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Wednesday, June 10, 2009



Melyssa Snyder helps launch the new Splash Pad at the Moraga Commons with Parks and Rec Director Jay Ingram
 Photo Doug Kohen

Let the Summer Fun Begin!

By Cathy Tyson, Sophie Braccini and Andrea A. Firth

School's Almost Out. Find the events you don't want to miss in our Summer Event Guide, page 18 and 19.

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Budget Goes From Red to Less Red

By Cathy Tyson

(The Lafayette City Council is scheduled to revisit the proposed budget after press time on Monday, June 8. Please check our website for updates. <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/>)

The proposed \$11.9 M budget to run the City of Lafayette for fiscal year 2009/2010 represents a 2% increase over last year's spending. Unfortunately there was a projected \$900,000 budget gap between revenue and expenditures, due to several one time

charges. Further reductions may be implemented at the next City Council meeting.

The largest one-time charge is the anticipated borrowing by the State of California, "When lawmakers pull this trigger – and we are confident that they will – the impact to Lafayette will be a \$540,000 reduction in General Fund revenues," said City Manager Steven Falk in a Staff Report. The state's fiscal picture is so dire, it's allowed to borrow revenue, but it must be paid

back within three years with interest.

Instead of taking the \$900,000 from the \$8.3 million sitting safely in reserves, the Council decided it was more prudent to look for cost savings to reduce the overage.

"Projections are anything but rosy, economists are saying we are not going to recover for some time," said Council Member Carol Federighi at a recent City Council meeting.

... continued on page 2

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Drugs and Alcohol Take Toll on Local Teens

By Jennifer Wake

Now that Danielle Lincoln is a junior at Acalanes High School, she and her friends hang out with the seniors, and she can tell that a lot of seniors drink. Although she didn't see as much drinking among freshmen and sophomores, she says, "Friends are turning toward drinking as they get older; they consider it cool."

And while she says the recent tragedy involving 16-year-old Miramonte student Joe Loudon was "a wake-up call," she hasn't heard about Acalanes parties "getting that bad."

"After sports [events] or seasons are over, they have parties," she says. "A lot of people drink and it carries on to the next year. It's just a way to blow off steam and celebrate the end of the year."

"Teens are gonna party," says marriage and family therapist Monica Gadda. Unfortunately, Gadda has seen a growing attitude among teens (and their parents)

that as long as it's just drinking, it's not a big deal.

Gadda teaches a course on alcohol and substance abuse at Saint Mary's College and has coached volleyball at Orinda Intermediate School and volunteered at Joaquin Moraga. While at the middle schools, she saw a disturbing trend. "Younger and younger people are drinking," she says. "These sixth, seventh and eighth graders would tell me, 'We're drinking just a little bit of beer . . . not smoking pot. High school kids drink; it's just what you do.'"

The 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) reported that 28 percent of youth aged 12 to 20 years drank alcohol, and 19 percent reported binge drinking (more than five drinks in a sitting) – making them more susceptible to alcohol poisoning.

... continued on page 8

Police Plan to be Vigilant this Weekend

Orinda Police Chief Bill French is a man on a mission. "I thought I had a zero tolerance policy before, but this will be a stepped-up effort," French stated firmly regarding teen drinking and anyone drinking and driving this upcoming graduation weekend. "We will have extra patrols out, and we will be targeting high school parties and DUI enforcement." Police in Lafayette and Moraga will be paying attention as well, so residents are encouraged to celebrate safely.

Rainbow Trout to Return to Orinda Creek?



By Sophie Braccini

Six months ago, the Friends of the Orinda Creek (FOC) assisted the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development (CCCD) to test the waters of the San Pablo Creek. The results are in and the waters of the primary creek that flows through Orinda are in good enough shape to support the re-introduction of trout.

Read on page 5

Miramonte Wins North Coast Baseball Championship



By Kevin D. Shallat

It was an emotional week for the Miramonte varsity baseball team going into the North Coast Section (NCS) Baseball Championship game on May 30, as well as a tough week for the school and community together. Merely one week earlier, Miramonte lost a student, Joseph Loudon, who was close to some of the players on the team. Read on page 21

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Calendar

City Council 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Monday, June 22

Planning Comm. 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Thursday, June 18

Design Review 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Tuesday, June 23

Senior Services 3:00pm
Community Center, Alder Room
500 St Mary's Road
Thursday, June 25

City of Lafayette:
<http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us>
Chamber of Commerce:
<http://www.lafayettechamber.org>



Hit and Run, 5/25/09 A Betty Lane resident returned home late at night and parked his vehicle on the street in front of his home. When he returned to the vehicle the next day, he discovered it had been hit by another vehicle. Damage to the vehicle included a broken rearview mirror and a dent over one of the tire wells. There are no suspects and the only witness is missing a mirror.

Notice: Unlocked Car Doors Attract Purse Snatchers, 5/26/09 The victim left her purse in her unlocked vehicle and walked into First Steps Learning Center on Stanley Boulevard. She later discovered the purse was missing. Lost contents included her Ghurka wallet and BlackBerry Storm telephone. The purse snatcher rounded out the insults by using both of her credit cards and her ATM card at local establishments and on-line.

Look Out for Strawberry Vendors, 5/29/09 An alert and impressively concerned citizen contacted Lafayette Police when they saw an unknown suspect selling strawberries on St. Mary's Road near Rohrer. Police made contact with the Spanish-speaking subject and attempted to explain that he was not allowed to sell strawberries (or any other produce) without a permit. Police soon received another concerned call about a second strawberry vendor on St. Mary's Road. Both strawberry salespersons were given a ride to BART so they could go home.

DUI, 5/30/09 An anonymous passerby called police when he observed a single car accident on Pleasant Hill Road near Quandt. The suspect involved in the solo car accident admitted to driving the vehicle. She was arrested and transported to the Martinez Detention Facility.

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Fate of Downtown Apartment Building Undecided

By Cathy Tyson



Proposed development behind Panda Express Illustration provided by Heller Manus Architects, San Francisco

The 1.47 acre gravel parking lot behind Panda Express may be ever so slowly progressing toward development. It's been a circuitous route for the proposed C-shaped, 87-unit apartment building with one, two, and three bedroom units, known as Town Center III. The preliminary plans, after the first go-round of review will definitely be adjusted, more on that below. But at the moment the project features parking on two levels,

accessible from Dewing Avenue behind the Pet Food Express store. There is also a courtyard divided into public and private areas, with access to the public section from the BART pathway, and a 2,500 square foot community plaza/sculpture park. At a recently held Joint Meeting with the City Council, Planning Commission, and Design Review Committee, representatives of KB Home, Inc and Lafayette Residential

Partners were hoping to see if there was support for the project or not, which will determine if they file a formal application for development. In general, city staff support a multi-family project at this location because of its proximity to BART, shopping, and parks and find it "an ideal site for higher density housing," said Niroop Srivatsa in a Staff Report.

... continued on page 12

Budget Goes From Red to Less Red

In addition, many felt that that reserve was to be used in case of a major earthquake or fire. Given the Council's fiscally conservative history, staff put together a menu of service and cost reduction options to choose from to put a dent in the deficit.

Seven pages of options each with a service implication and estimated savings were prepared. Getting off to a great start, Ron Lefler, Manager of the Public Works department, negotiated a rate reduction of \$85,000 from contract vendors. Add to that \$100,000 that won't be spent for new radios this year - a part of the Regional Communication System. City offices will be closed for four days between Christmas and New Year. Jennifer Russell, Director of the Parks, Trails and Recreation Department reported that summer fees were higher than anticipated, saving approximately \$27,000. The combination of these and other items totaled \$411,000, bringing the deficit of \$900,000 down by almost half to \$489,000.

One thing not on the negotiating table, at least at press time, was employee salaries and merit increases. "The Council has received some, shall we say, 'less than posi-

tive' response to this decision," said Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson.

How are salary increases determined? "Each employee is given a performance evaluation and receives an overall rating of 0 - 3. That rating is then multiplied by a merit "factor" -- this year, the contract stipulates that the multiplier is 2.5; therefore, employees can receive a raise of between 0% and 7%. Last year the average merit increase was 6.7%. However, because the raises are pro-rated for new hires, the actual percentage increase in salaries was closer to 6% overall. Two notes -- not all employees are receiving a 7% increase and that \$135K figure (for merit increases) is fully loaded and includes the cost of social security, workers compensation and fringe benefits," said Robinson.

Getting back to this year's unusual one-time charges, in addition to the State money grab, accounting for the stupendous rise in the cost of policing through the Sheriff's department has gotten increasingly difficult. "Lafayette's total cost for police services in 2005 was \$2.9M, but we expect that number to climb to \$4.0M in the next fiscal year and -- unless something is done -- to

... continued from page 1

\$7M within five years," said Falk. The proposed 2009/2010 budget reflects \$250,000 in increased reserves to offset the potential cost associated with a change in the provider of police services.

Another growing expense is non-negotiable Contra Costa County fees. The County is also in dire financial straights and continues to push expenditures onto cities where possible. For example in 1996 Lafayette paid nothing for Animal Control services, in 2006 the county charged \$54,000 for the same level of service. This year the fee will be \$150,000.

The feeling around the administrative offices is that if the County and the State would just leave Lafayette alone, the city would be just fine.

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Multi-Use Path Almost Open for Business

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

It's a win-win for Lafayette. It's not everyday that you get more than you pay for - especially in this case where EBMUD is footing the vast majority of the bill for the project. The brand new porous concrete Multi-use path originally planned to extend along Mt. Diablo Boulevard from Risa Road to the Reservoir entrance, was lengthened all the way to El Nido Road.

"We committed a specific amount of funds toward the multi-use path, and the city designed a cost effective project. With the competitive building climate right now - estimates came in much lower than anticipated," said Sonna Garcia, Associate Civil Engineer with EBMUD.

Serious joggers and cyclists take note, "This will provide a link to the trail system that con-

nects with Happy Valley, Upper Happy Valley and El Nido," said Matt Luttrupp, Associate Engineer with the City of Lafayette.

EBMUD provided the funding on this cooperative project, while the City of Lafayette provided engineering and staff time. "We are very excited to see the path get built, it looks great," said Garcia. "Discussion with the City about collaboration began with planning for the pipeline that will be built on Mount Diablo Boulevard in 2010. Because it's a heavily used pedestrian area we wanted to improve safety during construction. Long term, it provides a nice pathway in Lafayette and improves access for visitors to EBMUD's Lafayette Recreation Area."

... continued on page 6

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Moraga

Lamorinda Community

Calendar	
Town Council	7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo	
Wednesday, June 24	
Planning Comm.	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Monday, June 15	
Design Review	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Monday, June 22	
Park & Rec	7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Tuesday, June 16	
Liaison	8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way	
Friday, June 12	
Town of Moraga online: http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us	
Chamber of Commerce: http://www.moragachamber.org	



Grand Theft, 5/30/09 An unknown suspect has broken into the Campolindo Aquatic Center and removed several envelopes containing checks and cash for the week's sales from a lock box. It was taken sometime between 4:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., while staff was conducting training in another part of the building. Estimated loss - \$10,000. Nothing funny about that.

Possession of paraphernalia, 5/29/09 Officers noticed a car driving erratically near Larch and Camino Pablo. The driver waved officers over for assistance. Apparently the young woman driver had gotten into an argument with her boyfriend and was looking for him. She may have been upset at the boyfriend, but she was probably more upset that she didn't have her driver's license, had priors and that the car contained a methamphetamine pipe, small bag of meth and burglary tools.

Found Property, 5/29/09 A good Samaritan called Moraga Police to report that she found a gold colored watch at the Moraga Commons Park at 11:00 a.m. that day. The reporting person didn't wish to claim the watch, only to return it to its rightful owner. No mention if it's actual gold or just gold colored. Contact Moraga P.D. if it belongs to you, 376-2515.

Stolen Car, 5/27/09 A Miramonte Drive resident told officers that her Silver Nissan Maxima, license plate number 2NMM552, was taken from her assigned parking spot without her permission. Although it was locked, there was a spare key in the glove box. No suspects or leads at this time. Do people ever give permission to steal a car?

Moraga Revenue Enhancement Committee Hits the Ground Running

By Sophie Braccini

The purpose of Moraga's Revenue Enhancement Committee (REC) meeting held on June 1st was to bring its members up to speed on the Town's financial needs and start organizing their work.

Moraga Town Manager Mike Segrest presented an updated budget that's still in the black. But the figures show that the current budget does not sufficiently account for infrastructure maintenance and replacement.

The new REC is charged with identifying ways to increase the Town's income, so the infrastructure does not deteriorate and more services can be offered to residents. Ideas were put forward including studying the possibility of Moraga becoming a "Charter City."

REC Chair Dick Olsen kept order and focus during the two-hour meeting. Jill Mercurio, Town Engineer and Public Works Director, presented the current state of Moraga's roads. "Our roads are rated at a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 57, which is considered fair," said Mercurio, "to maintain this rating we need to spend about \$1.2 million a year, but at this time we have \$800,000 budgeted for that item."

Mercurio provided REC members with a detailed simulation that showed how much should be budgeted in order to obtain different levels of pavement conditions.

"Council needs to come to grip with what we want," said Council Member Mike Metcalf, who also sits on the REC, "we've not had this discussion yet. We need to answer this for the community and then this committee will find the money."

The issue of the drainage system is of great magnitude as well. "The system was built before the town was incorporated, it is good for 65 years, and 40% of the town's drains are more than 45 years old," explained Mercurio. Three years ago a sinkhole formed when a storm drain collapsed under Rheem Boulevard. After this incident Mercurio ordered a video inspection of the main drains to assess their state. The film has not been analyzed yet. Segrest added that a capital expenditure funding schedule could be made available for REC, but that the roads/storm drain issue was likely to take closer to 50 years than 10 to be fixed.

REC will meet 12 times before sun-setting at the end of November with a presentation of its report to the Town. Members will work in sub-committees during those meetings and the public is strongly encouraged to participate in the deliberations.

The four sub-committees are General Fund revenue enhancement opportunities, public works infrastructure and long-term maintenance, boosting commercial economic activity and sales tax revenues, town facility and real estate management.

At the next meeting on June 15, REC will review the proposals made by its counterparts in Orinda and Lafayette. Of particular interest to REC is the idea of becoming a Charter City, an idea that both Lafayette and Orinda are considering.

"At the last Mayors' Conference our neighbors approached me and proposed having a Lamorinda strategy on this issue," said Mayor Dave Trotter. "If we are to consider such a change, then the public will need a lot more information," said Moraga Chamber of Commerce President Edy Schwartz during public comment period.

What is a Charter City?

In California, cities and towns are ruled by State law or can adopt or modify their organizing charter by a majority vote of their residents. Moraga is governed by State law and is managed by a five-member City Council. A charter gives a city's residents the flexibility to choose any kind of government structure allowed by the Constitution. It is a growing trend in California and at this time last year, 112 of California's 478 cities were charter cities. According to the League of California Cities' legal staff, "the charter city provision of the State Constitution, commonly referred to as the 'home-rule' provision, is based on the principle that a city, rather than the state, is in the best position to know what it needs and how to satisfy those needs. The home-rule provision allows charter cities to conduct their own business and control their own affairs. A charter maximizes local control." Lafayette and Orinda are looking into this possibility as well. Areas that municipalities can decide to rule include: municipal election matters, land use and zoning decisions (with some exceptions), how a city spends its tax dollars, and municipal contracts. S. Braccini

Moraga Center Specific Plan to be Tweaked Before Adoption

By Sophie Braccini

After a long evening of debate on May 28, the Moraga Town Council partially approved the Planning Commission's recommendation for the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP). It agreed to add more flexibility to the plan, but capped the maximum number of units at 630. Staff and the specific plan sub-committee (Mayor David Trotter and Council Member Michael Metcalf) will refine the final MCSP, which will be brought back to the Council for final approval next fall.

In a written report, Moraga Planning Director Lori Salamack hypothesized development numbers based on the very flexible rules that the Planning Commission recommended. Among them was a scenario that pushed the number of single family units to the minimum (40), and the active senior housing to the maximum (760), with the addition of 100 compact family housing units, the total reached 900 housing units. That number got the Council thinking.

Town Manager Mike Segrest's recommendation was to establish development limits not according to numbers of unit, but according to a traffic envelop: "A unit can be a 5000 square foot home for a family of five or a 600 square foot condo for a senior," said Segrest, "and the impacts are drastically

different. Planning with a maximum traffic impact would give us a good comfort level of what the end product will be."

"This approach makes good sense," said Mayor David Trotter, "but our community needs a number, we need a cap, with flexibility in the mix of housing." A maximum of 630 units became the consensus.

The Council also moved to ensure that development along Camino Ricardo would be only single family homes up to the ridge line. The Planning Commission had allowed the possibility of higher density housing beyond a first row of single family homes. The Council felt it was important to preserve the feeling of a homogeneous neighborhood both for the current Camino Ricardo residents and the Sonsara development, across the street from these potential new buildings.

The Council discussed the possibility of keeping a separate housing count for Saint Mary's college students and workforce. "The plan charts housing for workforce and for Saint Mary's, but the college is the largest employer in the town, so combining the two categories would make sense," said Trotter. But some Council Members disagreed and wanted to keep a separate

rate count for the college, so it was decided that the sub-committee would ask Saint Mary's for their position.

A consensus is emerging around the recreation/gym center that perhaps none of the sites that have been considered in the MCSP for its location are optimal. The position across from St Mary's road would be at the entrance of a busy retail area and would not be conducive to attracting customers. The second site near the Moraga Commons, along Moraga Road, would locate the center at the confluence of 3 major creeks, where the recommended Fish and Game set-back is 150 feet. The property owner, the Bruzzone family, continues to present that site as a better opportunity. It is likely that this issue will be completely re-studied after the MCSP is approved.

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REVERB (youth).....7pm
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BLAST! Kids Club.....6pm

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Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, June 16	
Thursday, June 18, 7pm	
joint meeting with Planning Commission	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, June 23 canceled Tuesday, July 14	
Traffic Safety Advisory Comm.	7pm
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Monday, June 20	
Mayor's Com. Liaison	8:30am
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Monday, July 6	
City of Orinda: http://www.cityoforinda.org Chamber of Commerce: http://www.orindachamber.org • local businesses • upcoming events	



Residential Burglary, 6/02/09
Sometime between Monday and Tuesday a Quail Ridge Lane home that was under construction was broken into. Approximately \$770 worth of miscellaneous items were taken.

D.U.I., 5/31/09 East bound Highway 24 at Oak Hill Road, a 25-year-old male was pulled over at 1:45 in the morning, because he displayed objective signs of intoxication. The math professor at a local college failed his field sobriety test and had a blood alcohol content of .11 He was booked at Martinez "Detention" Facility. You can say that again.

D.U.I. 5/31/09 Same spot – east bound Highway 24 just a little farther down at Pleasant Hill Road, same officer, a couple of hours later. This time a 47-year-old female was pulled over and also failed the breathalyzer test. Oddly enough both individuals were driving Saturns. What are the odds? When buzzed, stay away from Saturn, call a cab.

Attempted tire theft, 5/28/09 At 2:30 in the morning an officer on patrol noticed someone taking the tires off a truck with a small flashlight on El Nido Road, near St. Stephens. The vehicle fled the scene with lights off reaching speeds of 80 – 95 m.p.h. on Highway 24 when it crashed at the Highway 13 off-ramp. Two twenty-something young women were taken into custody, the stolen property and burglary tools were located. What a surprise, their get-away car was also stolen.



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Orinda Prepares Housing Element

By Andrea A. Firth

As Orinda's City staff and the Planning Process Review Task Force (PPRTF) work toward finalizing their report, which will address the potential for incorporating greater housing opportunities in the downtown areas of the City, running in a parallel track but about six months ahead, is the City's requirement to file an updated Housing Element with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). With the PPRTF recommendations not quite final or ready for implementation, Council members decided to submit a basic version of the housing element to the HCD with plans to update the housing plan in the Fall to include the PPRTF recommendations as appropriate.

What is a Housing Element?
State law requires that cities

plan for the projected housing needs of the community at all economic levels. As part of the city's General Plan—the comprehensive, long-term plan for the physical development of the city—the state mandates cities to include a housing element. In order for the private market to adequately address housing needs and demand, cities are required to adopt land use plans and regulatory systems which provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development. Orinda's current housing element planning period runs from 2007 to 2014, and the next update is due to HCD by June 30th.

How is the housing element relevant to the Orinda resident?

As is often the case in Orinda, all things relevant tie back to the deteriorating condition of the

roads. Compliance with the state's housing element law is a prerequisite to the city's receipt of Measure C/Measure J transportation funds, and this equates to about \$320,000 in annual pavement maintenance for the city. At the most recent City Council meeting, Planning Department Director Emmanuel Ursu mentioned that 40% of California's cities do not currently have housing elements that meet the state requirements, however this is not position that Ursu recommends for Orinda. Along with the possibility, albeit remote, that the city could lose road maintenance monies, according to Ursu, additional risks associated with not having a legally adequate housing element are exposure to law suits from housing advocacy groups and the potential for the Contra Costa Transportation Authority to pro-



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hibit the city from issuing any development permits until the housing element were compliant.

The housing element also requires cities to provide adequate zoning to allow for transitional housing and emergency shelters. "This does not mean we must construct or operate such facilities; however, if we received a request from a property owner to do so, and the property owner complied with the standards we established (hours of operation, location,

staffing requirements, size of the operation, etc) then we could not deny the request," explains Ursu. "My intent is to present the City Council with parameters for the operation of such facilities that both follow the requirements of state law and are consistent with the services our local churches already provide in this respect," he adds. Ursu will present a revised, draft Housing Element to the City Council at their next meeting on June 16th.

Downtown Revitalization—Getting Closer

By Andrea A. Firth

At a measured pace, Orinda is moving toward a more hassle-free process for residential development and establishing guidelines to foster the revitalization of the downtown areas. The City Council and Planning Commission have completed their joint review of the 61 recommendations proposed in the draft report of the Planning Process Review Task Force (PPRTF). Following an almost two-year journey and over 140 meetings, the PPRTF will now move to incorporate changes and feedback culled from multiple public meetings to generate a final report for the City Council.

As the Council and Planning Commission reviewed the final recommendations related to downtown revitalization, they worked to provide sufficient flexibility to allow developers to bring creative planning to the City while not uprooting the successful businesses already in place. "I am one for keeping this as open and flexible as possible," stated Planning Com-

missioner Richard Westin. "We don't know what a developer is going to bring to us... Leave it open and see what we get. Then we can begin to shape it," he added.

For not the first, or probably the last, time the Council and Commission members wrestled with the definition of a village character and what a village should or would look like. (Even the definition of semi-rural, as Orinda is often described, was briefly debated.) As proposed by the PPRTF, Orinda's village character will have a mix of retail, office, and residential space. It will be pedestrian friendly with inviting storefronts, include common open space areas, and take advantage of the surrounding natural beauty. For the visual learners in the group, the question still seemed to be—"so what does that look like?"

55-foot Building Height.
Longtime resident and former Mayor and Planning Commissioner Bill Judge asked the Council to ensure that the PPRTF recommendations not go so far as to eliminate

"the village" from the village of Orinda. Although the recommendation for raising the building height to 55 feet in the downtown districts had been reviewed at a previous meeting, Judge reopened the height discussion and challenged the rationale for allowing downtown building height to rise another 20 feet even if designed with setbacks. (The current downtown building height maximum is 35 feet.) "It's appalling, it doesn't fit... 55 feet is going to far," stated Judge who used Lafayette's Mercantile Exchange Building as an example of why 55 feet is too high. "The Mercantile Exchange Building on Mount Diablo Boulevard is only 42 1/2 feet high," noted Judge. "Think about 35 feet or 42 feet but not 55 feet," he added.

Parking. Ensuring the availability of adequate parking to meet the current and future retail parking needs was clearly supported by members of both the Council and Commission.

... continued on page 12

State Senator

DeSaulnier Talks Budget with Orinda's Council

By Andrea A. Firth

Mark DeSaulnier, California State Senator for the 7th District, paid a visit to the Orinda City Council meeting last Tuesday. Despite the current bleak outlook for the state's finances, he tried to infuse some good news, or at least hope, within his description of the

significant budget challenges facing California. "We thought we had solved the problem of the largest deficit that California has ever faced," stated DeSaulnier, who had just returned from a joint session of the Senate and Assembly in which the Governor deliv-

ered more negative news about the state's projected revenues. "We now have, as of today, an additional \$24 billion problem, which could lead to cash flow problems within as soon as a month," he stated.

... continued on page 6

Orinda Police Still Investigating Teen's Death

By Lee Borrowman

There have been no further arrests in the case involving the May 23 death of 16-year-old Joseph Loudon. The Miramonte High School student died of apparent alcohol poisoning after attending a party. Shortly thereafter police arrested two suspects, 18-year-old Patrick Gabrielli, the party's host, and an unidentified 16-year-old male who is suspected of bringing alcohol to the party. Police charged the two with contributing to the delinquency of a minor and giving alcohol to a minor. Many of the initial questions have been answered, according to Orinda Police Chief Bill French, but police are seeking additional witnesses to help them fill in details of the events of that evening.

"We are trying to find and interview more of them (the teenage guests)... there were fifty to sixty people there that night, but we've been able to talk to only a few and they have not provided very much information," French said last week. (Loudon's mother, Marianne Payne, has written an open letter to the Orinda community asking witnesses to come forward; read it in

our Public Forum on page 6.)

Although French said it did not appear that there was anyone of legal drinking age at the party, a keg of beer and a large quantity of hard liquor was found in the home at which the party was held.

"We were able to trace the keg; we know who purchased it and where," stated French. "There was also hard alcohol that was purchased that afternoon," he continued, but would not identify the suspect due to his age and the ongoing investigation.

French would not name the establishments, but confirmed "some of the alcohol was purchased in Alameda County, and some was purchased in the Lamorinda area." Police are working with the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to investigate the businesses involved.

The case has not yet been forwarded to the District Attorney. "We are waiting for the toxicology report (part of the autopsy that was performed on Loudon). Those results will be very important to this case," says French, and they will be available in a few weeks."

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—Lynn Simon

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Life in LAMORINDA

Rainbow Trout to Return to San Pablo Creek?

By Sophie Braccini



(L to R) Michelle Luebke instructs Barbara Denny and Brian Waters on how to collect samples in the San Pablo Creek Photo Sophie Braccini

Six months ago, the Friends of the Orinda Creek (FOC) assisted the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development (CCCD) to test the waters of the San Pablo Creek. The results are in and the waters of the primary creek that flows through Orinda are in good enough shape to support the re-introduction of trout. This is good news for creek supporters, because for some time there were critical questions as to the condition of the creek and its ability to support a species of trout that was once a natural part of our local environment. But before residents can watch silver reflections gliding through local waters, obstacles need to be removed and the main property owner of the watershed, the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), needs to climb on board.

The Friends of Orinda Creek (FOC) is ready to begin the project of repopulating the creek with the majestic rainbow trout. However, one small but formidable physical obstacle stands in the way of restoring the fish to its natural habitat; a 14-foot weir, owned and operated by EBMUD, that's located just upstream of the Bear Creek Road crossing. The old weir, now full of sediment after years of service, presents a hurdle to any trout seeking to follow its natural instinct to migrate upstream from San Pablo Reservoir to spawn in the upper reaches of San Pablo Creek.

"This structure still has a function for us," says EBMUD's Eileen White, who is in charge of infrastructure, "it reduces the deposit of debris and sediments in the San Pablo Reservoir and slows runoff during intense storm events." In an effort to work around this obstacle, the FOC proposes to establish a fish ladder or similar solution.

San Pablo Creek runs from the southeast to the northwest, originating near Orinda and flowing into San Pablo Bay. It drains one of the largest watersheds in the East Bay. Historically there were annual runs of rainbow trout in the creek. Some rainbow trout have been spotted in the Moraga Creek swimming up from the San Leandro reservoir. "Trout are the top predators of our

streams; reintroducing their population is a testimony of the restoration we have undertaken with the Orinda residents," said FOC member Brian Waters.

In its effort to restore the trout, the FOC enlisted the support of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). A meeting of representatives from the three organizations was organized on August 20, 2007. "By the end of the meeting, EBMUD staff adopted the position that they didn't think that San Pablo Creek above the barrier dam had adequate water quality and habitat conditions to support a trout population," remembers Waters, "and that it would be incumbent on FOC to demonstrate otherwise before they or DFG should give further consideration to restoring rainbow trout to San Pablo Creek upstream of the barrier dam."

The quality of the water and its habitat is tested yearly by the CCCD, using the manpower of volunteer groups. Last month the FOC received the report of the sampling that had been done six months ago. "The biodiversity of the benthic macroinvertebrate (BMI) community in upper San Pablo Creek is similar to the biodiversity downstream of the San Pablo Reservoir

where there is a current population of steelhead," said Michelle Luebke, Watershed Monitoring Coordinator for CCCD, as she looked at the results, adding that she is not a fisheries' biologist.

"We hope the 2009 results show as good, if not better, trout habitat conditions as did the 2008 results," said Waters, "FOC is confident that the water quality, benthic macroinvertebrate (BMI), and habitat condition data demonstrate that the reach of San Pablo Creek upstream of the barrier dam can support resident rainbow trout, and that there should be no further roadblocks to initiating a trout population restoration program in the creek."

EBMUD's new manager of the Natural Resources Department, Richard Sykes, was delighted to hear the good news when we contacted him to find out what the agency's position was on the re-introduction of the trout. "We would like to see what new data the FOC have gathered," said Sykes, "let's reconvene and discuss what can be done." Sykes added that what's good for fish is good for human and that the agency is very favorable to any initiative that will improve the quality of the water that reaches its reservoirs.

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LAMORINDA Community

Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writers and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and town (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only), and should be 350 words or less. Letters may be edited for length or legal considerations. email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: **Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570**

Dear Editor,

As one of the few periodicals that provides local reporting for Lafayette, how informed is your readership? How many Lafayettes know the Council looks set to pass a Downtown Specific Plan that would allow buildings to rise to an urban, view-obstructing 43 feet and increase population density? How many know that the Council is debating another supersized apartment complex downtown, right behind Panda Express? Do they understand that views of the hill are in danger? Do they realize the City Manager has proposed a budget with an 11% deficit that eats into our emergency reserves and threatens basic city services, like repairing the failed roads that 15% of our residents live on or funding our already undermanned police department? How many know that part of that deficit is fuelled by yet another 7% increase to wages, when cost-of-living is flat, our revenues are down and most businesses and municipalities are laying people off, not giving them raises? Our City Council needs to hear our voices, but we need better reporting of the issues. For those interested in learning more, I can be reached at gabriel.froymovich@yahoo.com.

Editor

Lafayette has \$500,000 for a downtown plan but could not get a portable potty to the Chamber of Commerce's fabulous June 5th event. I ran into a famous person there (Dave Seaborg.) When I mentioned Lafayette's Downtown Strategic Plan on my list of government waste, he was shocked. He said he recently worked on a 10 year downtown plan. Lafayette's government keeps crying poor, while wasting money on plans. It is fiscally irresponsible. Always has been and probably always will be.

Bruce R. Peterson
 Lafayette

Gabriel Froymovich
 Lafayette

Public Forum JOIN IT

Dear Orinda Community,

Over the past week, I have been overwhelmed by generous offers of support from so many people – all or most have offered “anything – anything I can do to help you – just ask.” I am now asking – pleading - for your help. I need information – and the Orinda Police need information – and we need answers about Joe's death. It is estimated that there were 50 to 60 people at the Hamilton/Gabrielli house on the night of Saturday, May 23rd. To date, only a handful of these people have been willing to come forward and of this handful of people, most are unwilling to share what they know. If you were at the party and know what happened please do not be silent. If you are a parent or friend of someone at the party and have information about what happened, please come forward. If you have knowledge of the whereabouts of Joe's I-Phone – please contact the Orinda Police immediately. If you have any information at all – please contact the Orinda Police. We need answers. Answers that I am certain are out there. The truth about what happened must be known. I have to know –

we all need to know so that we can learn from this tragedy so that it will never happen again Joe had more integrity than any one I know. He was honest and forthright – and always believed in doing the right thing. Joe deserves this justice. If you are a friend of Joe's, you will come forward and tell the Orinda Police what occurred on the night of Saturday, May 23rd. Those of you who were at the party know. This is the hour when you are called to be your best selves, to stand for truth and not hide from your responsibilities. Joe's life has ended, you are all witnesses and your lives will be defined by your actions.

Marianne Payne
 Mother of Joe Loudon

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to letters@lamorindaweekly.com and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.

State Senator DeSaulnier Talks Budget with Orinda's Council

... continued from page 4



Senator Mark DeSaulnier speaking at the Orinda City Council meeting
 Photo A. Firth

DeSaulnier went on to describe the budget remedies proposed by the Governor comprised primarily of additional cuts to local funding and health and human services. Most relevant to the Orinda City Council members was the Governor's proposal to suspend Proposition 1A (2004) allowing the state to borrow \$2 billion of local property tax revenue. "For Orinda that's \$500,000," stated Council Member Victoria Smith. "The Governor has put these options on the table to demonstrate the dire situation that we face," DeSaulnier responded. However, the senator indicated that he felt that there may be other ways to address some of the deficit. The problems we have in California are systemic," noted DeSaulnier who identified the state's "robust" initiative system and the need for a super majority vote to pass the budget as elements that impact the legislature's ability to manage the state's finances effectively. DeSaulnier also described the rise in the cost of the state's corrections program, which has more than doubled in the past five years (growing in cost from \$5 billion to \$12 billion) and boasts a recidivism rate of 73%, as a big part of the problem. "The good news is that we have interest in structural reform," stated DeSaulnier who has called for a Constitutional Convention to initiate improvements to the state's budget process. With the potential impact of the State's proposed property tax grab in mind, the City Council has been working through the budgeting process for the next two fiscal years. At a recent Mayor's Liaison meeting, City Manager Janet Keeter noted that although the City has been able to maintain a balanced budget thus far, a decrease in property tax revenue makes this difficult. "Property tax represents 47% of the City's revenue," stated Keeter. "We are projecting 2% or less growth in [property tax revenue] for the next year due to a reduction in real estate turnover." Keeter added that the City had begun to discuss the concept of temporary furloughs with the employee groups as a measure to reduce personnel costs.

CCCSD Board Opts Not to Raise Sewer Rates

(Information submitted by Bonnie Lowe, CCCSD)



Board President Jim Nejedly applauded staff's diligent efforts to keep the District in a solid financial position during challenging economic times. "We will continue to look for savings for the District and our customers while still meeting our goal of full regulatory compliance while protecting public health and the environment," Mr. Nejedly noted.

The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD) Board of Directors decided on June 4 not to approve a proposed \$10 increase to the annual Sewer Service Charge.

Multi-Use Path Almost Open for Business

... continued from page 2

In addition to EBMUD and the City, various groups provided input on design and materials: the Creeks Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and the Ad-Hoc CIP Review Committee consisting of the chairs of the Planning and Design Review Commissions, and the Circulation Commission. Concerns ranged from width of the bike lane, the possibility of a split rail fence to viewsheds and beyond. The straight porous concrete path, similar to gray Rice Krispy treats in appearance, is designed to let rainwater seep into the ground, reducing storm water runoff. Despite the "Sidewalk closed" sign, plenty of joggers and walkers could be seen enjoying the path last week. The grand opening should be any day now – weather permitting.



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LAMORINDA Community

Lee Promoted To MOFD Battalion Chief

By Lucy Amaral



Darrell Lee Photo provided

The Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) has named Darrell Lee Battalion Chief.

A 25-year veteran of MOFD and one of the original members of the Moraga Fire Protection District, Lee rose through the ranks of Firefighter, Engineer and Fire Captain/Paramedic before taking on the Battalion Chief position.

Along with being in charge of the A shift for Battalion 4, (which consists of the five fire stations in the Moraga Orinda Fire District), Lee will also oversee Facilities, Supply and Information Technology for the Fire District.

Lee emphasized that safety and service will remain key goals. "We want to do the best job we can

and offer top customer service," he said. "We want to make sure everybody - the firefighters and the public - goes home safe."

In preparation to move into the Battalion Chief position, Lee said he has taken numerous qualification classes including management and command courses as well as becoming a certified Fire Chief. MOFD Fire Chief Pete Nowicki said that all firefighters have the opportunity to continue their training so they will be well-prepared for promotions. "We have a career development guide that we adhere to that promotes and enables employees to get their qualifications," said Nowicki

Lee is a founding member of the Department of Homeland Security as part of the National Disaster Medical System, is on the Incident Management Team for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties as a Medical Unit Leader, and has served through deployment to na-

tional incidents such as the World Trade Center and five hurricanes, including Hurricane Katrina. And, for more than 20 years, Lee has spent much of his off-duty time as a Moraga Police Reserve Officer.

"Darrell has been a 'go-to' employee for almost 25 years. He's performed admirably as a Paramedic/Captain and has eagerly been preparing for transition into the new role as a Battalion Chief," said Nowicki. "He's well known for his many years as a major player all aspects of emergency medical response and Contra Costa County EMS affairs and (along with our Continuous Quality Improvement Nurse and Training Chief) has managed and has developed the Fire District's EMS program to the successful level at which it operates today."

Lee replaces Battalion Chief Ed Borden, who retired at the end of April.

Parking Fines to Rise at Res

The East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) operates 80 parking meters at the Lafayette Reservoir. They are patrolled by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) police on behalf of EBMUD. The agency has announced plans to increase the fine for expired parking meters at the Reservoir. "The fine for an expired meter will increase to \$35

beginning July 1. The \$35 fine would then be the same as the other meters patrolled by EBRPD police. We will be posting signs at the reservoir too, so nobody should be surprised," said EBMUD's Richard Sykes. If you don't want to carry change for the meters, yearly parking passes can be purchased.

S.Braccini

Senior Softball



Photo Doug Kohlen Correction to Senior Softball photo caption, issue date May 27, page 11:

We incorrectly identified this handsome ball player; his name is Bob Muegge.

MOFD Approves Strategic Plan

By Lucy Amaral

At a special meeting held on Wednesday, June 3, the Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Board of Directors approved the District's 2009 Strategic Plan.

Board Member Frank Sperling said this document represents a commitment to the community by the Board and the Staff to move forward with improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the District. "It's critical that an organization has a purpose and a direction," said Sperling. "(This plan) will plot out our direction over the next two years...essentially what do we want to accomplish and how will we accomplish it."

MOFD Fire Chief Pete Nowicki said that the Strategic Plan will provide a vision for the near future and establish obtainable goals that will enhance every aspect of how MOFD does business and provides service to the community. And, while the plan was only recently approved, the District has not been sitting idly by.

"Even as we were putting these strategies and ideas into written form, we've already begun working on most of the initiatives in the document," said Nowicki.

The plan identified five areas of focus: Operational Readiness; Human Resources Development; Community Partnerships and Outreach; Fire Prevention and Education; and, Fiscal Responsibility. Within each of these areas, specific items were apportioned as objectives with strategies assigned to meet each objective.

In the 12 years that the MOFD has been in existence, there have been two other strategic plans, the last one being a five-year plan. Sperling said that based on advice from their consulting partner, Dr. Larry Bianati, the Board decided that this strategic plan will be a two- to three- year plan.

"This plan represents a refined approach in terms of tackling the current issues that are facing the District and at the same time allowing us to continue to focus on the basics of providing excellent fire and medical service to the community," said Sperling. "Additionally, it more clearly delineates the Chief and Board roles in accomplishing our goals."

Nowicki added that the new plan will also serve as an adjunct to the new fire chief selection, providing candidates with information regarding the direction of the district.

The plan is not static and will be adjusted as necessary, said Sperling. "It is our intention to continue to update and/or reissue strategic plans on an ongoing basis," he said.

A copy of the Strategic Plan can be found on the MOFD website (www.mofd.org).

MOFD Exterior Hazard Control Program Deadline Looms

Beginning on June 17, 2009, the Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) will begin inspections to see if property owners are complying with the 'minimum abatement standards' for creating and maintaining defensible space around structures.

More commonly referred to as "weed abatement," exterior hazards can include items such as trash, dead trees, dead shrubs, bushes, and grass/weeds. MOFD Fire Chief Pete Nowicki said that hazard abatement also covers a wider range of dangerous situations like wood piles up against a house, pine needles on a roof, lack of a spark arrester on a chimney or tree branches too close to the chimney.

In April of this year, MOFD mailed notices to owners of properties in the fire 'interface' areas of the district. "An 'interface' is where the residence or building property meets or abuts natural vegetation in a wildland area, or there is undeveloped land on the parcel where vegetation may become a fire hazard," said Nowicki.

Owners have until June 15 to comply with the abatement notice, and the work is required to be completed by this date.

If owners have not complied, a second letter will be sent to property owners. After the second inspection, if a fire hazard is still not dealt with properly, the District will have the hazard abated by its contractor and the parcel owner will be billed for the work and administrative costs.

The Exterior Hazard Control Standards as defined by MOFD can be found on the MOFD website (www.mofd.org).

L. Amaral

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Transplanted Family Enjoys New Grounds

By Moya Stone



Lica Handa with daughter Jane

Photo Moya Stone

I pull up in front of the Lafayette home and see Lica Handa waving to me from the

large front window. Waving back I spot a spry little girl running around Lica, clearly excited by

the prospect of a visitor. When I reach the front door, we all exchange animated greetings and the warm welcome makes me even more interested to get to know Lica and her family.

We met while rehearsing in the St. Perpetua Church choir. There was little time for chats, but I did learn that Lica moved to the Bay Area from Japan with her

husband and daughter. A concert pianist, Lica had a much better command over the sheet music than I and she came to my aid from time to time.

There are two things that stand out in the Handa home: the grand piano in what would be the dining room and three-year-old Jane. This is an apt reflection of Lica's new life in Lafayette. "We lived in Tokyo. I was playing concerts and always in a hurry," explains Lica, pausing briefly. "There wasn't much time for Jane, but now I have much time for Jane." After the hustle and crowds of Tokyo, Lica is enjoying the slower pace and vast space of California. She says she loves the greenery and flowers surrounding her home and the more moderate weather.

Lica's husband, Mitch works as a trader for Barclays Global Investors and was transferred to San Francisco in November 2007. The family lived in the city briefly while they researched where to settle. "I wanted the American suburban experience for my family," says

Mitch, who has lived in various places around the U.S. and like Lica, appreciates the open space and weather in Lafayette. "This is the nicest place I've ever lived."

While Lica and I visit, Jane bounces back and forth between us and her dad in the other room. Sporting a cute bob hairdo, she tells me she likes her preschool and has made lots of friends. Jane was only a year-and-a-half when the family moved and she had a little trouble adjusting. "She'd wake up and cry," says Lica. "She didn't know where she was." But now Jane is happy. Recently she was baptized at St. Perpetua Church. She goes to Old Firehouse School every weekday, which is when Lica gets a chance to practice the piano and practice her new passion: baking.

Lica takes me into another room and shows me two shelves of dessert cookbooks, all in Japanese. She bakes twice a week and shops at Diablo Foods for the ingredients. Tiramisu is her latest creation and Mitch says she's enjoying the big kitchen, a rarity in Tokyo.

Suburban lifestyle suits Lica, who was born in San Diego but moved to Tokyo when she was three months old. Her father studied engineering at UC San Diego for three years and then returned to Japan to work for the Ministry of Defense. Lica started playing piano when she was four. At 12, she went on tour to Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. That's when she knew she wanted to do this for life. "It was exciting," says Lica. "I thought, oh, this is a good world." For six years in the 1990s, she lived in Munich studying piano. Back in Tokyo she taught piano and performed.

Now Lica plays piano for St. Perpetua and she'd like to volunteer to play for retirement homes, which she did in Japan. When she's not tickling the keys or baking goodies, Lica is trying her hand at gardening and writing a blog as a way to share her American life with her family in Japan. Before I leave, Lica plays Bach's Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, which is as much of a sweet treat as her tiramisu.



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Drugs and Alcohol Take Toll on Local Teens

... continued from page 1

"[If a friend is really intoxicated], you don't want them to sleep, and you need to be sure they're responsive to pain like a pinch or a slap in the face," Gadda says. "Teens will often tell friends to go take a rest, but that risks there won't be someone there if something goes wrong. Clearly, if everyone's intoxicated, who's going to notice?"

Gadda has seen another alarming trend as well: An increase in non-medical use of prescription drugs among older teens, and the combining of the two substances. "This depresses their system even more and increases their risk of death," she says. "Prescription drugs in Lamorinda are widely available and easily accessible. Stimulants are available from friends with ADHD, kids can get Tylenol with codeine, and over-the-counter medications."

Dr. Alex Stalcup is the medical director at New Leaf Treatment Center in Lafayette, and says we are dealing with an epidemic in prescription drug use. "This is a public health catastrophe," he says. "For many, many Lamorinda kids it's beyond experimentation, it's a part of their life. This is a local example of an emerging national problem."

A recent report released by the director of the National Drug Control Policy stated that "unintentional deaths involving prescription opioids (pain relievers) increased 114 percent from 2001 to 2005, and treatment admissions increased 74 percent in a similar four-year period."

According to Stalcup, Adderall sales (the drug used to treat ADHD) are happening with kids as young as elemen-

tary school. "They think it helps them study, but it makes you high and you get the illusion you're brilliant when you take them."

The patients Stalcup sees are not troubled youth, either. "These kids are athletes and top students who tried tobacco once or twice, and know what drugs feel like. We have kids passing out in class, in blackout situations. I have one patient with an OxyContin habit equivalent to shooting up double doses of heroin, and another patient with a Xanax addiction worse than I've ever seen. This is a situation that's suffered in silence."

A key problem is that non-medical use of prescription drugs seems very innocent. "Mom takes it for her back; Dad takes it for his neck. It must be safe, right?" Stalcup says. "Unfortunately, prescription drugs feel way too good, and kids find out they like the pills. They hang out unsupervised in friends' family rooms, share pills and experiment quite a bit. It takes six weeks to six months or a year before it becomes a problem. Kids think, 'I can get high, sit in class, no one knows... I don't smell.'"

According to the NSDUH, 64 percent of teens ages 12 to 17 who have abused prescription pain relievers say they got them from friends or relatives, often without their knowledge.

Once these teens realize they have a problem, often after severe withdrawal symptoms begin to emerge, it's too late for an easy fix. But the consequences of not getting help can be dire.

This is not just another 'drug du jour,' added Stalcup. "Pain killers are life-changing drugs. Once you've crossed the line of needing the drug, you're in a new risk group. It's the most fatal addiction by far," he says. "Withdrawal symptoms (unable to control bowels, sweats, shakes and terrible pain) would bring a grown man to his knees. The brain isn't developed until age 18, so changes the drugs make on a developing brain may not be fixed. We're playing roulette

with brain development."

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, nearly one in 10 high school seniors reported taking Vicodin in the past year without a doctor's approval. Teens are also abusing some over-the-counter drugs, primarily cough and cold remedies that contain dextromethorphan (DXM), a cough suppressant, to get high. From 1999 to 2004, there was a seven-fold increase in cases related to the abuse of DXM reported to poison control centers nationwide. Most of these cases were among 15- and 16-year-olds.

"This is a desperate situation we're in," Stalcup says. "But there is a way to treat the withdrawal symptoms. My message to kids is, please don't go through withdrawal without treatment. Get the necessary help."

For parents, Gadda says start educating kids at a young age about alcohol, substance abuse and even sex. "If you don't tell them, someone else will."

Signs of Alcohol Poisoning

According to the Mayo Clinic, treatment for alcohol poisoning consists of providing breathing support and intravenous fluids and vitamins until the alcohol is completely eliminated from the body. (Even if a person has stopped drinking, alcohol continues to be released into the blood stream and the level of alcohol in the body continues to rise.) Symptoms include: confusion, stupor, vomiting, seizures, slow breathing (less than eight breaths a minute), irregular breathing, bluish-tinted skin or pale skin, low body temperature (hypothermia), and unconsciousness. It's not necessary for all of these symptoms to be present before you seek help. A person who is unconscious or can't be roused is at risk of dying. If the person is conscious, call 1-800-222-1222, and you'll automatically be routed to your local poison control center. (All calls are confidential.)

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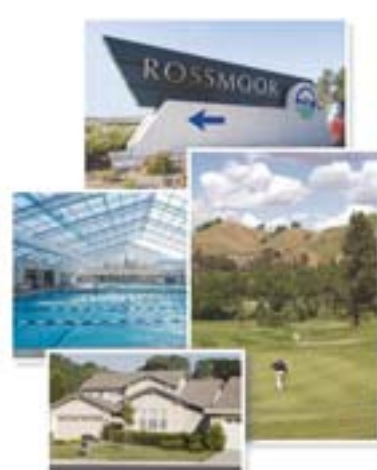


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Green and Greener Got Your Goat?

By Dave Rochlin and Katy Foreman

Dave: So I was running along the trail behind Moraga Country Club last week, and ran into a herd of goats by the creek. What's the deal with them?

Katy: I have been wondering about them for years, so I did some research. The goats you saw were probably from Orinda-based Goats-R-Us. Their goats have a pretty cool story.

Dave: Does it involve a troll and a bridge? Pagan rituals?

Katy: Thankfully, no! Turns out, the goats are really good at eating pesky plants like star thistle and blackberry vines. Even poison oak! Private landholders can hire them to graze on their land and keep those plants under control. Some of their goats were brought here from Catalina Island, where they were having a feral goat problem. The Orinda folks went down there, caught the goats one by one, and integrated them into the herd. Now they're chowing down with some new goat friends.

Dave: They're doing a pretty good job of it, but don't they have a problem chewing up all that spiky weedy stuff?

Katy: My question, too. I couldn't reach an actual goat expert, but this is a pretty busy time of year for them. The goats are in high demand as a way of eating down dead grasses in the summer, for fire abatement. I did find out, though, that the "poison" in poison oak doesn't aggravate goats like it does us, and their little mouths are incredibly tough. The skin can withstand thorns. In fact, I think blackberry vines are actually a preferred food of theirs. Goats are a great natural system for removing unwanted vegetation.

Dave: Well the kids sure think they are cute. There were several toddlers lined up along the fence watching. I guess in Moraga a goat counts as exotic wildlife! But how is it green? Don't goats process all that roughage, and create methane issues like cows? As you regularly remind me, methane has 20 times the impact on the environment as carbon does, and cattle manure and belching is actually a fairly large source of greenhouse gasses.

Katy: They do emit methane. I hate to break it to you, but most humans do, too, though neither goats nor hu-

mans produce as much as cows. However it's still far better than the diesel tractors and herbicides that might be used for mowing or killing weeds otherwise. Little goat hoof-prints also do less damage to the landscape, versus tire tracks. Google has even started using goats to keep the grasses around its campus safe from fire. A single goat can eat up to 8 lbs of foliage in a day.

Dave: Since the creek runs into San Leandro reservoir, eliminating the chemicals makes a lot of sense. But most of us don't have the property to warrant a goat rental. What do you have for the rest of us?

Katy: Around Lamorinda, most run off drains to the creeks, reservoirs, or to the bay, so chemicals should be an absolute last resort. Even in the small area around your house, salamanders, reptiles, and beneficial bugs can get a fatal dose of poison just from minor applications of pesticides. Some old-fashioned hand-weeding and digging, followed by a hefty layer of mulch, is a good approach. Plus, the mulch conserves a ton of water in the summer.

Dave: So you are suggesting I work like a goat?

Katy: Har har. One of the best ways to discourage weeds is simply to give them less water. If you design a low-water landscape, and/or water plants directly with drip emitters instead of watering your whole property, fewer weeds can sprout. With EBMUD raising rates, you'll

save money, too.

Dave: And then I can buy a goat!

Katy: Well there's an old proverb that "a prudent man does not make the goat his gardener." You can go to www.bayfriendly.org for more tips, but leave the goats to the experts.

Katy Foreman is a committed environmentalist who lives in Lafayette, and Dave Rochlin is a lazy environmentalist who lives in Moraga. Together they operate ClimatePath. Individuals and businesses can measure and then reduce their carbon footprints through tax deductible donations that support carbon reduction activities, renewable energy project, and forestry initiatives around the world at www.climatepath.org.

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 can be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, with the subject header In Service to the Community.



Pictured is Stephanie Prescott, community funds chairwoman, presenting Kathy Bowles of Youth Homes Inc. with a \$20,000 donation. Text and photo provided by Gina Hageboeck and Roselyn Stenzel

Lafayette Juniors presented \$37,000 in total to several charities June 4th at their final meeting of the year. The Juniors raise money from annual events including The Lafayette Juniors Kitchen Tour, Rummage Sale and etc.

Lafayette Juniors 2009 Beneficiary List
Youth Homes Inc. (Major Beneficiary)
Since 1965, this non-profit organization has helped abused and neglected children and youth in Contra Costa

County recover from trauma by providing high-quality residential and community based counseling treatment. www.youthhomes.org

We Care

This organization serves very young children (ages 0-5) specifically, with special needs. This group provides developmental programs for Autism, Down Syndrome and Learning Disabilities. www.wecarebmcc.org

Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center
A non-profit riding center that gives horse riding lessons to children (ages 5-17) with multiple disabilities such as developmental issues, Autism, Down Syndrome just to mention a few. www.xenophontc.org

Lamorinda Spirit Transportation Program
Contribution will subsidize the cost of taking seniors to the CC Café for lunch, medical appointments, shopping etc. Lamorinda Spirit Van: 925.283.3534; Orinda Seniors Around town: 925.254.0800; Senior Helpline Services Rides for Seniors: 925.284.6161

Futures Explored

A program to provide life skills and work-related training to adults with developmental disabilities; providing support in reaching an optimum level of individual potential by delivering a broad range of resources and ongoing guidance. www.futures-explored.org

Thank you to everyone in the community who supported our efforts this year! Without your help, our charity contributions could not be possible. For more information visit www.lafayettejuniors.org



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The Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group will meet on Friday June 26 from 10:00 am to 11:30 AM in the Las Trampus Room of the Hillside Clubhouse in Rossmoor. Suzette Lake, Bowenwork Therapist, will be a guest speaker and will give a presentation on Bowenwork Therapy and how this work has helped people suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy. Bowenwork is a powerful and innovative form of healthcare. It has applications for pain relief, injury recovery, stress reduction, enhanced performance for sports and work, as well as for the maintenance of health and wellness. Meeting is open to persons who reside outside Rossmoor as well as Rossmoor resi-

dents. For more information call Carolyn Cash 925) 254-8195.

The California Writers Club offers writers to learn about their craft and share their work. The next meeting is on Saturday, June 20 from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm at Oasis Grille, 780 Main Street, Pleasanton. Local author Mark Curtis, who recently published his book "Age of Obama: A Reporter's Journey with Clinton, McCain and Obama in the Making of the President 2008." He will share the inside scoop on the historic election and an insider's perspective on the rapidly changing world of journalism today. The meeting cost is \$21 for members and \$27 for nonmembers, including lunch. Anyone curious about the group is in-

ited to attend with no obligation to join. Reservations are required. To make a reservation contact Fred Norman at Fnorman300@aol.com or 925-462-7495 by Wednesday, June 17.

Orinda Juniors, a local non-profit group of women, supporting STAND! Against Domestic Violence, the Orinda Convalescent Home, the Oakland Children's Hospital, Haley's Run for a Reason, Youth Ink and other East Bay causes, meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. (September - June). We always welcome new members. If you are interested in joining our group, please contact Diane Petek or Ann Sullivan at orinda.juniors@yahoo.com for the meeting location.

Cal Shakes Kicks off the Summer Season



OIS students win a speed performance contest against Chamber of Commerce and City Council Members

With the launch of California Shakespeare Theater's 35th season last week, summer has officially begun in Orinda. Over 100 people gathered in Theater Square for the 3rd annual Orinda

Salutes Cal Shakes event that included food, music, and performances by Orinda Intermediate students who study Shakespeare under the direction of Cal Shakes Teaching Theater Artist Clive

Worsley. Also on hand was Cal Shakes actor L. Peter Callender who served as emcee for part of the evening, and Susie Falk, Cal Shakes new Managing Director. *A. Firth*

Meet Cal Shakes Managing Director—Susie Falk



Susie Falk at the event on May 28
Photo Andy Scheck

Susie Falk brought her signature big smile to the stage set up in Theater Square to greet the local residents of the city where Cal Shakes

Bruns Memorial Amphitheater makes it home. Named Managing Director in February, the Lamorinda weekly spoke with Falk then about her new role within the organization. "Everyone in the arts is daunted by this economy," acknowledged Falk, but as a veteran of the San Francisco and Bay Area arts communities, she seemed confidently optimistic about what lay ahead. "We have a hugely loyal audience and a very supportive board."

Growing in up in a family of theater lovers, as a teenager Falk was both a patron and student of Cal Shakes when the productions were staged at Berkeley's John Hinkel Park. "Participating in theater helped me to navigate those difficult adolescent years," she says. Her self-described linear side led Falk to choose to major in psychology over theater in college. A summer stint in the box office of a theater in the Bershires provided

Falk with the revelation that she could combine her practical nature and love of theater into a job in theater administration.

Falk had served as Cal Shakes Marketing Director for four years prior to taking on her new role. Prior to that she had worked in public relations at both San Francisco's American Conservatory Theater and the Berkeley Repertory Theater. These days Falk keeps busy with overseeing the business matters of Cal Shakes as Artistic Director Jonathon Moscone's vision permeates the theater, "I enjoy the dynamic partnership [with Moscone] that provides each of us a voice in how things are done," she says.

Early reviews give Cal Shakes opening production of *Romeo and Juliet* two thumbs up—a nice start to Falk's first season while in charge. Cal Shakes mid-season plays are *Private Lives*

Stanley Middle School Music Department

10th annual Jazz Cafe was held last Friday at Stanley Middle School, Lafayette



Bob Athayde, Director of Music Education

Photo Doug Kohen

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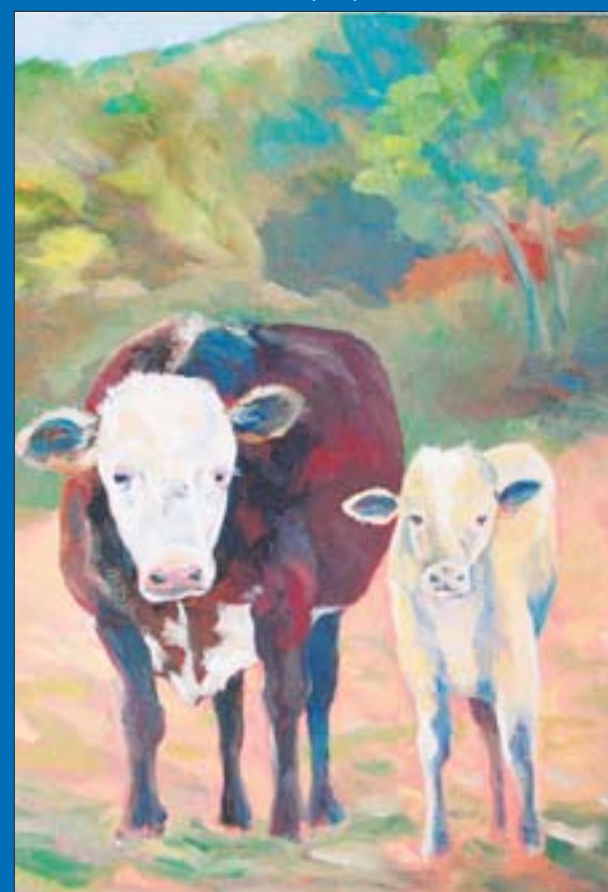
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Picture: 'Moraga Cows' by Alecia Larson; call above for interest.

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Lamorinda Home Sales continued

	LAFAYETTE	Last reported: 4
	LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$515,000
	HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,300,000
	MORAGA	Last reported: 5
	LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$440,000
	HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$900,000
	ORINDA	Last reported: 13
	LOWEST AMOUNT:	\$545,000
	HIGHEST AMOUNT:	\$1,500,000

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

- LAFAYETTE**
667 Glorietta Boulevard, \$1,057,500, 3 Bdrms, 2135 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 5-15-09
983 Hawthorne Drive, \$725,000, 3 Bdrms, 1278 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 5-12-09
3475 Moraga Boulevard, \$515,000, 3 Bdrms, 1953 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 5-4-09
101 Jordan Place, \$1,300,000, 4 Bdrms, 3355 SqFt, 2003 YrBlt, 5-12-09
- MORAGA**
315 Birchwood Drive, \$900,000, 3 Bdrms, 2243 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 5-1-09
1387 Camino Peral, \$440,000, 2 Bdrms, 1116 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 5-5-09
76 Miramonte Drive, \$480,000, 3 Bdrms, 1248 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 5-12-09
253 Scofield Drive, \$680,000, 3 Bdrms, 1648 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 5-7-09
145 Via Joaquin, \$605,000, 2 Bdrms, 1802 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 5-6-09
- ORINDA**
91 Acacia Drive, \$1,011,500, 3 Bdrms, 2258 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 5-1-09
3 Arbolado Court, \$835,000, 3 Bdrms, 1578 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 5-5-09
25 Bates Boulevard, \$575,000, 4 Bdrms, 1505 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 5-15-09
14 Berkeley Avenue, \$579,000, 2 Bdrms, 1360 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 5-14-09
17 Broadview Terrace, \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 1620 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 5-15-09
135 Camino Don Miguel, \$925,000, 4 Bdrms, 1511 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 5-13-09
53 Davis Road, \$545,000, 2 Bdrms, 1586 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 5-13-09
108 Fiesta Circle, \$1,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 2909 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 5-5-09
1 Las Vegas Road, \$796,500, 3 Bdrms, 2005 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 5-15-09
63 Lost Valley Drive, \$1,243,000, 4 Bdrms, 2911 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 5-6-09
19 Martha Road, \$790,000, 4 Bdrms, 2077 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 5-15-09
510 Miner Road, \$940,000, 3 Bdrms, 2544 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 5-15-09
45 Tarry Lane, \$710,000, 3 Bdrms, 2137 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 5-7-0


Lamorinda Foreclosures continued

- LAFAYETTE**
Greene Place, Aurora Loan Services, 04-30-09, \$925,376, 2495 sf, 4 bd
Pleasant Hill Road, GMAC Mortgage, 04-28-09, \$787,500, 1988 sf, 4 bd
- ORINDA**
Rheem Boulevard, Washington Mutual Mortgage, 05-01-09, \$692,750, 1420 sf, 4 bd












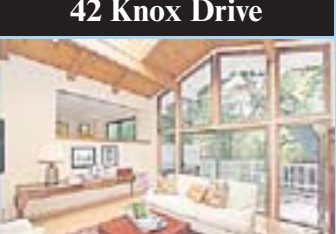
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Fate of Downtown Apartment Building Undecided

... continued from page 2

Other pluses include providing affordable housing units, public open space, and improved access to BART. "However...as the marked up plans indicate, we cannot as yet find the project to be consistent with the Settlement Agreement. This is a project of significant size and scale and more changes are needed to reduce its visual impact, ensure safe circulation and improve its exterior aesthetic. Therefore staff cannot recommend approval at this time," said Srivatsa.

Design Review Commissioner Bill Marquand echoes that sentiment, "I really do like the idea of density near BART - an excellent idea and a valiant effort. But I'm concerned with the monolithic mass." City Council Member Mike Anderson is also on the fence, "The building faces the back end of restaurants with dumpsters - not sure how these are going to relate. I like the public/private sharing of space. I think we're going in the right direction but we're not there yet." Planning Commissioner Tom Chastain said, "The whole bottom edge has presented itself as a series of afterthoughts. The towers are totally without value to me - this is not a hill town in Italy."

Public comment was less than supportive, "It's a huge building for Lafayette," said Marie Blits. "Now Lafayette has a fort,"

said Guy Atwood of the drawing's fortress-like appearance.

How did the City get to this point? Eleven years ago the City Council made an agreement with Lafayette Town Center Associates to redevelop 4.84 acres in the downtown core. Phase I and II were built and are now occupied. Moving on, the 2003 application of Lafayette Residential Partners, formerly Lafayette Town Center Associates for a 73-unit apartment building was found to be inconsistent with the BART Block Specific Plan, so that application was withdrawn. A couple of years later the property owner made a deal with KB Home to purchase the property, but shortly thereafter KB opted out.

A Settlement Agreement was entered by the City to resolve a dispute in May of 2006 in the Development Agreement. In February of 2008 amendments to the Settlement Agreement were made that spelled out details of the resi-

dential project: design, uses, affordable housing requirements and more. These specific terms of the amended Settlement Agreement were summed up in the Fourth Amendment to the Development Agreement that was approved in April of 2008.

The Development Agreement freezes the city's rules and regulations to the original approval date - April 27, 1998. At that time there was no established height limit in the downtown, although the project is "governed by the BART Block Specific Plan which establishes a three story maximum limit," notes a staff report.

At this point architectural firm Heller Manus has received preliminary comments by the City Council, Planning Commission and Design Review, but a date has not been set for the next meeting. The Council requested that it be in late June or early July to give architects time to incorporate suggested changes.

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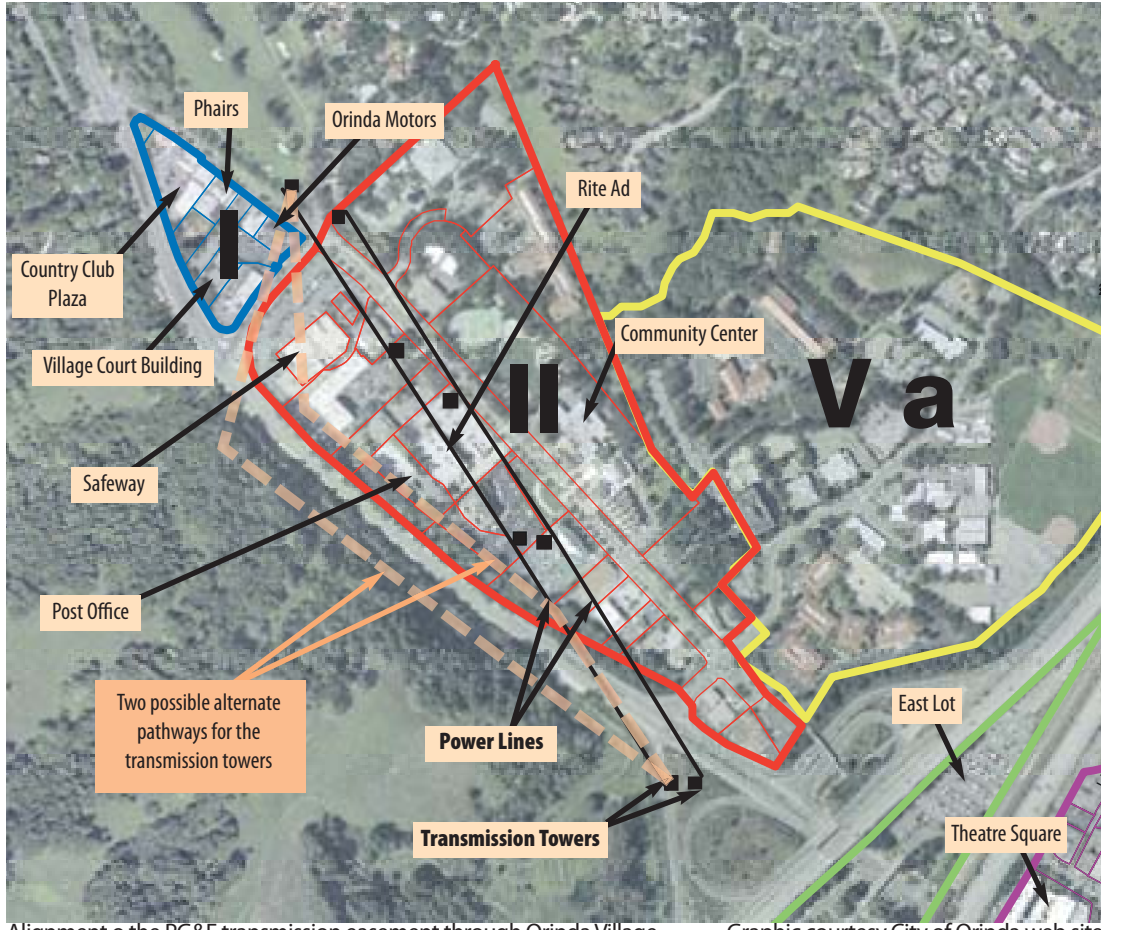
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Downtown Revitalization—Getting Closer

... continued from page 4



Alignment of the PG&E transmission easement through Orinda Village. Graphic courtesy City of Orinda web site

According Planning Department Director Emmanuel Ursu, the Task Force felt that a parking study was needed to determine how to best meet this need. "I've always been convinced that everything comes from parking and goes from there," stated Westin. "Parking is a critical issue and hurts our retail business," added Planning Commissioner Bob Jungbluth.

Council members were quick to point out that the City could not afford to fund this study, and PPRTF member Clark Wallace indicated that he believed a developer would likely be willing to bear this cost. Ursu also pointed out that appropriately priced meters in the downtown retail district are one of the most effective ways to manage street parking. "Parking meters have proven to be a good solution to parking issues in many successful downtown communities," stated Ursu. Council member Tom McCormick encouraged the group to take a bigger, greener look at the parking problem and consider a greater use of shuttles to the surrounding residential communities and employing more innovative so-

lutions such as flex cars and bikes.

PG&E Towers. The relocation of the four PG&E transmission towers that traverse diagonally through the Orinda Village retail district—a sensitive issue for residents within view—was also debated. Ursu identified three different options for the placement of the towers that would free up two acres of additional land for development. "Moving the towers leaves you with many great options for opening up [the Village Center] and allows the possibility of creating a really nice pedestrian mall," stated PPRTF member Wallace.

As the discussion progressed, Council members Smith and McCormick found themselves in direct opposition on the subject.

"I support the no cost to the City aspect of this recommendation," said Smith. While she supported the individual property owners addressing the issue of the moving the tower on their own properties, she strongly opposed moving the towers to track along Camino Pablo Road—a scenic gateway for the city as defined by the General Plan—or to a location

that would impact the views of residents. "This is an issue of view shed...this is a serious problem for me," she stated.

"The only way to revitalize the downtown is to move the poles. Somebody's view will be affected," countered McCormick. "We need to look at the bigger picture. We need the sales tax dollars from a re-structured downtown."

Wallace also recommended the towers, if moved, be converted to the more streamlined, less obtrusive mono-poles that are used in other parts of the downtown districts. McCormick stated that cost of moving the towers is estimated to be \$6 million.

Next Steps: A final PPRTF report will be ready for the Council to review and act on by September. Ursu plans to draft new planning ordinances to address the changes proposed in the process and residential sections of the report with the aim to have those recommendations implemented by the end of 2009. Implementing the planning changes related downtown revitalization will likely carry over into early 2011.

business briefs

Lafayette Farmers Market?

People are brainstorming in Lafayette to see if a farmers' market could be possible in town. Sustainable Lafayette and the City's Environmental Task Force are at the fore front of the effort. A meeting is scheduled for business owners/managers on Tuesday, June 23, 6:00pm at the city offices, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in room #240 to discuss the topic. Attendees will discuss the possible merits or issues that a Farmer's Market might bring to the community. The business community is invited to join this group for an informal meeting and weigh in on with their thoughts. Can't make the meeting? Please email your comments to Janet Thomas at jthomas@silcon.com.

Entrepreneurial Youth in Lamorinda

Taylor Smith, a junior in the Industrial Engineering and Operations Research Department at UC Berkeley, is running an exterior painting business in the Lamorinda area for the summer. He started his sales and marketing effort at the beginning of May and plans to go into production in June. This endeavor is a business management internship supported by College Works Painting. The company gave Smith a \$6,000 line of credit to start his business. The student placed an ad on Craigslist to recruit painters and got 800 responses. After interviews, screening and checking references, he constituted his team. Smith's revenue will be the profit generated by the business. On top of that, if he earns 100% customer satisfaction, College Works will give him a scholarship. "I always wanted to run my own business," says the Engineering major. He has set a goal of 25 homes to paint over the summer and has booked 13 so far. Smith can be reached by phone at (650) 773-1035 or ttmsmith@berkeley.edu.

Subway in Moraga is Getting a Facelift,

396 Park St, Rheem Center, 376-2959
The store will stay open, and contractors will work thru the night for the next two weeks to completely revamp the store.

News from the Three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce



Lafayette Town Manager Steve Falk celebrates businesses at the Try Lafayette First party on June 5 Photo Sophie Braccini

Lafayette Chamber celebrated the Try Lafayette first campaign on June 5th and thanked the community by treating residents to a free barbecue and concert. A very large crowd gathered on the soft lawn of the downtown Plaza to hear the Buzztones play classic and fun rock and roll. Jay Lifson of the Chamber of Commerce was delighted with the great attendance. "I hope our campaign is helping our merchants," says Lifson, "people have started to realize that shopping local makes sense on many levels, it supports a vibrant downtown filled with a wide variety of unique businesses and boutiques, it reduces our carbon foot print, and saves gas by shopping in town, it keeps our tax-base strong by circulating money in town versus sending it elsewhere, and it supports businesses that generously donate to local schools and non-profits."

- Green Committee, Wednesday, June 17, 11:45am, Chamber Office
- Entrepreneur's Club, Thursday, June 18, 8:30am, Chamber Office
- Martini Contest, Monday, June 22, 6pm, Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa
- Business Issues Meeting, Friday, June 26, 8:00am, Chamber office
- Mixer, July 8 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Lafayette Tree and Landscape, 1024-A Walnut Drive.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

• At its May meeting, Moraga Chamber of Commerce Board member Dimitri Bokman, Manager of the Union Bank in Moraga, organized an educational session about the current economic situation and how small businesses owners can cope financially. Bokman invited Mark Sweetland of The Hartford Financial Group to talk about the present economic situation. "He explained how the present situation was different from the 1929 great depression and that we will get out of it over time," said Chamber member Jeff Schwartz. The second presenter was Taylor Bell, small business development Officer at Union Bank. Bell made a very detailed presentation of everything small business owners need in order to get financing in these difficult times.

• Mixer on June 23 at the St Mary's College Rheem campus with Parkmon vineyard. Tasting of Lamorinda wines and wine pairing by Dave and Shari Parker. The mixer will start at 6 p.m., cost is \$5 per person, spouses and significant others are invited along with Chamber members. The campus is located at 380 Moraga Road.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce

• Grand Opening "Mixer" and Ribbon Cutting to celebrate the Pizzeria Amoroma Restaurant opening in Orinda. Tuesday June 16th 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., 65 Moraga Way, Orinda (next to Peet's Coffee). Restaurant phone : 925-253-ROMA (7662). This free event is sponsored by owner Michele Lavecchia, and manager Libby Havlicek.

• Chamber breakfast meeting, on Thursday, June 25 from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. at Village Pizza 19 Orinda Way Orinda. Cost \$10.00 - at the door. This is a relaxed coffee hour in which chamber members can mix and mingle, share ideas, and exchange business cards.

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

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Lamorinda Entrepreneurs Find Recipes to Beat the Recession

By Sophie Braccini



Steve Benjamins playing a Baby Grand in his new Lafayette location Photo Sophie Braccini

What is bad news for some is an opportunity for others. In spite of the gloom, entrepreneurs continue to launch new businesses in Lamorinda. From frozen yogurt, to repair shops, to stationary, they are ready to work hard to benefit from new consumer trends or position themselves to take advantage of the recovery, when it comes.

"It can seem counter-intuitive to open a new stationary store in times like these," says Andrew Han, the owner of Elmwood Stationers in Berkeley who will open a second store in Lafayette in July, "but it is a good time to negotiate advantageous terms with property owners, to rationalize business practices, and if we can make it through this difficult time, we will be better positioned when the recovery comes."

Han has been very successful on College Avenue selling the beautiful specialty stationary items he loves, such as high quality journals, paper invitations and note cards, as well as business supplies. He knew the owner of the previous Lafayette stationary store and was aware of his inventory issues. "With two stores we can transfer inventory back and forth and try new things," adds Han, "and since we'll buy larger quantities, we will get bigger discounts." Han is expecting his new Lafayette location to open on July 13.

The two frozen yogurt shops that opened in May in Lafayette are banking on the fact that people want to indulge, but for a reasonable price and possibly in a healthy way.

The first one to open is located inside Flippers at 960 Moraga Road; it's a MYO Pure Frozen Yogurt franchise. Molly and Paige Meyer started this business in Walnut Creek. They claim to offer only fresh yogurt with live culture in a wide variety of flavors and toppings that is sold by the weight. "For a few dollars people can get a treat that's healthy and delicious," says Paige Meyer. The location, which is close to both an elementary and a middle school, has been doing well.

A few blocks away at 3518-A Mt. Diablo Blvd, Yogurt Shack, which operates under a similar business model, is off to a successful start. The

store sells yogurt by the weight with a large choice of toppings. For the Coccimiglio's it is a family affair with parents and daughter running franchises in Danville and Lafayette. In all their locations, the mix of healthy and affordable treats is a winning ticket. Last April, Time Magazine reported that chocolate sales all over the planet seemed to be immune to recession and continued to grow. A customer summarized the trend that seems to work in Lafayette as well, "We may not be able to buy luxuries any more, but we can still splurge on small pleasures like chocolate," or yogurt!

Repair service is another good niche for tough times. It appeals to people who want to spend less and to those who want to waste less. Three businesses have recently opened or moved to Lamorinda that focus on this market trend.

Tick Tock in Moraga is a clock and watch repair shop (read details in our May 27 issue at <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com>) and the second store for its owner.

Richard Yom, on the other hand, repairs cell phones.

At 3541 Plaza Way he opened Prostar - Sprint PCS store where he will sell what he believes are the best value networks in town and to further serve his clientele he will replace that broken screen on an out of warrantee phone or change a broken port. "I took a

special training in phone repairs," explains the former software engineer, "because I saw that phones were getting more and more expensive and people were in need of repairs." A Moraga resident, Yom moved his business from Vallejo to Lafayette to work closer to home.

Another repair shop expanded in Lafayette recently, Restoration Piano by Benjamins Piano Tuning opened a large warehouse at 3434 Golden Gate Way in Lafayette. Business owner Steve Benjamins tunes, repairs, restores, rents and sells pianos on consignment. "I can do anything that has to do with a piano," says the man who can play at events as well. But for him, it is not the repairs that are keeping his business afloat. "It might be that new place where

I can warehouse pianos that will save my business," says Benjamins.

Benjamins explains that when people are losing their jobs, their homes, piano are hard to move and there's a hemorrhage of free pianos on Craigslist. "The only part of my business that's growing is the consignment sales," he says, "I can pick and choose remarkable instruments. For those who have money, it's a great time to buy a piano." His large warehouse features baby grand and uprights from different centuries. "This is a tough time for musicians," admits Benjamins, "but we live in a community with a lot of very talented adult and youth and it will always be my joy to see kids grow and families change because they have found the right piano."

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SCHOOL CALENDAR

School Governing Board Meetings

Acalanes Union

High School District
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
Wednesday, June 17, 2009 at 7:30

Lafayette School District

LAUSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
Wednesday, June 24, 2009 at 7:00

Moraga School District

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
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TBA

Orinda Union School District

OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
Monday, June 22 at 4:00

Please send story ideas to
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Stockton to Lead Reorganized AUHSD Team Miramonte and Acalanes High Schools Get New Principals

By Andrea A. Firth



John Stockton

Photo provided

A self-described rare, aging veteran of secondary education, John Stockton, Acalanes Union High District's (AUHSD) newly appointed superintendent, brings 37 years of diverse experience to his new position. "We are extremely fortunate to have an individual with the broad experience that John brings to the role of superintendent of our district," stated AUHSD Governing Board member Tom Mulvaney.

In July, Stockton will take over from current AUHSD Superintendent Jim Negri, who has led the district to a number-one ranking for academic performance in the state for the past two years. Negri will move on to serve as the superintendent of the Castro Valley Unified School District. "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to both live and work in the same town," stated Negri. "I can walk to the Castro Valley District office, if my knees

will let me," he joked.

Negri hired Stockton almost five years ago to serve as the Associate Superintendent of Educational Services. Stockton moved to AUHSD from the Fairfield Unified High School District where he had overseen the construction and opening of a new high school. Stockton started his career in education as a social sciences teacher and moved on to hold a variety of teaching and administrative positions including activities director, head counselor, principal, and curriculum director. In 37 years of secondary education, there seems to be little that Stockton as not already seen or done.

Stockton takes over as the district is faced with the potential for further reductions in state funding following a school year that has been consumed with working to balance the budget and maintain personnel and programs in the face of signifi-

cant funding reductions. "Our most pressing issue is to continue to progress forward with our academic programs despite what is going on with the state and funding," stated Stockton. "We need to focus on student achievement. We are here for the students." He also identified the renewal of the parcel tax, which contributes \$7 million to the district coffers and expires in June of 2011, as another important focus for the district. "We have to address the eventual renewal of the parcel tax," stated Stockton. "The community's support of the parcel tax and the funding that it brings the district is one of the things that distinguishes AUHSD from surrounding districts."

Immediately following Stockton's appointment, the District also announced the reorganization of a several positions within the administrative team and the appointment of two new principals. John Nickerson, currently the principal of Acalanes High School, will backfill Stockton's position and serve as Assistant Superintendent of Education Services. "We are fortunate to have John Nickerson in the district to take on this role. He has been one of our curriculum leaders as a principal," stated Stockton. "We have also recruited two high-energy, personable, and intelligent administrators to fill the principal openings at Acalanes and Miramonte High Schools," added Stockton. Aida Glimme, currently an assistant principal at Monte Vista High School in Danville will move to Acalanes, and Adam Clark, currently the principal of J. Douglas Adams Middle School in Brentwood, will replace the departing Raul Zamora at Miramonte.

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Reading keeps summer from turning kids' minds into Jello

Submitted by Jennifer Rowes

Summer reading programs are a great way to provide children regular opportunities to read books, play writing games, and listen to stories. While children might be more focused on the fun and prizes involved, educators know that these sorts of programs help little kids get ready to read and big kids raise scores.

A study conducted by Jimmy Kim at Harvard's Center for Evaluation found that reading four or five books over the sum-

mer months had an impact on fall reading achievement comparable to attending summer school. Public libraries all over the country are busily gearing up for the 2009 summer reading program "Be Creative at your Library". The program is sponsored by the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP), which is a grass-roots consortium of states working together to provide high-quality summer reading program materials for children at the lowest cost

possible for their public libraries. The CSLP began in 1987 in the state of Minnesota and has since grown to include libraries from virtually every state in the country.

To find out the details about dates, times, and registration for this summer's program, call or visit your local library. And to learn more about effective and engaging children's educational materials visit these websites: www.scholastic.com, www.billygorilly.com, and www.pbskids.org.

Orinda Boy Scouts to the Rescue

By Andrea Firth



Bill Hummer (far right) with Tyler Young (center), Trevor Langum, and Jaikar Beasley (front). Erin Grey not pictured. Photo Andrea A. Firth

On a recent backpacking trip the members of Orinda Boy Scout Troop 237 were able to put their outdoor survival skills into practice as they helped to rescue a stranded hiker. Awoken by the man's calls for help at 11:30 p.m., four members of the troop, Jaikar

Beasley, Tyler Young, Trevor Langum, Erin Grey, and Assistant Scout Master Bill Hummer set out in the dark and found the lost backpacker with a badly injured ankle and his dog with a serious rattle snake bite. The scouts administered first aid and kept the man and dog

warm while activating an emergency GPS transponder to get paramedic assistance. The man was transported to the hospital, and the boys finished out the weekend with an uneventful hike in Little Yosemite. The moral of the story: Be prepared.

Miramonte's Class of 2009

Celebrates with a Safe and Sane Grad Nite

Submitted by Susie Romak

Over 200 parent volunteers are working to create the Miramonte Class of 2009's quintessential hometown graduation party, which begins immediately following the graduation ceremony on June 12. For 20 years local parents have banded together to provide an alcohol and drug free Grad Nite Party, and this year is no exception. The

Class of 2009 will be feted with the theme "To Infinity and Beyond," which will include designated distinct areas of entertainment for the students, including Andy's bedroom from "Toy Story," Buzz Lightyear's spaceship, outdoor games from "A Bug's Life," and casino games and dancing in Alladin's City of Agrabah. The evening

ends with the much anticipated and traditional Senior Class Video produced by and featuring senior class students. Special thanks to co-chairs Jennifer Crocker and Tina Ross, who spearheaded this event. For further information, please contact Susie Romak at sromak10@aol.com or by phone: 925-376-5690 or 925-250-1332.

Pre-Schoolers Worry Over Bank Woes

Submitted by Dorothy Stewart



A group of 4 year olds from Old Firehouse School on June 4 visited West America Bank in Lafayette to ask if the bank was a safe place for their money. They became concerned about how money gets distributed when, at Christmas time,

they discovered that some people had no money to buy toys and food. "How fair is that? they wondered, "and began to ask questions about where money comes from and where it is kept."

Photo A. Scheck

Orinda Rotary Field Day High Point Winners Announced

Submitted by Dick Burkhalter



Ron Noon presents the winner plaque to (left to right) Ryan Anderson, Violet Bathgate and Arden Creson

Photo Provided

The high point winners of 59th annual Frank E. Isola Rotary Field Day accepted the winner's plaque from Rotarian Ron Noon at the Orinda Rotary luncheon on Wednesday, May 13. The high point winner (boy's category) was Glorietta fifth grader Ryan Anderson. Del Rey fourth grader Arden Creson and Wagner Ranch third grader Violet Bathgate tied in the high point girl's category.

OA Students Win Academic and Artistic Awards

Submitted by Miriam Schaffer

Orinda Academy (OA) senior Elizabeth Agramont-Justiniano – who will attend Colgate University in Hamilton, New York in the fall – is a 2009 recipient of the "A Better Chance Academic Achievement Award." A Better Chance is a national nonprofit that works to change the life trajectory for academically talented youth of

color via access to rigorous and prestigious educational opportunities in grades 6-12. OA Junior Dylan Marcus received an honorable mention award in recognition of his musical talent in the "Talented and Learn Differently Contest" from the Parent Education Network. Dylan has produced his own digital music using Logic

and Reason software and designed the Web site, www.biodmusic.com, where his music can be found. Dylan designed the site after taking a multimedia class offered at Orinda Academy. The site was featured at the recent Education Revolution 2009 conference held at AT&T Park in San Francisco.

Payday at Acalanes High School



(L-R): John Sherry (Lafayette Rotary), Helen Wang, Anna Eames, Person Lyverse and David McDiarmid

Photo provided

Four Acalanes High School students who participated in Lafayette Rotary's annual 4-Way Test Speech Contest received a total of \$500 in checks last week. The Speech Contest – which is part of the

Rotary Vocational Service – was held on March 5 during a regular lunch meeting of the Club. John Sherry, Club President, honored the students for the well prepared speeches and chosen subjects. 1st place:

Helen Wang (Journalism), 2nd place: David McDiarmid (Acceptance Behavior), 3rd place: Person Lyverse (The Elderly Connection), 4th place: Anna Eames (Community Service).

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Continuity at the Head of Camino Pablo Elementary

By Sophie Braccini



(from left to right), Neil Jennings, Mary Thomas, Deborah Roden and Diane Haley Photo Sophie Braccini

"I am beyond happy," says Deborah Roden, future Principal at Camino Pablo Elementary (C.P.). "I feel like I'm in Heaven." The woman who will fill Neil Jennings' shoes come August, believes that the school and the community are a perfect fit for her, her values and her experience.

Roden is bringing to C.P. a rich and diverse experience all based in California education.

She taught K-7 grades for more than 10 years, then changed the focus of her career to administration. She became a resource teacher in a magnet school, then got her master's degree and served as vice-principal and principal in different greater Bay Area schools. She presently

works for the Lodi School District as coordinator of professional development.

Her diverse experience taught her that focus, consistency and continuity make for better results. She observed and practiced this method teaching teachers and implementing methodologies and curriculum across a whole district. "We were very impressed by Deborah Roden's caliber," said Moraga School Superintendent Rick Shafer. "She will be a great addition to our team and we're looking forward to working with her."

The distressed situation of Lodi's school district motivated Roden to look for another job. "I looked for another opportunity

that would allow me to fulfill my absolute passion, working with children," she said. Roden choose Moraga for many reasons: The community resembles the small town where she was raised near Santa Cruz; and its values seem to offer the kind of environment she likes best, where families share the same values of respect, security, manners, and of course have high expectation for learning.

She feels ready for the challenges of the position. "Where I am now I balance the objectives and requirements of 50 schools, 2,000 teachers, and 125 staff," she said. "As a principal, I will do the same with different constituencies, parents, students, and district." She feels she understands the demands of the Moraga parents. As a mother, she has the same high level of expectation for her own children. "The main focus is to give children a well rounded education, with a strong core of learning," she adds.

When she starts next fall she is not planning to revolutionize the place. "I'll gently make the transition, I will watch, I will listen and I will learn," she says. "Of course I have my own personality and experiences, but I will wait before changing anything."

Acalanes Student Takes Senior Project for a Ride

By Lucy Amaral



Chris Oliveira with his bar stool go cart Photo Jennifer Wake

Parents, take stock of your household furniture. If you're not careful it could end up as a senior project in Bear Begelman's Design and Fabrication Shop at Acalanes High School.

Chris Oliveira, a senior at Acalanes and a student in Begelman's Fabrication 3 class combined his automotive acumen with the creative freedom of Mr. Begelman's class to design and build a bar stool go cart for his senior project.

"He had this wild idea to make a bar stool go cart," said Begelman. "He was excited about it, and he's a crackerjack with his hands. So, I said, 'If you are going to do this, it's not going to be haphazard. It must hold your weight and maintain torque.'"

Begelman's class offers students the opportunity to work with wood, metal, jewelry, ceramic tile and, according to Begelman, "Whatever some-

one can come up with." He said that other senior projects from his class have included a 17-foot kayak and an electric guitar.

Obviously this is not your father's wood shop.

This industrial-sized building at the far side of the high school houses sophisticated machines and an aura of creativity. "We can make anything here," said Oliveira. "It's a room full of possibilities."

Along with the full litany of smaller tools like wrenches, hammers and hand-sanders, large items like computer controlled routers, a full complement of work-working machines, plasma machines, mig welders, and tools for bending and shaping metal make their home here. Projects can range from cutting boards, to outdoor furniture to even an oversized, piece-welded, skull-shaped metal bobble-head.

Oliveira, 19, has worked

on race cars with his dad since he was 10 years old and has worked for Gomes Motor Sports in Manteca for the past five as pit crew and shop mechanic, so the idea of a motorized bar stool was viable, but actually building one was maneuvering into uncharted territory.

"The hardest part was the designing," said Oliveira. "You have to fit a lot of things in a really tight space."

Begelman advised Oliveira through the intensive planning and design process. Begelman said that Oliveira spent a good deal of time researching similar machines, visualizing what he would want, the materials that would be needed and then laying it all out on paper.

What Oliveira ended up with was his go cart, boasting a 28 horsepower engine that runs on 110 octane gasoline that he says can go up to 70 miles an hour. Not that Oliveira runs it at 70. "I got it up to 55 miles per hour and got a little scared," he said.

It also ended up being more than a Naugahyde-topped, metal stool strapped to an engine. "Once you step back and look (at the end result), you see you've used fabrication, art, design, math," said Oliveira. "There's a lot of stuff wrapped up into one project."

Oliveira presented his project to a panel of judges at Acalanes, outlining his work, offering his documentation and describing in Begelman's terms "what did you learn and how did it change your life."

While Oliveira doesn't know what his final grade yet, he has some plans for the go cart. "I'll probably mount a tool box on it and use it on the race track."

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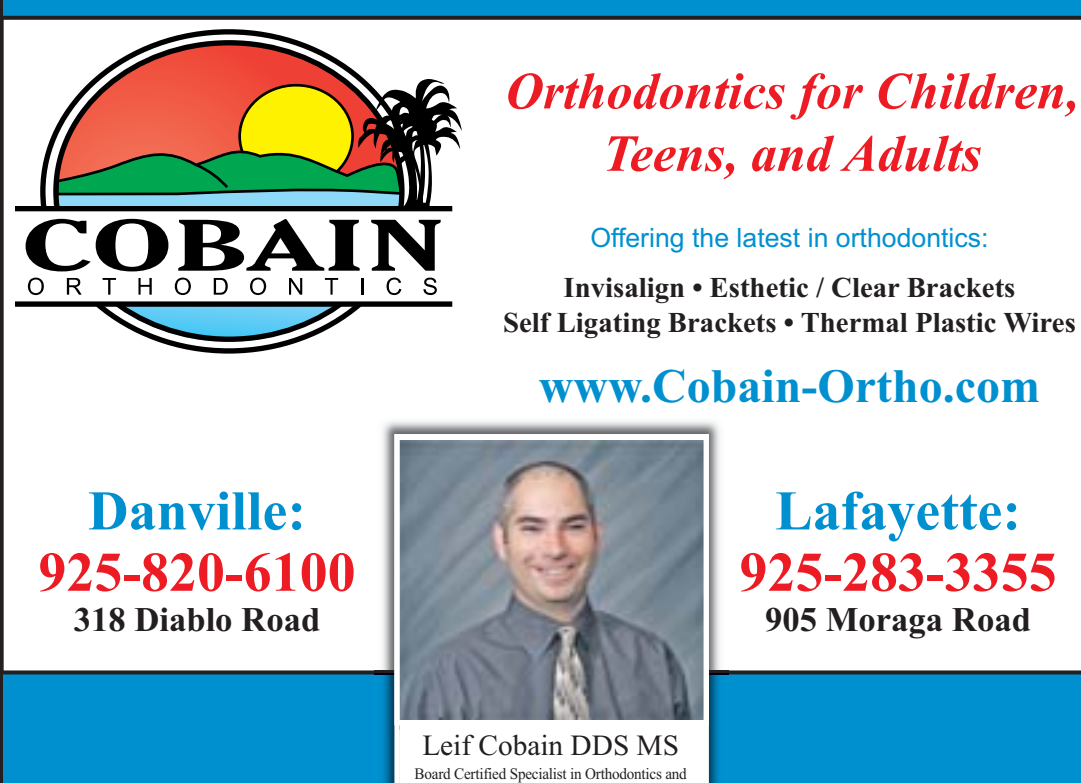
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Daisy Scouts Discover the Underworld

Submitted by Papa John Kiefer



It was one of those recent sparkling afternoons, as the 'Daisy' Scout troop 30960 gathered at 'Papa John' Kiefer's home in Springhill Valley for an adventure into one of Lafayette's nature free-ways, otherwise known as Reliez Valley Creek. All were appropriately attired in knee boots, galoshes or tennies. One first grader sported unofficial scout foot ware with a 'daisy' pattern. As wildness and screams emanated, echoes filled the air from exuberant kids splashing the creek water passing through a six foot pipe beneath the road. (Encourage our children to play in our creeks, learn of the natural world and experience its pleasures and risks at an early age. There, they can have a magical experience building forts, exercising creativity, and living out their fantasies, to better know who they are.) Photo submitted

Jack's Day at Camino Pablo Elementary

By Sophie Braccini



Principal Neil Jennings with Jack, sporting their "Team Jack" T-shirts Photo Kim Zombsch

On May 29, the entire staff at Camino Pablo wore "Team Jack" T-shirts to show the first grader their support and celebrate his courage before leaving to spend three months in a Delaware hospital. "Jack was born with a condition known as 'Metatropic Dysplasia.' It is a rare dwarfing condition that is mainly characterized by wafer thin and soft vertebrae causing severe twisting of the spine," explains Jack's mother Kim Zombsch. "This summer, Jack will undergo two surgical procedures at duPont Children's Hospital. Jack is aiming to come home by the end of August to return to Camino Pablo as soon as possible!" Jack is very upbeat about this surgery but he will miss his friends and active lifestyle in Moraga the most. If you'd like to drop Jack a card (he's really looking forward to getting mail), send to: Jack Zombsch, patient, duPont Hospital for Children, 1600 Rockland Road, Floor 3C, South Wilmington, DE 19803.

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Family Focus

Modeling Effective Communication for Your Child

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

We have all seen parents who have been out of control with their anger and frustration. Hmm, come to think of it, many of us have probably been one of those parents at one time or another! But there is never an excuse to insult, ridicule, or verbally attack another person just because we are at our wit's end.

Unfortunately, some parents cross over this line when they become angry. They sound off and it doesn't matter who is at the receiving end of their ire. What does this behavior communicate to our children (not to mention to the unfortunate recipient)? Our children may learn that it is all right to express themselves in disrespectful and inappropriate ways. They may learn that it is all right to let their anger fly instead of employing self-restraint. And they may learn that what matters most is their need to vent, and that the feelings and rights of others are not nearly as significant as their own.

One parent in the Lamorinda community developed a reputation for constantly threatening teachers and school staff that she would take

her complaints directly to the school superintendent. Unfortunately, her child was often present when she sounded off. What she didn't realize was that she eventually lost credibility and good will among school personnel because of her abrasive conduct.

There is always a better way to express ourselves if we take the time and make the effort to do so. It helps to think ahead and formulate ways of communicating clearly and emphatically so that we don't run the risk of being disrespectful. I often recommend writing down in advance what you want to say so that you have a rational and constructive reference. Think of how to express your feelings in ways that avoid assigning blame and are solution-oriented.

As Dr. Dorothy Stewart, Executive Director and owner of Old Firehouse Schools explains, "Parents need to understand their role in helping their child navigate through the social world of childhood. It is important for parents to ally themselves with those who take care of their children, such as teachers, coaches, and principals. Social or-

ganizations such as Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts want parents who are supportive. Parents also need to realize they are providing their children with a model of how to negotiate effectively in the social world."

In our small community, word spreads quickly when parents behave aggressively and negatively. In addition to setting a bad example for their children, parents with a reputation for verbally attacking those who take care of their children - teachers, coaches, service providers, babysitters, -- may find many doors shut to both them and their child.

At the same time, it is never too late to change how we react to situations and people when we feel angry and frustrated. Not only will we be more personally effective, but we can also provide our children with a positive model for communicating with others.

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

Girl Scouts Honored with Silver and Gold Awards

Submitted by Thama Brentano



Photo provided

The Orinda Moraga Girl Scout Service Unit recently honored 31 girl scouts who have earned their Silver or Gold award.

The Gold Award is the highest award that a Girl Scout may earn. In addition to reaching several other milestones, each girl was required to design, plan and implement a Gold Award Project that meets an expressed need in the community, and will have a lasting impact on society. The scouts each spent a minimum of 50 hours designing and executing their projects.

The Silver Award is the second highest award in Girl Scouts and the highest award that can be earned by a Cadette Girl Scout. After reaching several milestones related to their project, each girl was then required to design, plan and carry out a Silver Award Project that took a minimum of 40 hours (per girl) to complete.

Gold Award Recipients:

Troop #30189, Leaders Kappy Dye, Debra Hughes, and Colleen Stagg,

Campolindo High School

Emily Gerst's project consisted of a donation drive for Shelter Inc, which she organized and facilitated for two months last spring. Jillian Hughes' project "Healthier Lives through Healthier Cosmetics" was a faire for middle school girls to learn about chemicals in products they use every day. Sarah DeMateo ran a musical workshop for the kids at the Shelter's Inc. low income apartments in Antioch. And Amy Stagg's project "Bringing Lacrosse to Inner City Youth" was based on introducing the sport of lacrosse to youth who would not normally have the chance to experience it.

Troop #31562, Leader Brigitte Lossing, Miramonte

Amanda Bains created a sewing club as her project. The club named "sew4charity" recruited members from local schools, girl scouts troops, as well as community members at large.

Silver Award Recipients:

Troop # 30346, Leader Janice Kjell,

Campolindo:

Anastasia Chilimidos, Maren Kjell, Rachel Meadows, Elizabeth Mediat, and Alicia Glidden worked together on their Silver Award project to benefit the J. F. Kapnek Foundation.

Troop # 30662, Leader Jaime Zafanella, Miramonte:

Tara Baghdassanian, Gabriela Blum, Jamie Fiero, Chelsea Godsil, Katie Latimer, Alicia Macler, Kathleen Stanaro, Sofie Woodlee, Anna Blain, Emelia Hildreth, Melanie Jones, Ashley Juarbe, Cecily Schmidt, Sophie Wegener, Leah Wolk, and Cassie Zafanella planned a special day-long event titled "iScout" aimed at encouraging middle-school aged girl scouts to stay in scouting.

Troop #: 32905, Leader Marsha Harris, Miramonte:

Hanne Andersen, Grace Hilty, Selena MacDuff, Anne Odell, Hannah Swernoff, and Hayley Young planned a Dog Faire that was held in the Moraga Commons.

Life in LAMORINDA

Moraga's Gar Forman Named GM of Chicago Bulls

By Sophie Braccini



Gar Forman with his wife and two sons

Since he was seven years old, Gar Foreman knew that basketball was going to be his life. Born to a Moraga family where no one was tall and where academic pursuit was the norm, the odds didn't seem to be in his favor. But through unyielding determination, the young man made a name for himself in the professional basketball world and in May he was named the new General Manager of one of the most prestigious National Basketball Association (NBA) franchises, the Chicago Bulls.

"I expected him to become a doctor or a lawyer," says Gar's mother, Moraga resident Janet Forman. "I assumed that by the time he'd go to college he'd want that, too." But as the young man grew, he remained adamant. "Gar has an amazing persistence, when

Photo courtesy of the Forman family he wants something, he goes for it," says Janet, "no matter what it takes." She remembers how he prayed daily to become tall. "No one is tall in our family," she continues, "but somehow Gar managed to reach 6'2".

Forman started playing basketball with LMYA in the second grade, with his father as coach. "Sports was what bonded my father and me, and still does to this day," says Gar. Ken Forman, Gar's father, remembers those years fondly. "He was not a great athlete, but always liked basketball." Gar agrees, "I knew early on that I wanted my career to be in basketball and that it wouldn't be as a player, so from the time I was in junior high school I knew that I wanted to be a coach."

When it came time to choose a college, Forman was determined

to get into a college team. "He probably wrote to 50 junior colleges and got accepted at Lassen," remembers Janet. "When I got to Lassen, my dad told the coach I would 'make' their team," says Gar, "the coach thought it was my dad saying how good I was, but what he was talking about was that I would get some talented players to come play there which is what happened when I recruited Eric Petersen the following year." Petersen was the best player in Contra Costa County at the time.

"All his life Gar recruited players," says his father, "he never deviated, and he was willing to pay the price." A price indeed, as Forman took jobs that sometimes didn't pay much. "My first 7 years of coaching I made less than \$10,000 a year in places like Logan (Utah), Palm Desert (CA) and Las Cruces (NM)," says Gar, "but I was willing to go wherever I needed to in order to get experience at the college level."

For 17 years now Forman has built his reputation by recruiting and retaining excellent players that have turned teams around. "To detect talent you look for physical and athletic tools. A skill level and feel for the game. I've always been a believer in make-up and character," says Gar, "then recruiting in college was like any other type of sales - you had to develop a relationship and make it difficult for them to say no."

His father believes that his excellent reputation is due to the fact that he cares for his players not only on the court but off, and he remembers the example of Randy Williams, his son's first big recruit at New Mexico State. "To sign up Randy, Gar went to visit his mother who had to approve of it," remembers Ken, "If you take care of my Randy I will sign" she said, and Gar promised." When

Randy became a NBA player and bought his mother a house, he took Gar to see the mother and he asked, "So, did I take care of your Randy?"

Forman has now been with the Bulls for 11 years in numerous capacities, as Scout, Special Assistant to the VP, Director of Player Personnel and now General Manager. "Over the past six years, Gar Forman has been growing into a more prominent role within the Bulls organization," said Executive Vice-President John Paxson. "With his help, we have improved the way we conduct business within our Basketball Operations Department, and this promotion is a reflection of his hard work, commitment and contributions to the organization. For Gar, this is long overdue and well deserved."

Ken and Janet Forman are immensely proud of their son. Janet has no regrets about not seeing her son become a doctor. "I am a psychotherapist and the turning point for me was when I worked with a couple who were both doctors and whose son was a mechanical genius," she says. She remembers that the parents were always down on their son, when he was such a beautiful person. "It opened my eyes," she says, "what we want for our children is to be happy and do what they love. Not respecting their passion is in the end so damaging."

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Randy Levandowski comforts his sleepy daughter Meredith Hika as they wait for the Buzztones to finish a break Friday night.



Moraga's Brian Drue enjoys a Saturday treat at Cold Stone with his daughters Ryann and Cameron.

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School's Out. Let t

Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson

At the Lafayette Library:

June 12 – Sweet Thursday Special Event – Lisa Sec, author of Snowflower and the Secret Fan and Peony in Love at Stanley Middle School, sponsored by Friends of the Lafayette Library and the Lafayette Book Store, 2:00 p.m. on Friday.

At the Lafayette Community Center:

June 15 – August 14, Wheels on Wednesdays, play games and enjoy music every Wednesday throughout the summer 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. \$3. Bring your skates or scooters down to the Rink at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road.

June 26 – The Magic of Going Green – a magical, musical and educational magic show about recycling, waste reduction and energy conservation, featuring Tye the Magic Guy and Tiffany. Friday 11:00 at the Lafayette Community Center, \$3 per person.

July 10 – Boswick the Clown – enjoy the antics of Boswick the Clown, a former Ringling Brother's Circus Clown. Magic and juggling packaged in comedy, Friday 11:00 a.m. Lafayette Community Center, \$3 per person.

July 17 - Mad Science "Fire & Ice" – Children will be dazzled and entertained as they interact with our Mad Scientists! Event includes foggy dry ice storms. Volunteers from the audience can taste special Mad Science "burp" potions. 11:00 a.m. Lafayette Community Center, \$3 per person.

July 31 - The Amazing Marcus – A high energy show that will make all that watch laugh themselves silly. With hysterical antics, extraordinary escapes, amazing magic and great juggling. 11:00 a.m. Lafayette Community Center, \$3 per person.

August 14 - Free Dodgeball Movie night, 7:30 – 10:00 p.m. Come down to the Lafayette Roller Hockey Rink to play dodgeball and view the movie, "Dodgeball." Bring blankets and wear sporty clothing. Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road.

August 14 - Capt'n Jack Spareribs – Who knew? A pirate that can juggle and entertain right here in Lafayette. 11:00 a.m. Lafayette Community Center, \$3 per person.

Other events of interest:

An Evening in the Garden with Wine and Roses

On Thursday, June 25th from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Orchard Nursery in Lafayette is hosting an evening of wine tasting, gourmet-treat eating, and culture to get the summer started in good style. Live music, a book reading, an art exhibit (by Lafayette artist Vicki Pierpont), and presentations on rose care and botanical arrangements are all part of this fun, first-time event. To make a reservation, call (925) 299-5444.

August 14, 21, 28 - Rock the Plaza, 6:00 p.m. – Three Friday concerts at Lafayette Plaza Park at the corner of Moraga Road and Mt. Diablo Blvd. Sponsored by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and Red House Studios, see Chamber website for band information, www.lafayettechamber.org. Free.

Anytime: The Lafayette Reservoir

The Lafayette Reservoir is ideal for fishing, hiking, jogging, fishing, boating and picnicking. Open every day for all visitors, the recreation area is also open for bicyclists (and for those who prefer roller skates, roller blades and scooters) on Tuesdays and Thursdays from noon until closing and on Sundays from opening until 11:00 a.m. on the paved Lakeside Trail (2.7 miles) and roads. See www.ebmud.com/services/recreation/east_bay/lafayette/ for rules, fees and permits required.

Amenities

- Whole access fishing dock
- Bait shop
- Launching docks
- Rental boats (Private rowboats, canoes, kayaks and small sailboats allowed if carried atop vehicle - no gasoline engines)
- Picnic areas (including 2 group sites available for reservation)
- Children's playground (located on the East lawn)
- Native Garden
- Senior and disabled persons discounts



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Moraga

By Sophie Braccini

A Moraga favorite, the summer concert series at the Moraga Commons,

returns from June 4 to August 20. Unless otherwise noted, all shows start at 6:30 pm and end at 8:30 pm:

- June 4 Rossmoor Big Band - Swing & Jazz
- June 11 Stone Soup – a local band playing Rock & Roll
- June 18 La Ventana - Latin Rock
- June 25 Big Rain - R & R
- July 4 Larry Lynch & the Mob - R&R at 7:00 PM
- July 9 The Houserockers - R & R
- July 16 Dave Russell Band - Country & Western
- July 23 Culann's Hounds - Celtic Rock
- July 30 Mixed Nuts – a local band playing R&R
- August 6 Motor Dude Zydeco - Cajun
- August 13 littledog2 – a local band playing R&R
- August 20 Dave Crimmen - Rockabilly

June 14: Summer Jazz Banjo Festival at Saint Mary's College
The East Bay Banjo Club will present the First Annual Summer Jazz Banjo Festival on Sunday, June 14, Noon to 4 p.m., at the Soda Activity Center, Saint Mary's College of California, Moraga.

The festival features the unique sounds of a truly American institution the 4-string banjo. Bands from throughout the bay area will perform on one of two stages, including; the Sacramento Banjo Band, Wineland Banjo

Band, San Francisco Banjo Band, Bay Banjo Club.

The festival is a family affair with w... will have an opportunity to make... simple song and perform on stage.

Refreshments are available and a v... orabilia, music and a variety of ra... luthier Renée Karnes will also be j...

A portion of the proceeds will bene...

For more information, go to http://...

4th of July in Moraga:

The day will start with the Annual... mile, 5 mile, or the kiddies race... Country and Track Teams. Afterwa... enjoy a free pancake breakfast at the Moraga Youth Involvement Comm... Go to http://www.campotrack.com... Participants will meet the morning... Moraga Rd in Moraga by the Mon... aga Garden Center. Non-racers an... pancake breakfast for \$5, that will... 10 a.m. in the Moraga Commons F...

The Summer Fun Begin!



Photo Doug Kohen

Orinda

By Andrea A. Firth

Concerts-in-the-Park

This annual summer concert series is a favorite Tuesday night event for both the young, old, and in-betweens of Orinda. Sponsored by the Orinda Community Center Auxiliary the concerts are held on Tuesday nights from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Orinda Community Center Park. Bring a picnic and enjoy the free music!

- June 23rd** The Dave Crimmen Band (Rock-a-Billy)
- June 30th** Juke Joint (Rhythm & Blues)
- July 7th** Mixed Nuts (Rock, Disco, Blues, Oldies)
- July 14th** The Crises (Rock & Blues)
- July 21st** Stone Soup (Oldies Rock)
- July 28th** Pladdohg (Celtic Rock & Folk)

A Walk in the Art

Over 20 local artists will display their work throughout Orinda's Theater Square.

Saturday, June 20th, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Take a walk through the square to view exceptional art for sale at exception values.

Orinda Theater Square Summer Music Series

Plan to catch dinner in town on Thursdays this summer when Theater Square will host it's summer concert series. Starting June 11th through September 17th, bands will be filling the square with music every other Thursday from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

- June 11th and 25th** 747 Express featuring Ed McClary and Michael Hatfield
- July 9th** Surefire featuring Bob Athayde and friends
- July 23rd** Michael Robinson Band
- August 6th** 747 Express
- August 20th** Surefire
- September 3rd** Michael Robinson Band
- September 17th** Stone Soup

Orinda Starlight Village Players

A mystery, a classic, and a comedy will all be part of the Starlight Village Players' 2009 season—an intimate out-

door theater experience in downtown Orinda. [The Outdoor Theater is located in the corner of the Orinda Community Center Park.] The three plays will run from June through September on Friday evenings starting at 8:30 p.m. with select Thursday evening shows and Sunday late matinees. For a complete schedule and ticket pricing go to www.orsvp.org or call (925) 253-1191 or email info@orsvp.org.



June 5th thru June 27th
Spider's Web
By Agatha Christie



July 17th thru August 15th
Cyrano de Bergerac
By Edmond Eugene Alexis Rostand



September 11th thru September 26th
Harvey
By Mary Coyle Chase

Orinda Celebrates July 4th



The Orinda Association has planned an "old fashioned" 4th of July celebration complete with all of the favorite events and entertainment from the past years. The day will kick off with a fun run at 8:00 a.m. fol-

lowed by the parade through the City at 10:00 a.m. There will plenty to eat, do, and enjoy including a pancake breakfast, a mini car show, kids' games and a petting zoo, and music by the Bob Claire Orchestra. Pack a picnic and plan to spend the day. For more information, go to www.orindaassociation.org.

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the Peninsula Banjo Band and the East

workshops for young and old. Children their own instruments, learn to play a

endor area offers banjo related mem- file items. The Banjo Hall-of-Fame joining the festivities.

fit local charities.

summerjazzbanjofestival.com/.

4th of July Fun Run with either the 2 sponsored by the Campolindo Cross rds, all 2 mile and 5 miles racers can e Moraga Commons sponsored by the ittee.

for race information and registration. of the race in the Parking Lot at 1460 essori School, Asia Palace, and Mor- e encouraged to enjoy the traditional start at 8 a.m. until foods runs out or ark.

From then on, adults and children alike will have a choice of activities including the dog parade, old fashion youth games, the kids' bike parade, jumpies, and for the first time a classic car show presented by Rheem Valley Automotive. Food will be served through out the day at the Commons and in the evening Larry Lynch and the Mob will play before the sensational Moraga fireworks that will begin once it's dark, around 9:30 p.m.

- 7 a.m. - Late registration Fun Run
- 8:00 a.m. - Pancake breakfast and Kiddies' Runs
- 8:30 a.m. - 5 mile run and 2 mile run/walk
- 9:00 a.m. - Dog parade
- 9:00 a.m. - 1 p.m. - Car show
- 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. - Jumpies
- 10:30 a.m. - Kids' bike parade
- 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. - Old-fashion games for youth
- 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. - Food booth open
- 6:45 p.m. - Amanda McDowell sings the National Anthem
- 6:50 p.m. - Mayor's welcome
- 7 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
 - Music by Larry Lynch and the Mob;
 - fireworks at about 9:30 p.m., followed by a couple more songs from "the Mob."



*Based on information from Bay Area Real Estate Information Services, Contra Costa Assoc. of Realtors, Bay East Assoc. of Realtors, East Bay Regional Data, RE-InfoLink, San Francisco Assoc. of Realtors for the period 1/1/08 through 12/31/08. Due to MLS reporting methods and allowable reporting policy, this data is only informational and may not be completely accurate. Therefore, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage does not guarantee the data accuracy. Data maintained by the MLS's may not reflect all real estate activity in the market. ©2009 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned And Operated by NRT LLC. DRE License # 00313415

Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining • Dining

Clambake!

By Susie Iventosch

Clambakes are becoming more and more popular on the west coast. The traditional clambake, which originated on the east coast, is an all-day affair, starting with the building of a fire on the beach, heating the rocks to just the right temperature, digging for clams and harvesting seaweed for wrapping the food while cooking it over the hot rocks! Often "clambakers" will serve clam chowder on the side, or as a first course.

"In New England the clambake goes with summer as much as grilling burgers does at a BBQ," said Elaine Smit of Chow Bella. "The clambake is an easy casual way of entertaining outdoors for large gatherings with friends and family. The clambake is becoming increasingly popular here in California."

According to Smit, a clambake can be held at the beach or anywhere you can start a fire. The tradition of the clambake began with the Native Americans and dates back to the days of the first European settlers. They were taught by the Native Americans how to

steam clams, corn, potatoes and other things in a hole in the ground.

While the beach is the ideal location for a clambake, it can also be prepared in a huge pot over the stove, or on the barbecue, for inlanders. The clambake usually consists of corn, onions, potatoes, cherry-stone or littleneck clams, and can include lobster, chickens, sausages and eggs.

I'd heard of a clambake for years, perhaps it was from listening to "A Real Nice Clambake" from Rodgers and Hammerstein's Carousel, but I'd never prepared or partaken in one. So, it was really fun to try it on my family last weekend. Since the only beach we have at our house is a sand volleyball court with lots of weeds, but no seaweed, we opted to cook our clambake over the barbecue. The meal was delicious! We all enjoyed the combination of seafood, sausage and veggies cooked together in a personal little packet for each person. We made a little extra basting sauce with melted butter, wine, garlic and parsley and this was perfect for passing around the table!

Chow Bella's Clambake Recipe

(Serves 4)

The traditional method for throwing a clambake is to start by digging a hole in the ground. Cover the bottom of the hole with large stones and build a large, hot fire on top of the stones. This fire needs to burn for a couple of hours to heat those stones as hot as they can get. In the meantime you can prepare the food. A clambake consists of a lot of food, most importantly fresh clams. Typically the menu will include (but may also include regional or seasonal substitutions):

- 4 fresh ears of corn, shucked
1 pound smoked sausage, cut into 4 pieces
12 very small (one-inch in diameter) new potatoes, cut in half
8 small to medium onions, peeled, and cut in half
4 (1 3/4-pound) lobsters
24 little neck clams, scrubbed

For serving: 1 cup unsalted butter, melted
2 lemons, cut into wedges
Serve with clam chowder

You will also need enough seaweed or rock weed to cover the fire pit and plenty of cheesecloth. Wire baskets are also helpful to hold everything together. Wrap individual servings of the above ingredients in cheesecloth, tying the corners together and place in baskets if you have them.

Once the rocks are hot enough to spit a drop of water back at you, rake off the coals from the fire and cover the rocks with seaweed. Place the food packets on the seaweed and cover with more seaweed. It's then best to cover the whole project with a large tarpaulin. After about 2 hours everything should be done. Serve with lemon and melted butter.

That's how you hold a traditional clambake. Since most of us don't live on a beach or



Clambake Photo Susie Iventosch

want to dig a hole in our backyard this meal can be made on the grill or in a large pot.

How would you do this in the pot? Arrange corn, sausage, potatoes, and onions in a steamer basket over boiling water in a Dutch oven. Top with lobsters and clams. Cover and steam 20 minutes. Serve with butter and lemon.

How would you do this on a charcoal grill? Lay out two pieces of foil with two pieces of the cheesecloth on top. Wrap this around 1 corn, 1 piece of sausage, 6 potatoes, 2 small onions, 1 lobster, 6 little neck clams, and some seaweed or rockweed -- if you were able to find it -- add a cup of water to the package. Make sure to tie the cloth over the food and seal the foil well.

Make 4 of these packages and place them on a barbecue grill about 4 inches from the heat.

Cover the grill with the hood or with large pieces of foil tucked in around the edges of the grill.

Let the packages steam for 1 hour flipping them every 15 minutes. If the potatoes are done, it's a good indication that the lobster and the rest of the ingredients are ready too. (Note, my packets cooked in about 30 minutes, so the cooking time will vary with each barbecue. It's best to take one of the packets to test from time to time to see if the potatoes are cooked.)

The recommended dessert for a Clambake is a Whoopie Pie. Whoopie pies are considered a New England phenomenon and a Pennsylvania tradition. They're one of Maine's best known and most loved comfort foods. They accompany most New England clambakes but are not a staple of Chow Bella.

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Table listing various restaurants in the Lamorinda area, including American, Italian, Japanese, Mexican, and others, with their addresses and phone numbers.

The Lamorinda Weekly (LW) Restaurant Guide is not paid advertising; our intent is to provide a useful reference guide. We hope that we have included all Lamorinda restaurants on this page, except those that told us they did not wish to be listed.

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SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Miramonte Wins 2009 North Coast Baseball Championship

By Kevin D. Shallat



2009 NCS Baseball Champions Miramonte Matadors

Photo Jordan Fong

It was an emotional week for the Miramonte varsity baseball team going into the North Coast Section (NCS) Baseball Championship game on May 30, as well as a tough week for the school and community altogether. Merely one week earlier, Miramonte lost a student, Joseph Loudon, who was close to some of the players on the team. The players

had to deal with some very real life occurrences that make the idea of sport seem less important. However, the players had a game to play. "Joe (Loudon) was at our game on Friday, right before he passed. That kind of made us realize that what we were doing was more important than just for ourselves, it was for the community. It made us play with a

little bit of purpose, and lot of togetherness," said shortstop Mike Reuvekamp.

For Miramonte Head Coach Vince Dell 'Aquila, competing in an NCS championship game was nothing new. He had coached the 1999 and 2002 championship teams that played at the Oakland Coliseum, as well as the 2004 and 2005 teams that won it all as well. The 2009 team had earned a 20-3-1 record to advance to the NCS Championship game at the Oakland Coliseum against the Sir Francis Drake Pirates (20-5).

But for the players, who have never experienced the loss of a friend, to play in a big league ballpark, or compete in a state championship game, this was all new to them. Behind a masterful performance from their starting pitcher, Miramonte pulled off a 1-0 victory to record their fifth NCS championship in 10 years.

Despite being the one seed, the Matadors lost the coin toss and had to accept the visiting team designation. This, as it turned out, was a blessing in disguise, as the Mata-

dors displayed some early pop with their bats. Miramonte's Kevin Paulsen led off the first inning with a base hit to left and advanced to second on a passed ball. The next batter was Reuvekamp, who scorched a grounder up the middle that caromed off of the pitcher's leg to score Paulsen from second. The atmosphere in the dugout and stands became loud with an anticipation of more runs, but the game was destined for a pitcher's duel.

The Pirates gave the Matadors a scare in the bottom of the first, as they looked to answer right back in the same fashion. Drake's number two hitter advanced to second after an infield hit, but after their cleanup hitter walked, their number five hitter struck out to end the threat.

Miramonte's starting pitcher, senior Andrew Kjar, was brilliant. His slider baffled and neutralized hitters all day. "I feel most comfortable with it (the slider), it's just like a fastball until the last second when you need to break your wrist to get the movement on it," said Kjar. After getting the cleanup hitter to pop out to end the third inning, it was pretty much smooth sailing from then on. Kjar wound up throwing a three-hit complete game shutout to seal the NCS championship by a score of 1-0.

"I'm really proud of the boys, because of what they've been through all week. Their heads and hearts were in other places, but they did it. They did it!" said Coach Dell 'Aquila.



Andrew Kjar (34) and Kevin Paulsen (4) pound it after a great inning

Photo Jordan Fong



Mike Reuvekamp (1) gets a laugh with teammates during the second inning



Kevin Paulsen rounds third base to score after a single by Mike Reuvekamp in the first inning

Photos Jordan Fong

Gymnastics – More than Flying Through the Air

Submitted by Candace Morton



Cameron Morton

(photo provided)

Melanie Jorgenson, 17, pauses, takes a deep breath, runs, leaps into the air, twisting her body, head over heels and lands amazingly unharmed with a big grin. She is just one of several Lamorinda gymnasts who call Concord's Golden Gate Gymnastics their home gym. Melanie discovered the sport when she was 2 1/2 at a friend's birthday party. "I like the challenges and learning new tricks," says Melanie, a Level 9 gymnast and junior at Acalanes High School.

Her younger counterparts concur, "I like flipping through the air, it feels like I'm flying," says Sawyer Morton, 13, a 7th grader at Stanley Middle School.

Her younger sister, Cameron, a 5th grader at Lafayette Elementary says, "I kind of feel like a superhero when I'm flipping around."

Besides being fun what can gymnastics do for your child? Mike Lynch, Owner/Coach of Golden Gate Gymnastics says, "It helps increase strength, flexibility, balance,

and coordination; however, the self-confidence and lessons learned such as perseverance and dedication transfer to every other area of their life."

He isn't the only ones singing gymnastics' praises. A study completed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) showed that graduation rates for gymnasts exceed 90 percent in college, much higher than the national average. Women gymnasts received more NCAA academic awards than any other sport at a rate of two to three times that of other sports. Gymnasts also received more NCAA post-graduate scholarships.

When looking for a gym, make sure to look for a USAG (United States Association of Gymnastics) certified gym with USAG certified instructors who have the knowledge to coach and spot your child appropriately.

Sabba Jweinat, 11, a 5th grader at Springhill Elementary says it best, "Once you start gymnastics you can't stop and life without it is boring and lazy."

Cougar Football



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