properly into a protective limestone, which allows moisture to escape rather than becoming trapped within the walls. "Water is the enemy of straw-built houses and can lead to mold," he says.

While many people have helped on various parts of the project, Norman credits his childhood friend – local artist Evan Gerardo – for his constant help. "Evan is the reason I'm still alive today," he says. "He helped dig, moved lumber, and, once the plastering started he would show up regularly to give of his time and supportive energy."

At first, the couple had hopes of being able to move in before their baby is born, but Amber realized the stress of completion was getting to be too much: "My nesting urge is definitely kicking in, but I'll still be able to prepare the bedroom. We've accepted that we may not make it in time."

Looking back at the process, Norman says, "As painful and as time consuming as it's been, when I look at any particular piece of the house I can think of the person who helped me with it. I have a personal investment in every square inch of this project."



*Feng Shui*

# Kitchen feng shui for the fall

By Michele Duffy



*Kitchens should be clean and tidy and also flooded with lots of natural light, or at least fantastic lighting options.*

*Photo Michele Duffy*

**K**itchens are gathering places to create, nourish and feed ourselves, our families and our friends – but especially with fall in full swing, the kitchen shifts to being the work horse of the season.

Your kitchen should not be a downer when you are in it for a meal or even a snack. In fact, it should be where you spend your happiest moments and where you find the joy of being a family. Good food, cooking and a warm kitchen makes the house a home, so kitchen feng shui should be top of mind during this bounty of the fall harvest.

The feng shui symbology of the kitchen is unique and multilayered, revolving around increasing positive energy in the kitchen to generate household prosperity, happiness and good health. Food brings people together for nourishment, celebration and connection. Creating a bright, well-lit and welcoming kitchen with that loving vibrational will enhance the meals you create there and

amplify the health and happiness results you want.

The kitchen is associated with the fire element because the hearth of the home or stove is located there. Because the kitchen and, in particular, the stove help create nourishment that allows us to have energy to work and prosper, the kitchen and stove relate directly to the home's finances.

Good stove feng shui includes maintaining and repairing any broken burners, cleaning your stove cooktop daily and keeping it spotless, as well as using all of the burners and rotating them daily. The stove, ideally, should be placed in the “commanding” position, in the middle of a center island, if there is room, to promote being in control of one's own finances.

Many people do not realize many obvious kitchen feng shui tips; if your kitchen is at odds with this list, you might possibly need a professional to help.

... continued on page D6

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## Feng Shui

# Kitchen feng shui for the fall

... continued from page D5



White shows off food best in the kitchen, and the stove cook top in the island or "Commanding Position" bodes well for wealth. Photo Michele Duffy

- 1) Make sure you actually use your kitchen to prepare meals to show how much you want to nourish your loved ones;
- 2) For the same reason, avoid having dirty dishes on counters or in the sink overnight;
- 3) Clean and sort thoroughly inside cabinets, the counters, floors and make the kitchen sparkle;
- 4) Assess what you really use in your kitchen and remove or store appliances away from the counter that are just getting in the way of an organized working space;
- 5) Kitchens should be well lit, well ventilated, and clutter free;
- 6) The placement of the kitchen should, if possible, be toward the back of the home;
- 7) Kitchens placed in the center of the home should be avoided;
- 8) Repair any and all leaking faucets, drains and refrigerators, and fix creaky doors;
- 9) Do not place knives on the countertops since

their "sharp" negative energy weakens the fire energy associated with the kitchen area;

10) Make sure the sink or refrigerator is not directly next to the stove (water puts out fire) if you desire financial abundance;

11) The stove should be in good working order at all times and spotless to draw more wealth and positive energy into your life;

12) If possible, the stove placement should be in an island configuration or in the "commanding position" to be in control of one's wealth/finances;

13) Microwaves should not be placed over the stove, blocking the stove's positive "Sheng" energy;

14) Balance out the kitchen with all five elements. Usually the four elements of Fire, Water, Metal and Earth are already present, so add a small plant or fresh flowers for the Wood element to encourage positive and balanced energy flow in the kitchen;

15) Choose a color that corresponds to the placement that your kitchen occupies in your home and if in doubt, white shows off the vibrancy of our food best; and

16) Choose artwork that reinforces health, abundance, happiness and vitality. You don't need to prepare com-

plicated meals to impress your family and friends. Use ingredients that are fresh for the most vital Chi from a farmers' market or your favorite organic grocer. Choose whole foods versus processed. Like elsewhere in your kitchen, a tiny bit of planning and preparation will go a long way toward preparing yummy nourishment for all.

Keep in mind that the feng shui health trinity of master bedroom, baths and kitchen all contribute to our overall feeling of sustainable wellness, nourishment and ease. Our kitchens can be lovingly simplified, restored and organized to be a clean and tidy space where we can create meals that sustain our busy lives. If your kitchen no longer feels organized or functional, hopefully these tips will inspire you to clean out the junk drawer, or make the coffee and tea station less cluttered, or organize the broom closet, or clean the stove. Wherever you start, notice how it begins to open up the space and notice how you feel.

If you feel like creating more space, then keep going. If you do even a few of the tips that I have shared, you might feel inspired to take back control of your kitchen so that this fall you continue to nourish and delight with food to feed the soul of the season.

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The Bagua Map: Front Door

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 2017 Feng Shui Consultation, contact Michele at (520) 647-4887 or send an email to spaceharmony@gmail.com.





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## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for November

# Where there is smoke...

By Cynthia Brian

*"Count the fires by glowing flames, never by the ashes that fall.*

*Count your days by the golden hours, don't remember clouds at all.*

*Count the nights by stars, not shadows.*

*Count your life by smiles, not tears.*

*And with joy on every day, count your age by friends, not years."*

**H**ello November! We are grateful to welcome you.

With the devastating fires of the past month throughout California, our atmosphere has been filled with smoke and ash. The air quality has been so poor that we have been warned to stay indoors or wear N-95 rated masks when walking outside. Wildfire smoke and soot irritates eyes, skin, throat, nose, and lungs, and is especially dangerous for anyone with asthma or other respiratory illnesses.

But what effect does the smoke and debris have on our gardens?

Surprisingly, healthy plants have the ability to absorb the dangerous carbon dioxide and turn it into oxygen. Some landscapes may actually benefit from smoke as it diffuses the light allowing the shadows to be less intense under the top leaves of plants. The lower leaves then produce more food for the plant. Plants use carbon dioxide as a fertilizer, cleaning the chemicals and toxic particles in the air while restoring and cleansing our atmosphere.

Houseplants are extremely beneficial in cleaning our indoor air quality. They have the ability to reduce the effects of mold, dust, microbes, and volatile organic compounds. Spider plants, pothos, snake plant, spathiphyllum, philodendron, palms, and ficus benjamina are all easy to grow and work overtime to keep us breathing clean, fresh air.

Scientists are discovering the dire consequences of climate change not only on our physical wellbeing, but on our mental fitness as well. Disasters such as the catastrophic hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and fires have a dramatic negative impact on our health. We can help the environment as well as our families by maintaining a positive outlook and putting a smile on our face while we work together diligently to reduce our carbon footprint.

... continued on next page



Getting ready for Thanksgiving, a garden of pumpkins.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Fall arrangement of clivia, roses and euphorbia.



Grapevines will be dropping leaves soon.

# Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for November



Harvest cauliflower and beets.

Want to protect your valuable plants from any negative effects from the smoke? Here are a few simple tasks to undertake.

1. Any vegetable or fruit still in the orchard or garden needs to be washed thoroughly before consuming. A solution of vinegar and water is a time-tested cleanser.
2. Compost any damaged bush, flower, fruit or vegetable.
3. Spray your plants with a hose to remove any clogged particles. Continue to do this until you see a difference.
4. Fertilize the landscape now, including your grass and lawn.
5. Add three inches of mulch to your garden, if you didn't already do it last month.
6. Any bare earth needs a cover crop. Clover, alfalfa, wildflowers, fava beans, vetch and mustard will add nitrogen to the soil.
7. Remove any dead or dying trees or shrubs. When planting new trees, space them at least 10 feet apart.
8. Be fire-wise by clearing your roof, gutters, eaves, decks and patios of debris.
9. Mow your lawns and keep them green. Lawns clean the air we breathe, absorb smoke and pollutants, and change sulfur dioxide and carbon dioxide into oxygen. A swath of green offers a healthy filtration system while being a flame-retardant safety zone.

Make fire prevention a top priority by creating a defensible space around your home and garden. Fires burn only when fuel is present and a dry landscape is fuel for the fire.

## Other Tips for your November To-Do List:

- **WINTERIZE** your garden. Cover frost prone plants and shrubs with blankets or burlap. Wash patio furniture before storing or covering. Move fragile container plants under an eave or away from harsh winds.
- **PRUNE** your fruit trees and crape myrtles once all the leaves have fallen. Keep branches a minimum of six feet from the ground.
- **RAKE** leaves to add to the compost pile. It is especially important to rake redwood and pine needles as they tend to blanket an area suffocating any other living things.
- **PLANT** bulbs for spring blooms. (You have been refrigerating your tulips and crocuses, right?)
- **CLEAN** gutters of all debris to prevent clogging when the rains come.
- **SOW** lawn seed and keep the seed watered until it sprouts.
- **PICK** guavas and bananas as they ripen.
- **WAIT** another month before harvesting persimmons. If you are having problems with the birds and squirrels eating your unripe fruit, pick early and refrigerate.

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A white mandevilla invokes serenity.



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# Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for November

... continued from page D9

- **PLANT** garlic and shallots before the weather turns cold. Easy to grow, they will overwinter to supply you with big savory bulbs for a summer harvest.
- **ARRANGE** roses, clivia, euphorbia and branches for a beautiful fall display.
- **GROW** chrysanthemums. These long blooming flowers are available in a variety of colors and textures adding a smile to any visitor.
- **PROVIDE** food and water for the birds, especially since many are migrating.
- **HARVEST** cruciferous vegetables including cauliflower, broccoli, kale, carrots, beets, Swiss chard, Brussels sprouts as well as arugula and nasturtiums for your healthy meals. These foods are high in antioxidants, which support the body's ability to fight off toxins and reduce chronic inflammation.
- **AERATE** your lawns. For more information on grass selections and the benefits of planting grass, see <https://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1117/Digging-Deep-with-Cynthia-Brian-The-grass-is-always-greener.html>
- **MARVEL** at the changing colors of the leaves on trees, specifically Japanese maple, pistache, liquid amber and crape myrtle.
- **CHECK** out the glorious bark of a eucalyptus tree.
- **CUT** a few branches from grapevines to use as table décor for an autumn gathering.
- **BRING** houseplants outside for a shower and day in the cooler sunshine. They'll be ready for a winter of air freshening back inside.
- **ADD** a peaceful, quiet element to a container by planting a white mandevilla. If you protect it from frost, you'll get an annual display of florets.
- **PACK** "To Go emergency bags" and keep one in your home and in your car. In case of a disaster, every second counts.
- **TAKE** a break and head to the beach. The sea air will refresh and reawaken your joyful spirit. (It works every time for me!)
- **GET** ready for Thanksgiving with a garden display of mixed pumpkins, gourds, and scarecrows.

Gratitude is the theme for November. The days are short. The soil is warm and we all pray for rain. Our thoughts and prayers go to all of those who have suffered in the recent natural disasters. It's been a challenging few months for our country and our world, yet despite the tragedies, let us all count our blessings and keep on smiling.



The architecture of the live oak invites tree climbers and awe.



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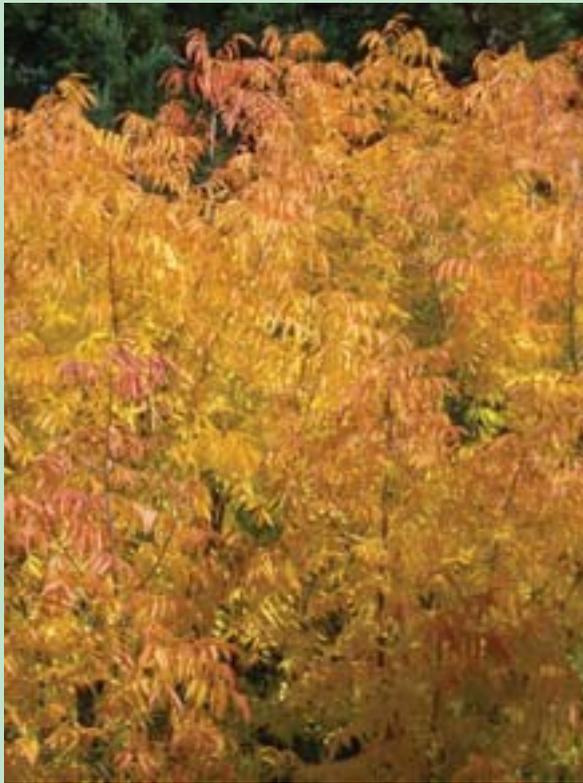
Photos Cynthia Brian



Peach hued Angel Trumpet Vine and delicious.



Banana trees offer privacy and delicious fruit.



Vibrant colors of the pistache change with the autumn coolness.



Cynthia Brian takes a sea break and encourages everyone to keep on smiling.

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, raised in the vineyards of Napa County, is a New York Times best selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are1® 501 c3. Please make a donation to help with hurricane & fire disaster relief at [www.BetheStarYouAre.org](http://www.BetheStarYouAre.org). Tune into Cynthia's Radio show and order her books at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com).

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