

# 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.



Maria Eberle, REALTOR®

(925) 478-7190  
 Maria@MariaEberle.com  
 www.MariaEberle.com  
 CalBRE #01798906



BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY  
 HomeServices  
 Drysdale Properties

Good to know™

Bridging the journey from Lamorinda to Rossmoor  
 "One satisfied client at a time!"



Call today for a personalized tour of Rossmoor and a Market Analysis of your home.

Rossmoor senior real estate specialist and Lamorinda resident for 20+ years!



NEW IN ROSSMOOR!

900 Terra California, #4  
 Walnut Creek

2BR | 2BA | 1364± SF

Only five gentle steps down to this special condo!

\$699,000



FOR LEASE!

241 Ivy Place  
 Orinda

4BR | 2BA | 2205± SF

Nicely updated executive rental in prime location!

Call for details!



MARY BETH MACLENNAN  
 925.324.6246

TONY CONTE  
 925.708.1396

marybeth@mbtcpartners.com  
 tony@mbtcpartners.com

License # 01480008 | 00959101  
 Pacific Union # 01866771



✓ LAMORINDA ✓ ROSSMOOR ✓ GREATER EAST BAY

## 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.

## Lafayette Pack and Ship + Print

are taking on the **big boys.**



Two years ago, this December, Ian and Sue McKinlay relocated to Lafayette from Denver Colorado to be closer to their family in Orinda. With over thirty years' experience in the retail shipping industry, both in Colorado and London England, they established Lafayette Pack and Ship + Print at 3559 Mt Diablo Blvd, and have enjoyed every minute, they maintain they have the best customers on the planet who comment how much they appreciate fast, efficient personal service.

Ian McKinlay said "we have created a flourishing store offering **FEDEX GROUND** and **EXPRESS**, **DHL** and all **USPS** services", as well as **NOTARY PUBLIC**, **MAILBOX RENTAL**, **PRINTING**, **COPYING**, **PASSPORT PHOTOGRAPHS**, **POSTAGE STAMPS**, **SHREDDING**, **GREETING CARDS** AND **GIFT WRAP**.

From first class and priority mail through to shipping high end artwork and antiques across the US and worldwide, their packaging techniques insure items travel safely as well as always offering the most economical options to suit your budget and requirements.

They have **FREE PARKING** behind the store, plus they offer a **FREE PICK UP** service anywhere within a three-mile radius.

Ian and Sue thank all their customers for their amazing support, and look forward to helping them this holiday season with all their shipping requirements". Call Ian or Sue anytime on 925 284 7444.