Indie Film Festival Makes its Mark in Moraga

Ouote of the Week:

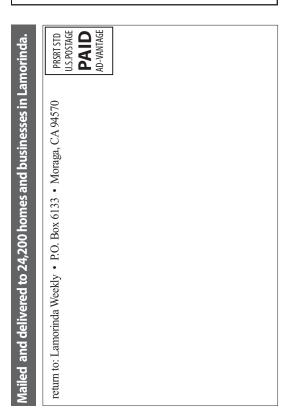
"Perhaps we should be arguing that Moraga has been subsidizing Orinda all this time?" Read Letters to the Editor, page A8

Opening Night of the film festival drew a large crowd to the New Rheem Theatre

Photos Doug Kohen



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By Andrea A. Firth

oviegoers packed the lobby of the New Rheem Theater at the Friday night opening reception of the 13th Annual California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF). Locals stood shoulder-to-shoulder nibbling hors d'oeuvres and sipping wine from the vineyards of Moraga winegrowers Sal and Susan Captain as they waited for the start of the evening's sold-out feature film, The 5th Quarter. The excitement was palpable and attendees jostled for the best viewing spots as the Festival's Program Director Beau Behan introduced the film's writer, director, and producer Rick Bieber and leading actor Ryan Merriman. The audience applauded as Bieber and the 27-year old Merriman placed their signatures on the tiled wall in the lobby—Moraga's newly-designated Wall of Fame.

The 5th Quarter, based on the true story of the Abbate family whose teenage son Luke was killed in a reckless driving accident, struck an emotional chord with many residents. Bieber spent several months with the family to learn about their story of loss and understand their journey to recovery. "Writing the screenplay went quickly, but it was emotional for me just to write it down," said Bieber.

... continued on page L4

Grand Opening Feb. 13th Call for details

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Lafayette Parcel Tax for **Schools on May Ballot**

By Cathy Tyson

ith a unanimous vote by the Lafayette School Board, a parcel tax will go on the May 3rd ballot as an emergency measure to continue to provide a quality education program in the face of deep cuts in school funding by the state legislature.

Voters will be asked to levy a \$176 per parcel temporary tax for four years to maintain core academic programs in math, science, art, music and more. If approved, the tax will take effect on July 1, 2011 and deliver \$1.5 million to Lafayette schools each year. Seniors can receive a special exemption.

Resolutions for the tax spell out the reasoning behind the measure: the District has not been fully funded to provide a quality education, and the District has exhausted all feasible means of generating revenue. No stone has been left unturned, even sports fields are rented out to LMYA and CYO programs, and facility rental fees are paid by the summer Jazz camp, scouts and others.

"We have to plan for the worst," said School Board Member Teresa Gerringer. "We've already cut \$2 million over the past two years and we still have a structural deficit." ... continued on page S4

appy Lunar New Year! With the arrival of tonight's new moon we usher in the Year of the Hare. The Hare represents longevity. It is said that people born under this sign are fun-loving, artistic, mild-mannered and conscientious. Following on the heels of a rather stormy year of the Tiger, 2011 should see things begin to calm down under the common sense and gentle influence of the Hare.

Graphic by Shayan Tajbakhsh



Wednesday delivery for Lamorinda Weekly!

In an effort to get the paper to you in a timely manner, we are converting our delivery method from the U.S. mail to a local home delivery service that will place the paper on your driveway every other Wednesday.

If you live in Lafayette or Moraga, this issue should have been delivered to you on Wednesday, February 2.

Home delivery to Orinda will begin on February 16. Please call (925) 377-0977 or email homedelivery@lamorindaweekly.com if you have any questions.

Lee and Grant Exhibit Opens at Saint Mary's College



By Sophie Braccini

The Lee and Grant exhibition opened last weekend at Saint Mary's College Hearst Art Gallery in Moraga and will continue until March 20th. Organized by the NEH On The Road, a special initiative of the National Endowment read on page L1

A Lamorinda Valentine's Day



By Lou Fancher

Celebrating Valentine's Day without leaving Lamorinda turned out to be much harder than expected. When the assignment came in, I thought: Piece of cake!

Literally. With bakeries, florists, gift boutiques, spas, new and established restaurants, movie theaters, and even a luxury hotel, what could be simpler? Within 30 minutes, the list of choices was longer than...

... read on page L3



Lafayette

Public Meetings

City Council Monday, February 14, 7:00 pm Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission Monday, February 7, 7:00 pm Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review Monday, February 14, 7:00 pm Lafayette Library & Learning Center in the Arts & Science Discovery Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Tri-City Meeting Thursday, February 10, 7:00 pm Joint meeting with Moraga and Orinda at Saint Mary's College, Soda Center

Police Report



Playing games, 01/14/11 Someone stole credit card information and made an online purchase of an electronic game system. The card owner is temporarily out the refuted purchase amount and doesn't even get to play the game...

Does it come with matching heels? 01/17/11 A thief (perhaps a "bag lady") with expensive taste stole a high-priced handbag from inside a locked vehicle on Walnut Street.

Not a pretty picture, 01/15/11 \$2300 worth of stolen goods-- a

camera and lenses, electronic reader and clothing were taken from a car parked on St. Mary's Road.

Around the same time, 01/12/11-01/15/11 A laptop and headphones (valued at \$1250) were stolen from another car; the rear window of an SUV was broken out—the thief helped him/her self to a \$3,000 laptop; jewelry and a laptop valued at \$21,000 were taken in an overnight residential burglary on Las Trampas Road.

Have they lost their way? 01/18/11

Thieves snatched a GPS from a car parked in the owner's driveway overnight on Moon Court. If the directions say "go straight," will they turn themselves in?



What's Happening with Redevelopment in Lafayette?

By Cathy Tyson

ith Governor Jerry Brown's proposal to eliminate redevelopment agencies in California, cities across the state are scrambling to commit funds so they will be beyond the long arm of Sacramento.

Lafayette, the only city in Lamorinda that has a Redevelopment Agency, is not thrilled at the prospect. At the moment, it's unclear if Governor Brown's proposal will remain or may evolve. If adopted, and passed by the legislature it would save about 2% of the state budget.

In a nutshell redevelopment programs allow local governments to borrow against future property tax increases in designated redevelopment areas. That money can be used for projects that would spur economic development, create jobs and benefit the community.

It was just last November that California voters passed Proposition 22, which demanded an end to the raid of local government funds. The League of California Cities is looking into whether Brown's proposal is legal, especially just months after the

passage of Prop. 22.

In Lafayette, Redevelopment money is responsible in part for the Mercantile Building, the Veterans Hall and the Library and Learning Center. Outside of Lafayette, redevelopment money helped pave the way for the new and improved downtown Pleasant Hill and IKEA, along with six other projects in Emeryville.

According to the City of Emeryville, "These seven major redevelopment projects have generated \$35 million in property tax revenue for the Redevelopment

Agency, \$25 million in sales tax revenue, and have created 7,600 jobs. These revenues represent \$15 returned in tax revenue for every \$1 of Redevelopment Agency investment."

"The silver lining is this would be a lot worse if we were in the middle of a project," said Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson. "Everything is very up in the air right now." Most of Lafayette's redevelopment money is committed to pay off bond debt and loans from the Library project.

Foundation Celebrates Fundraising Goal

By Cathy Tyson



here was champagne to celebrate reaching the \$4 million goal of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation's ("Foundation") Open Doors, Open Minds campaign. Even in a tough economy, generous donors contributed funds to literally keep the doors open of the one of a kind Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Longer hours, increased programming and the sustainability of the building were made possible by donations from individuals, foundation and corporate grants, room rentals, and special events. With 53% of the facility's total operating costs paid for by the Foundation, monetary support is critical to keep this public treasure open for business.

"Attendance at the library is mushrooming by the day" said Mike Gilson, newly appointed President of the Foundation Trustees. "Over 450,000 patrons have come through the doors in the first year — an extraordinary

achievement. Clearly it's had a positive effect on Lafayette."

"We're finding our expectation of participation is always exceeded," said Gilson, who is responsible for a variety of things including strategic planning. One of his tasks was to create his own job description: "help crystallize thinking and define 'what you want to be when you grow up."

Foundation Executive Director Kathy Merchant eagerly praises the new President, "Mike is very gracious, a voracious reader, a gifted writer and has great organizational skills - along with a financial background." He and his wife moved to Lafayette in 1990 and always had a passion for a new library. Gilson worked for many years in the corporate world and has been actively involved in quite a number of community projects.

Gilson feels he has a special obligation as President since so many friends and neighbors con-

Photo courtesy Kathy Merchant tributed –over 25% of the households in Lafayette donated to the initial fundraising campaign—that the Foundation needs to manage the Library effectively and spend resources wisely.

Even before the official grand opening in November of 2009, it's been a learn-as-you-go process for Merchant. She stays ridiculously busy managing the day to day operations of the establishment.

"We need the community to understand we need them, can't do it without them," said Merchant. Both Merchant and Gilson credit a number of people with the success of the Library, Librarian Susan Weaver Librarian, Building Manager Brian Long and the Friends of the Library.

As the nature of learning has changed, so has this Library. By moving from a traditional building for quiet reading to a community living room and gathering space, this unique facility embraces the challenge of appealing to disparate

groups of users. By offering a layout with a separate Community Hall, homework center, kids area and meeting rooms – everybody's happy and wants to come back for more.

In addition to fundraising, the Foundation manages the first of its kind Glenn Seaborg Consortium - a partnership of a dozen renowned education, science and arts institutions. These partners offer an array of specialty programs designed to appeal to a broad audience - from toddlers to seniors. In February look for events on Building the Hoover Dam, The Obama Effect: Where does the African American Community Stand Now and a special Sweet Thursday event with author Po Bronson. As the Library's popularity has snowballed, even more innovative groups want to hold events at the Library - like the World Affairs Council and the Gold Coast Players. For more information, go to www.LLLCF.org.

Art at the Library

Don't miss the brand new art exhibit in the Community Hall Gallery, "A Compendium of Birds," by Martin Lasack. The beautiful birds will be in residence until mid-March. The Gallery is open on Monday evenings from 6:30 and when there are public events scheduled at the Community Hall. Also look for the portrait of General Lafayette that was a generous gift from Gilbert Sonet and his son Noah – it's just to the right of the Information Desk.

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Burton Valley Homeowners' Remodel Denied on a Split Decision

By Cathy Tyson

t a marathon City Council Ameeting, the controversial proposed remodel of a Burton Valley home was, after hours of heated testimony, ultimately denied – although the denial resolution was not officially adopted, on a 3-2 vote, giving the homeowners, the Polichio family, a little wiggle room. At issue is a modest second story addition to a traditional 1950's rancher on Lucas Drive.

City staff has been supportive of the project all along, in a process that has taken approximately a year. The project has had its ups and downs: the Design Review Commission conditionally approved it, but the Planning Commission voted to deny citing neighborhood compatibility.

That theme was touched upon by Council Member Don Tatzin, "What is the definition of compatible?" Noting the addition required no variances and met all building guidelines, Architect Ken Hertel listed a host of design ele-

ments that this project has in common with the immediate neighborhood: porches, materials, garage, siding and windows, and suggested looking at Burton Valley in a larger context to define compatibility.

Homeowner Noelle Polichio, in an emotional plea to the Council, said, "This process has been expensive, exhausting and upsetting. We just can't do this anymore, we care about Burton Valley as much as anyone."

Several folks spoke up in support of the project; noting that, "it's not 1950 anymore" and criticized the "rancher timewarp;" another was concerned about ambiguous design standards. One neighborhood resident suggested looking at the "spirit of the design." Opponents also added their concerns, once again citing compatibility along with size and mass

Tatzin talked about objective and subjective components of com-

patibility. The objective elements have clearly been met – the height, setbacks and more are well within what the city requires. The problem is the subjective component, a personal opinion that may mean different things to different people.

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"We're considering all of our options," said homeowner Joe Polichio adding, "We're extremely disappointed." He feels they have compromised throughout the process, adjusting the architecture in response to legitimate concerns. "But we are so close, we just ask for the opportunity to respond to their suggestions, a chance to articulate their feedback architecturally." Just one more vote in favor would have approved the project.

Polichio feels they may be able to please everyone, if the Council can create a compromise, where everyone is a little flexible - perhaps in the future this controversy, and potential lawsuits, can be avoided.

homes for as long as possible, by

providing rides for grocery shopping, errands, doctor appointments and more. Drivers also help bring

packages from the van to the house with their "door through door" service. In addition, there's a regular lunch bunch service to the Sen-

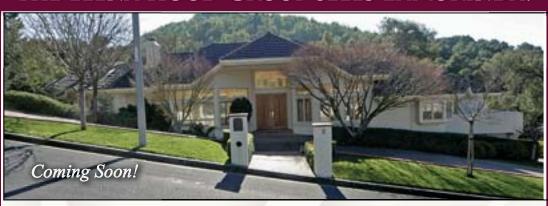
ior Center in Walnut Creek that

offers lunch, socialization and

round trip transportation. Both the existing van and the replacement

model have a wheelchair lift. For more information or to schedule a ride on the Spirit van call (925) 283-

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Okay for New Spirit Van

By Cathy Tyson



Photo provided

n a process that takes two years, Lamorinda Senior Transportation was approved to apply for a federal grant that would pay for a replacement Spirit van. Serving many fragile seniors, Program Coordinator Mary Bruns explains that they are able to assist passengers in their 80's and 90's, with one passenger that's 100.

The existing van is rapidly aging, "We put on about 1,000 miles a month picking up and dropping off seniors," said Bruns. The ridership has continued to grow over the years, almost doubling since 2006.

Getting the new van at a deep discount helped City Council members quickly approve the application. "The Federal Government pays for 88.53% of the cost of the van so we only have to pay 11.47%. The expected cost to the City of Lafayette is expected to be \$10,000 or less," said Bruns in a staff report.

The service is meant to assist seniors live independently in their





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Civic News Moraga

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Public Meetings

Town Council Wednesday, February 9, 7:30 pm Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, 1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission Monday, February 7, 7:30 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Design Review Monday, February 14, 7:00 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Tri-City Meeting Thursday, February 10, 7:00 pm Joint meeting with Lafayette and Orinda at Saint Mary's College, Soda Center

Liaison

Fire Station, 1280 Moraga Way

Friday, February 11, 8:00 am

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements Town of Moraga online: Chamber of Commerce: Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moraga.ca.us www.moragachamber.org www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

Police Report •



Science gone bad, 1/20/11 After a science experiment at Camino Pablo School several students reported having difficulty breathing. The fifth grade kids were conducting a litmus test that involved bleach, vinegar, dish soap, baking soda, salt and milk of magnesia. Affected students were checked at the scene and released, although one student was transported to Kaiser in Walnut Creek.

Inheritance hoax, 1/20/11 A Butterfield Place resident told officers he received a letter from a British attorney stating he may be entitled to funds from a person who recently passed away in the United Kingdom, since they had the same last name. Unfortunately he sent the requested fee to cover the cost of the legal transaction to Barclay's Bank in the U.K., but he has yet to receive his "inheritance."

MORAGA

Lost & Found, Found iPod and iewelry: On 1/23 A very honest 14-year-old boy found an Apple iTouch under a bench near the skate park. On 1/21 a woman turned in a bracelet, earrings and five rings found near the trail across from Saint Mary's College. Lost phone and wallet: On 1/24 a woman left her cell phone unattended inside the Madigan Gym during the afternoon, upon her return it was gone. On 1/12 between 9:45 and 11:00 a fellow reported he lost his wallet at Safeway, it contained a driver's license, BART pass, \$10 cash and bank

Mugging at Gunpoint, 1/24/11 A woman came to the lobby of the Police Department to report someone pointed a handgun at her while she was in the rear parking lot at the Rheem Valley Shopping Center and took her money and cell phone. Despite a search by officers from Moraga, Lafayette, Orinda, Walnut Creek and the California Highway Patrol, the suspect hasn't been located at this time.

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Moraga Developments Move Forward

By Sophie Braccini

t was a very good two weeks for those who want to see more rooftops and more action in Moraga. The Planning Commission acted on two proposals that affect very visible and historic locations, while on January 26th the Town Council approved a plan to construct 27 residences on the hills of

Although probably not the beginning of a huge construction spree, these projects are likely to have a significant impact on the future development of the town; the beginnings of revitalization can be expected, while some residents remain concerned that the approval of buildings on, or too close to, ridge lines is a dangerous precedent for a town that cherishes its open views. **Downtown Area Projects**

in the Planning Phase On the night of January 18th, the

Planning Commission discussed one proposed project on Moraga Road, across from the Rheem Center, and approved another at the historic Barn, which is at the corner of Viader and Country Club Drive. The projects are very different in nature and stage of development, but if they materialize as proposed they have the potential to significantly contribute to the revitalization of the downtown area. "This was one of the best Planning Commission meetings of my life," said Planning Director Lori Salamack after the fact, "We have a very talented and experienced Planning Commission and they did a superb job."

Chris Avant, who presented a modification of his Barn-café project, appeared to be touched by the number of people who came to the meeting in his support. Members of the Lamorinda Wine Growers Association, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, a local architect, and residents, all spoke in support of Avant's plan to have the ground floor of the building open from 6:00 a.m. to midnight, offering healthy finger foods and winetasting. The Planning Commission voted almost unanimously to support the project. Commissioner Bruce Whitley opposed the project on the basis of parking concerns.

"I am invigorated by the support of the community," said Avant after the meeting, "and I plan to open the Barn to the public during the summer of 2011." Last year Avant received approval to open a wine bar in the Barn from 4:00 p.m. to midnight. An extension of the permitted hours, and appealing to different groups of customers, made sense to Avant as he developed his business plan. "This will invigorate the businesses in this part of town and will hopefully be beneficial (to existing businesses)," said Avant.

Jim Knuppe, along with his sons and his architect, followed Avant with a presentation of his project. The Knuppe family owns the barren two-acre lot adjacent to its 5A Rent-A-Space storage facility on Moraga Road; the lot is currently zoned "agricultural only," and Knuppe was on a scouting expedition to find out if a plan to build an apartment/condominium complex on the site stood a chance of being approved. The Commission raised concerns about peek hour traffic, pedestrian flow and over-

flow parking for residents; but agreed that such a development made sense, indicating that Knuppe's first priority should be to have the area re-zoned.

The 40 units proposed by the Knuppe family would be one or two bedroom condos/apartments stacked on three levels with a parking garage on the first floor—the concept was presented as a housing option for Saint Mary's students, staff and the local workforce. According to the Knuppes, this is the only viable solution for the property. "We've studied everything," said Jim Knuppe during the study session with the Commission, "the market in Moraga could not support a hotel, and more retail, in view of existing empty spaces, does not make economic sense." The Planning Commissioners agreed with Knuppe; Commission Chair Jim Obsitnik added "if we want a vibrant retail, we need more people." Rancho Laguna Project

Approved

On January 26th the Town Council approved, by a vote of 2-1, the development of 27 homes on the hilly property known as Rancho Laguna along Rheem Boulevard. A previous approval by the Planning Commission in August of 2009 was appealed by a group of residents who challenged its consistency with the General Plan. Their position was that some of the homes would significantly alter the natural setting, not to mention being located too close to ridge lines. Almost a year and a half of discussions and iterations brought forward a much-modified project. "I think that most people will be

pleased when they look at the concessions that were made on both sides," said Town Manager Jill Keimach after the meeting.

Rancho Laguna is a180-acre property located on the eastern section of Rheem Boulevard, towards Saint Mary's Road, where cows now roam. The approved development consists of eight homes along Rheem Boulevard, and 19 on the upper plateau located on the southeast portion of the lot.

Along the road to approval various aspects of the projects have been addressed, including the preservation of the creek, the removal of an access road that impacted the creek, and the visual impact of the project.

Moraga resident Suzanne Jones, speaking on behalf of the appellant group, indicated that the modified project presented by staff could be acceptable, in spite of remaining concerns, if one specific lot was moved. That lot, located on the southeastern side of the upper plateau, is located on or very close to what the group considers to be a ridge line.

Dave Trotter was the only Council member to oppose the new plan, and did so on the basis that the location of the one controversial lot was not compliant with the General Plan; Mayor Karen Mendonca and Council Member Howard Harpham approved the plan. Vice-Mayor Mike Metcalf and Council Member Ken Chew had to recuse themselves from the discussion since they live too close to the proposed development.

Meet New Officer Mary Ann Grubb

By Sophie Braccini

ary Ann Grubb is a no-nonsense woman who knows what she wants and goes out and gets it. A passionate coach and teacher for the first 12 years of her career, she decided to become what she had always wanted to be - a police officer – "Once I got the coaching out of my system," she explains. Now Grubb patrols the streets of Moraga, mostly on weekend nights, one of the tough shifts on which newcomers must make their debut.

Grubb attended Carondelet High School in Concord and Santa Clara University for her BA degree; she now lives in Walnut Creek. She said she always wanted to become a police officer, but she fell in love with coaching cross country. "I didn't want to give coaching up," she said, "so I taught math for 12 years, as a means to get to coach."

Grubb says that the pride of coaching resides in taking young athletes who, at the beginning of the



Officer Grubb with Lieutenant Price

Photo Sophie Braccini

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In 2009 she decided it was time to become a police officer and she put herself through the Napa Valley College Police Academy, a six-month program she found very

rigorous. "It was a positive experience," she said, "I learned a lot about myself and police work." She notes that the program enforces a very strict discipline, "You find out if you are tough enough to come back the next day."In her class of 50 (five of whom were women), 30 graduated (three of them women).

Grubb was recruited by the Moraga Police Department in August of 2010. "I received other offers, but then those departments went into a hiring freeze," she says, "it's not that there is no need for more police officers, it's that there is no money to hire them." Some of her classmates have not found police jobs yet.

Grubb says she has found a good fit for herself in Moraga. "There are a lot of plusses in a small department," she says, "you get to know the people quickly, the learning curve is pretty good, you do a lot of the leg work." She works the graveyard shift from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. over the weekend, three or four days in a row, "The Chief (Bob Priebe) works that shift too," she says, "it's great to see him work; it's the best way to learn."

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Crime Awareness

By Sophie Braccini

rime Awareness is the title of an article that Moraga Police Chief Robert Priebe wrote for the latest Moraga About Town civic bulletin (online at www.moraga.ca.us). His department has hit the ground running in 2011, with a 50% increase in calls over the same time last year – as of January 28th, there were 61 calls, as compared to 41 in January of 2010.

2011's crimes-to-date include an armed robbery behind the Rheem Center and a multiple-car theft leading to a chase by the Moraga and Orinda Police Departments that ended in an accident near Orinda's Wagner Ranch Elementary School, which killed one of the suspects (27-year-old Christina Ramos of Hayward; at press time, other suspect(s) are still at large); along with residential and property thefts, including a case of electronic equipment stolen on the Saint Mary's College (SMC) campus that ended on January 27th with the arrest of two SMC students

and the return of the stolen property. "We have definitely experienced a spike in January," says Priebe.

Moraga's police may go beyond their jurisdiction to arrest suspects. For example, in pursuit of individuals that stole a wallet from an unlocked car, Priebe's officers are conducting an investigation in Alameda County and will press charges against the suspects when they are identified. "Every time I send someone out to investigate, I need to pull off the

streets one of the two officers who are here at all times," says Priebe, "it was good to effectively put the handcuffs on the thieves that stole SMC's property, but we needed three officers, including myself, and two officers from Walnut Creek to conduct the investigation and make the arrest; this is a very expensive operation for us."

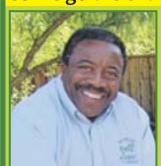
Looking at statistics from 2009 and 2010, Priebe noted that his department is the least expensive per capita in the county. "In Moraga, residents pay \$122 a year per capita for police service; in Lafayette the cost is \$198; in Orinda \$223; \$416 in Kensington; and \$164 in Clayton. With such limited resources, people should not have unrealistic expectations about what we can do."

With one officer on leave, Priebe was not able to have the detective position he hoped for - "We are customer-service oriented and do our best with what we have," he says.

If something happens, Priebe recommends that you call 911 immediately from a land line (from a cell phone call Dispatch at 925-284-5010). Residents interested in starting a 'Neighborhood Watch' group should contact Lieutenant Jeff Price at (925) 888-7049.

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As Seen in Lamorinda...



Dennis and Sandra Chiodo walk their American Miniature Horse, Sam, in the streets of Moraga. Dennis gave Sam to Sandra 15 years ago as an anniversary gift. Miniature horses are not ponies, they can pull a cart, and some are presented in shows. Sam is just a friendly pet who loves people and needs to be walked regularly. Photo Sophie Braccini

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amazing backyard. \$799,000 **Alan Marks**



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Elena Tyson



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Bill Finnegan



28 Watchwood Court, Orinda

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Square footage, acreage, and other information herein, has been received from one or more of a variety of different sources. Such information has not been verified by Alain Pinel Realtors. If important to buyers, buyers should conduct their own investigation.

ORINDA 2 Theatre Square, Suite 215 925.258.1111

Civic News ORINDA



Orinda

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Public Meetings

City Council Tuesday, February 15, 7:00 pm Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission Tuesday, February 8, 7:00 pm Auditorium, Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, February 9, 6:30 pm

Community Room, City Hall, 22 Orinda Way

Tri-City Meeting Thursday, February 10, 7:00 pm Joint meeting with Lafayette and Moraga at Saint Mary's College, Soda Center

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements City of Orinda: www.cityoforinda.org Chamber of Commerce: www.orindachamber.org

Police Report •



Attempted break in, 1/18/11 A Canon Drive resident reported that someone attempted to break into her home via the side door. Apparently the unknown suspect huffed and puffed and attempted to bust open the door. But he or she only succeeded in causing damage to the door

Drunk driving, 1/13/11 A car was observed making a sudden lane change near Camino Pablo and Highway 24. Concerned officer on duty pulled the driver over, who showed obvious signs of intoxication. Wouldn't you know it, he flunked his field sobriety test and was arrested for D.U.I. He also had possession of controlled substances, Ritalin and Tramadol in unlabeled bottles.

Warrant arrest for coke, 1/21/11 Not the soft drink. Contra Costa Sherriff's Office picked up a fellow on Brookwood Road on an outstanding \$50,000 warrant for California Health and Safety Code 11351.5 Possession of cocaine for sale.

Warrant arrest for tail lights, 1/19/11 An Orinda resident was arrested on an outstanding \$1199 warrant for tail lights. Should have gotten those fixed, would have been way cheaper.

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Orinda's Budget on Target

By Andrea A. Firth

City Council's midyear review Orinda's budget found the City's fiscal planning essentially on target. The summary of revenues and expenditures through the end of December 2010 revealed no major surprises, but a couple of line items were cause for a raised eyebrow.

Property tax revenue, which constitutes the lion share of Orinda's income, was projected to increase by 1% but final numbers from the County Assessor's Office indicate property tax revenue will decrease by 0.25%. This represents about \$40,000 to Orinda's bottom line, and according to Finance Director Emily Hobdy, this is the first decline in property tax revenue that Orinda has experienced.

While sales tax revenue is down approximately 17% from the previous fiscal year, the most recent quarter's decline was only 6%. "I expect the rate of [sales tax revenue] decline has slowed," said Hobdy. Investment income also declined significantly as compared to the prior year. This was largely due to the fact that a number of investments were sold; and the lost interest income was offset by the gain on sale for the current fiscal year. On a good note, revenue tied to recreation fees continues to rise and will add an additional \$50,000 to the City's coffers.

On the expenditure side of the balance sheet, Vice Mayor Steve Glazer was wary of a couple of proposed appropriations and asked City staff to provide further information

before moving forward.

A traffic study to address the snarls on Moraga Way is estimated to cost \$120,000 over the next two years. "This is a significant amount of money," said Glazer adding that he wanted to establish a high bar for justification of this expenditure. Council Member Amy Worth recommended that a public meeting be held to ensure that all sides of this issue are heard and addressed. The item will be brought back to the Council with more detailed information.

Glazer also balked at a \$60,000 appropriation for an ADA Transition Plan to develop an analysis of improvement to City facilities to meet the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). "The City is committed to improving access," said Glazer. "I know this is a touchy subject. But I don't know what the transition plan is, and this is a lot of money," he added requesting staff to provide more information. Worth concurred, reiterating the request for more data regarding the cost and components.

The Council did approve spending up to \$30,000 in insurance funds or waiving up to \$30,000 in processing fees associated with repairs to be undertaken as part of a settlement agreement associated with an ADA non-compliance suit. "The improvements for access for disability are required," stated City attorney Osa Wolff.

"It's not a question of if but when," she added, "It's a pretty big universe of issues the city has to study and address."

Bike, Trail, Walkway Plan Put in Place

By Andrea A. Firth

CANETTI'S BOOKSHOP ver two years in development, the Orinda Bicycle, USED & NEW BOOKS Trail and Walkway (BTW) Mas-ALWAYS DISCOUNTED ter Plan was unanimously ap-OPEN EVERY DAY 10:00am - 6:00pm proved for adoption by the City 925.258.9076 Council at its January 18th **39 MORAGA WAY** meeting. The BTW Master Plan **ORINDA 94563** (DOWNTOWN AT THE CROSSROADS) provides a long-term vision for the development of bike facili-"ORINDA'S HIDDEN GEM" ties, trails, and walkways taking -DIABLO MAGAZINE a twenty-year look forward at the potential infrastructure improvements that could be made throughout the City. Consultants from Alta Planning + Design in Berkeley developed the 82-page plan with extensive input from the Council, city staff, and a resident advisory group.

The BTW Master Plan identifies 43 bike, trail, and walkway projects representing 11.6 miles of bicycle lanes and routes, 12.2 miles of walkways, 4.1 miles of natural surface trails, along with 13 intersection improvements. Total cost for these capital improvements tops \$5.5 million (in 2009 dollars). "We did a lot of field work. The projects that are presented in here should be feasible," said Lauren Ledbetter of Alta Plan-

ning + Design. Council Member Dean Orr commended the comprehensive nature of the project list, but he acknowledged that given the City's scarce resources, the City would not be likely to fund any of the projects in the short term. City Manager Janet Keeter concurred adding, "This plans sets us up to pursue grants."

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OCF Celebrates 1st Year and 2010 Grant Recipients

By Andrea A. Firth



Pictured are Dick Burkhalter, V.P of the Orinda Community Foundation and Ted Urban a Community Liaison for the Foundation. Photo by Richard Westin

he Orinda Community Foundation (OCF) has awarded over \$23,000 in grants to community organizations and events for 2010. OCF grants helped to purchase two pieces of public art by the Library and Community Center, including the forever in flight frog over the fountain, and also provided funds for the Lamorinda Spirit Van, the Starlight

Village Players, the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, Orinda Idol, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, and Big Brothers and Sisters. The Foundation supported several community events and activities as well including the Orinda in Action Community Service Day, a youth writing contest sponsored by the Orinda Junior Woman's Club, a visiting the-

ater arts education program conducted through Cal Shakes and the Educational Foundation of Orinda, and the City's 25th anniversary celebration and July 4th parade.

The Foundation was established a year ago, because the City no longer had the resources to support these sorts of grants, says OCF President Richard Westin. "The first thing we did last spring was to send a letter to the community to explain the Foundation's mission and to ask for donations," he says adding, "We received hundreds of donations. It was really heartwarming." The Foundation also held a community golf tournament fundraiser in July that attracted over 100 participants and hosted the very popular Norcal Kids Triathlon. The OCF will host its 2nd annual golf tournament at Orinda Country Club on July 25th of this year and the third annual kids triathlon will be held on Saturday, August 27th, 2011.

To celebrate the first anniversary of the founding of the Orinda Community Foundation and its 2010 grant recipients, a reception will be held on Monday February 7th from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Orinda Library Gallery. All are welcome. For more information about the Orinda Community Foundation and how to donate, go to http://orindafoundation.org/ or call (925) 254-0800.

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"Within an eight-week period, I lost 22 lbs and eliminated my type- 2 diabetes." I am a 52 year old guy that came to Sheena weighing 208

lbs, which is too much for my 5 ft 10 in. height. I had a big gut with a 37 inch waist. I had recently been to the doctor and had been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes based on a triglyceride level of 379 mg/dl and a glucose level of 115 mg/dl. Given this information my wife and I decided to try the Living Lean program.

We began spinning classes two to three times a week, personnel training twice a week and riding our road bikes or skiing on the weekends. We changed our entire eating habits in accordance with Sheena's guidance. Within an 8 week period, I lost 22 lbs and reduced my

waist size to 33 inches. My recent blood tests indicate that I have eliminated the type 2 diabetes issues with a triglyceride level of 150 mg/dl and a glucose level of less than 100 mg/dl. I feel better than I can ever remember. I feel strong, energized and have an overall positive attitude. My wife has had similar positive results, and it has been very reinforcing to do the program together. Thank you Sheena! – Bill Rudolph



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Orinda's City Council members recently spent some time with new and repeating Governor Jerry Brown while in Sacramento attending the League of California Cities training. Pictured standing are City Manager Janet Keeter and Dean Orr, and seated are (from L) Amy Worth, Governor Brown, and Mayor Victoria Smith. Not pictured is Vice Mayor Steve Glazer who served as photographer.

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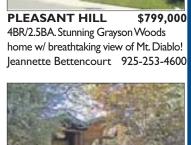
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April Matthews

Editor:

I must respond to Diana Stephens' recent letter since she repeats Steve Cohn's erroneous calculations purporting to "prove" that Orinda has been subsidizing Moraga's fire service. She claims, yet again, that Orinda has been subsidizing Moraga since the formation of the district in 1997 which is absolutely NOT TRUE. One faulty assumption has resulted in a totally incorrect conclusion.

Our city boundaries are not the same as MOFD's Moraga and Orinda service areas. All multi-city fire districts, including MOFD, ignore city limits and operate according to "areas of service." In the case of MOFD, there are 700 Orinda homes, all of which used to be part of the old Moraga Fire District, included in the service area of the two Moraga fire stations. LOGICALLY, ANY ACCURATE ANALYSIS OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES SHOULD USE THE AREA OF SERV-ICE, NOT CITY BOUNDARIES, IN DETERMINING WHETHER OR NOT CITIZENS ARE SUBSIDIZING THE OTHER'S SERVICE. If one were to make the appropriate analysis, using service area, not city boundaries, then the tax revenues collected in those 700 South Orinda homes should be accrued to the Moraga side of the ledger. Those 700 homes, plus those in the Town of Moraga, are paying the costs of running the two fire stations in Moraga. It could be argued that a significant portion of the tax revenues collected from the additional 800 Orinda homes that are first due for medical emergencies out of Moraga should also be accrued to the Moraga side of the ledger, especially since more than 70% of MOFD's calls are medical emergencies. Perhaps we should be arguing that Moraga has been subsidizing Orinda

In any case, every homeowner in California is paying the same 1% property tax rate. We are extremely fortunate that the citizens of Orinda and Moraga voted to tax themselves for fire service long before Prop 13 passed or we would be in the same dire financial straits as Contra Costa Fire, Pinole Fire, and East County Fire Districts now find them-

I have never heard, as Ms. Stephens claims, MOFD directors or Moraga Council members tell Orinda Council members that the "Orinda taxpayers' subsidy to Moraga is Orinda's problem." Rather, they have taken great pains to demonstrate that THERE IS NO SUBSIDY.

Yes, it is true that parts of Sleepy Hollow and the Downs have a longer response time than everyone would like which is the main reason Chief Bradley chose the Sleepy Hollow Homeowners Association to work with first on the new Firewise Communities program. It is my understanding that MOFD is exploring options to address this issue.

Yes, EBMUD's water pipes continue to be an issue. But, they are, after all, the property of EBMUD. Why aren't we going after the water district to fix its own pipes? Additionally, it is important to note MOFD has purchased water tankers to compensate for the inadequate water flow in some areas of Orinda.

THE CITY COUNCIL DOES NOT NEED TO FORM YET AN-OTHER CITIZENS' TASK FORCE TO STUDY NON-EXISTENT ISSUES --- AGAIN. Citizen's concerns should be taken directly to our elected representatives on the MOFD Board – local control at its best. It is unreasonable and unrealistic to suggest we take revenues from MOFD and give them to the City. It is time to move on and find practical ways of generating revenue to re-build our roads and infrastructure.

Ellen Dale Orinda

Editor:

There are two parts of the proposed Moraga Adobe plan which could do extreme damage to all of Orinda.

The first of these is the hazard of golf balls falling on the Adobe development from the adjacent elevated Moraga Country Club Golf Course. The capacity of these golf balls to cause injury is shown by the fact that the Claxtons, the former owners of the Adobe property, had to move their horses to another location because of their injuries from falling golf balls. The Developers have suggested planting trees as a solution for the golf ball problem. This might work 30 years from now but is useless in the present.

To have adequate golf ball protection a 50-foot high net must be installed by the Developers and maintained by them for the next 30 years.

techmem:

Keep in mind that one of these falling golf balls hitting the top of the head of a young child could paralyze him for life. Since the City of Orinda allowed this known hazard, the City would be responsible for the cost of caring for the child, and this cost could bankrupt Orinda.

A second major hazard from the proposed development is that there is only one entry and exit road in the development and the development is on slide-prone land. An earthquake would very likely close the road of the development which would keep the fire trucks out and the residents trapped inside. If, as is likely, a fire breaks out, not only would the development burn but the immediately adjacent brush-covered hillside would ignite. This could quickly become a fire storm such as the Great Oakland Fire and burn down all of Orinda since the brush has never been cut on the western hillsides of Orinda.

The solution to this problem is to require a second road into the development. This road could connect to existing adjacent Dolores Way, a public road. The Developer should make this connection.

Clyde Vaughn Orinda

Editor:

etters to the Editor

town (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only), and should be 350 words or less.

On December 9, 2010, I mailed the following letter to Ms. Kathy Foulkes, Director, East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). Since Ms. Foulkes has not responded to my letter, I thought perhaps I could use your publication to direct my questions to all EBMUD Directors and to appropriate management. At the same time, other water users and rate payers may be interested in EBMUD's response: Dear Ms. Foulkes:

I read "East Bay Water 2010" with considerable interest. It contains 21 pages of information about water conservation, water transfers, water desalinization, water banking, water recycling, water partnering, and . .. Have I left anything out?

Twenty-one pages of information about how to address potential and probable water shortages . . . but not one word about our water user

One can only guess at the tens of millions of dollars EBMUD will spend testing and trying and experimenting and probing for ways to stretch our water supplies. My guess would be that for less than one thousand dollars EBMUD directors could write letters to various federal and state executives and legislators pointing out that much of the costly testing, trying, experimenting, and probing you will be doing would be unnecessary if America and California would end their perpetual and accelerating population growth.

If America's population doubles and redoubles in this century as it virtually did in the last century, odds are good that California's and Northern California's populations will also double and redouble. Should that happen in EBMUD's territory, how far will all the costly testing, trying, experimenting, and probing take us?

Isn't it time for some brave directors in some embattled water district somewhere to stand up and tell it like it is? Does EBMUD have such brave directors?

Cordially, Edward C. Hartman

Editor:

Moraga

The Lamorinda community lost a treasure, with the passing of Diane Hurst. She had art exhibits and sold artwork, flowers and produce from her little farm on Saint Marys Road. My condolences to all of her friends and family. She will be missed.

Bruce R. Peterson Lafayette

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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.



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pleased with our defensive effort,

especially on the boards the first three quarters. We had a tough

week with four games but accom-

plished what we needed to accom-

plish in winning all four." Sopak

looks forward to the upcoming

match-ups against the top competi-

tion in the league. He said, "Now

the fun begins with Dougherty Val-

ley and Campolindo coming up.

We are getting healthy and I am ex-

cited to see what we can do in the

February 4th while Campolindo

hosts Dublin. Meanwhile Mira-

monte travels to Las Lomas. Ri-

valry games recommence on

February 8th when Miramonte

travels to Campolindo.

Acalanes hosts Alhambra on

coming weeks."

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Lamorinda Sports & Schools

Miramonte Boys' Basketball Splits Series with Acalanes

Lady Mats defeat Lady Dons

By Conrad Bassett



Stephen Collins (21) drives to the basket through Miramonte defenders Anthony Piganelli (1) and Matt Lim (4). Photo Jordan Fong



Kiran Shastri (21) pushes the ball up court

Photo Jodan Fong

he second half of the Diablo Foothill Athletic League basketball season has started and the three Lamorinda schools are jockeying for the opportunity to return to the post-season. In Orinda last Friday night, Acalanes boys came to avenge an earlier loss to Miramonte. Acalanes' girls did not have as much luck as the boys. They lost to the Lady Mats for the second time this season, although keeping the game much closer this time

The Miramonte boys' varsity edged the Dons 62-60 on the road earlier in the month and Acalanes did not want to have to play catchup again. Behind the sharp shooting pair of seniors Stephen Collins and Michael Jackson, the Dons opened up a 14-9 lead after one period and increased it to 33-16 off of a three by junior James Griffin late in the second quarter.

Not to be outdone, Miramonte came clawing back in the second half. Senior Anthony Piganelli muscled inside for six third period points and at the end of the period the Dons' lead was down to 11.

The teams traded baskets early in the fourth period as junior Ross Anderson scored 10 of his game-high 20 points including a banked-in three pointer to cut the lead to 56-50 with 3:10 to go. The Mats closed the lead to four with 21 seconds to play but Collins and Griffin each calmly hit two free throws to seal the 61-54 win.

Collins finished with eight rebounds to go with his 17 points. Griffin had 12 points. Anderson added ten rebounds for a doubledouble in the loss.

Dons head coach Darrell Hirashima Jr. felt good about his teamwide effort. "Stephen Collins was shooting well and hustling all over the court with rebounds, assists, and steals." He also noted, "This was a big win for us as the team is improving at the right time of the year as we finish the DFAL season and prepare for the NCS playoffs."

On the girls' side, Acalanes kept this game much closer than their first meeting when they lost by 27 at home. In arguably the toughest league in Northern California, the Lady Dons fell 57-46 to Mira-

The Matadors were led early by junior Janine Loutzenhiser who drilled two threes and fellow junior Taylor Kizziee who hit a base line three point shot in the first period to open Miramonte's domination. Kizziee worked double duty, performing the national anthem before both the boys and girls games.

The first period ended at 14-9 with Miramonte in the lead and the Mats doubled the lead to ten at the half. The Dons made a mini-run to open the third as senior Kiara Harewood hit two free throws and junior Sophie Taylor a basket but the Mats' senior Lisa Katz answered with two quick baskets and Miramonte scored 23 of the next 30 points to build a 22 point lead at the end of three quarters.

In the final period, the Dons came back to cut the lead to 11, but fell short. Harewood led the Dons with 20 points while Loutzenhiser had 18 for Miramonte. Alyssa Johanson added 13.

Head coach of Miramonte, Kelly Sopak said of the win, "I was

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Janine Loutzenhiser (50)



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Saint Mary's Basketball Struggles on the Road **By Bryant West**



Rob Jones (22) notched 18 points against his former team, USD.

n the span of two days, the Saint Mary's Gaels played their best game and then their worst game. They went from stunning a Spokane crowd with a win over the WCC-dominant Gonzaga Bulldogs to witnessing the Portland fans rush the court after the Pilots beat them

In a four game stretch that featured two games of great basketball and two games of not-so-great basketball, Saint Mary's bested San Diego at 67-56 in Moraga, lost on the road to Vanderbilt at 89-70, beat heated rival Gonzaga 73-71 in Spokane, and were downed by the Pilots 85-70.

"We just did a bad job preparing and executing," head coach Randy Bennett said after the loss in Portland. "I was proud of our guys. They competed to get that thing back reasonable... (but) We were never a threat to win the game."

San Diego sits last in the conference but gave the Gaels a fight. Still, Saint Mary's prevailed 67-56. Junior Rob Jones, who played his first two years at San Diego before transferring, led the Gaels with 18 points and 13 boards. With the score tied at 33-33 with 14:48 to play, Jones hit a three that started the Gaels' run and put them up for good.

On Saturday, January 22nd the Gaels got off to a good start in Tennessee before Vanderbilt took over, giving the Gaels their third loss of the season at 89-70. Sophomore guard Matthew Dellavedova led the way with 19 points and four assists but Saint Mary's couldn't stop the Commodores' offense, allowing them to shoot 52 percent from the field and 50 percent from downtown.

Saint Mary's held a 19-13 lead after a three from Jones with 12:58 to go in the half, but Vanderbilt outscored the Gaels 30-9 the rest of the period and held a 43-28 lead at halftime. The Gaels managed to cut into the lead multiple times- narrowing it to seven at 67-60 after a dunk by Jones with 7:38 to play - but Vanderbilt never relinquished the lead.

The difficult road trip continued to Spokane. The Gaels have never beat Gonzaga in their building in Bennett's tenure. But thanks to senior guard Mickey Mc-Connell's late game heroics – hitting a game winning shot around Bulldogs' center Robert Sacre with 1.2 seconds to play - the Gaels managed a stunning victory that silenced the rarely silent Kennel. Gonzaga was 44-1 in conference play at home to that point – losing only once before, to the Gaels in 1995.

"Gonzaga is a good team," Bennett said afterwards. "I felt like we beat a good Gonzaga team. We played well... we are happy as heck to get out of here with a win."

McConnell led the Gaels with 27 points, six assists and four boards, while Jones added 15 points and 13 boards. Sacre led the 17 and eight boards, while guard Steven Gray had 14 before fouling out with four minutes to play.

"We wanted to get one shot and that was the last shot so that was the main thing," McConnell said. "We wanted to switch Sacre and get the mismatch."

That was exactly what the Gaels got. Zags' guard Marquise Carter hit two free throws with 10 seconds to play that tied the game at 71-71. McConnell took the ball up, and a screen later found himself guarded by Sacre. He curved his body around the seven-foot center, shot a 10 foot jumper off- handed, and hit the game winner with 1.2 seconds to play.

But perhaps the victory over rival Gonzaga left the Gaels a little bit on the weary side as they lost to Portland 85-70 on Saturday. Portland used a 27-2 run to start the second half that buried the Gaels, and the Saint Mary's run – the Gaels cut it to eight at 76-68 with 51 seconds left in the game – came too late.

When asked if the tough trip

Mickey McConnell (32) hit the game winner against Gonzaga Photo Tod Fierne

had fatigued the Gaels, McConnell said he didn't think it had. "I think our guys felt alright. It is just a normal road trip... We really just didn't defend and do the little things we needed to do to get this win."

To the Pilots' credit, they have bested the Gaels in each of their past two meetings in Portland, but have both years been knocked out of the Conference tournament by Saint Mary's. McConnell had a career night, scoring 32 in the loss

but the Gaels shot just 39 percent from the field.

The Gaels sit at 6-1 in conference, one game ahead of second place San Francisco at 5-2. Both Santa Clara and Gonzaga have a 4-3 conference record, but the Broncos currently rest in third thanks to win over the Zags earlier this month. Saint Mary's returns home this week, taking on Pepperdine on Thursday and a Saturday matchup with Loyola Marymount.



Masters Swimmers Finish Top in "Go The Distance" Event

Submitted by Richard K. Jacobberger



After a workout at Oakwood Athletic Club

afayette City Council member and former Mayor Don Tatzin (58) was the overall champion for the 2010 United States Masters Swimming (USMS) "Go The Distance" event. Tatzin finished first in the nation having swam 1,798.18 miles in 2010. He improved on

Photo provided his 1,543.21 miles from 2009 which also qualified him for first place. Tatzin was the only

swimmer to exceed 1,500

Susan Skilton (52) swam 735.42 miles to finish 42nd overall and fourth in her age group. Skilton was one of only 209 swimmers nationwide to exceed 500 miles this year.

The "Go The Distance" event is the fastest growing USMS program, doubling participation ever year; more than 2,200 members participate logging a total of over 425,000 miles.

The event is a self-di-

rected program aimed at encouraging Masters swimmers to exercise regularly. There is no time limit for the distance milestones. The program is based on the honor system with swimmers logging the distance swam on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

SMC Gaels Home Game Schedule



www.SMCGaels.com

Thu, Feb 3 MBB PEPPERDINE McKeon Pavilion 7:00 PM Sat, Feb 5 MBB LOYOLA MARYMOUNT McKeon Pavilion 5:00 PM Wed, Feb 9 MTEN San Francisco Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 3:00 PM Thu, Feb 10 WBB Santa Clara McKeon Pavilion 7:00 p.m. Sat, Feb 12 WBB San Francisco McKeon Pavilion 2:00 p.m. Fri, Feb 18 WTEN Pacific Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 2:00 PM

> Schedule is subject to change. Confirm at www.SMCGaels.com

Fri, Feb 18 MTEN Idaho Timothy Korth Tennis Complex 3:00 PM

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It Only Takes One

Dons defeat rival Campolindo, 1-0

By Alex Crook



Sam Palano (25) struggles with Bryan Berlier (3) for control

Photo Doug Kohen

n a chilly January 26th, a rivalry was renewed on the pitch as undefeated Campolindo hosted Acalanes in a boys' soccer matchup.

The Cougars came into the match on a two-game winning streak, while Acalanes looked to snap a single game skid, a loss to Berkeley. Campo sat atop the DFAL standings having defeated the Dons in their December 10th matchup, while the Dons came into the match at number two; things were about to change.

There were some great chances for both teams in the opening forty minutes, as both the Dons and Cougars went back and forth exchanging missed opportunities.

Late in the opening half, Campo senior captain Jaison Kimura was awarded a free kick which was blocked. Kimura quickly recovered the ball and floated the rebound over Dons junior goalkeeper Jackson Foote for the easy goal. But after some reviewing by the referees, the goal was waved off, and the game remained scoreless.

Campo finished off the half with a few chances, but could not capitalize, and both teams went to halftime without a goal.

The second half picked up where the first left off, with tremendous effort and physicality. But

Acalanes senior forward and captain Nick Pereira received a great pass from the middle of the field and easily converted it into a goal to put the Dons up 1-0. That was the spark Acalanes

seven minutes into the second half,

needed and they controlled the tempo the rest of the way.

Campo put together a late surge, but it was not enough to overcome the Dons' defense.

Acalanes held on to take down their rivals from Moraga, 1-0. With the win the Dons take sole possession of first place in DFALalthough each team only carries one loss, the Dons have one tie to the Cougars two.

"They had their chances but it came down to execution like we expected. They had control of the game in the beginning but once the game got going it was very even. Our attitude didn't change much in the second half, except we were more focused about defense after the goal," said Pereira, whose lone goal sparked the Dons to victory. Pereira currently leads Acalanes with six goals on the year.

After the loss, Cougar senior goalkeeper Alex Mangels said, "It's tough, but it's really hard to go undefeated the entire season. Not a lot of teams can do it. We thought we could, but clearly tonight we just weren't on top of our game. We were outplayed a little bit, and it just took that one goal to put us away."

Up next, the Dons look to stay hot as they take on Alhambra in Martinez, while Campo tries to get back on track when they visit

Fellow Lamorinda rival Miramonte is hanging in there with a 4-7-3 record, most recently coming off of a 2-1 loss to Dougherty Valley. The Mats currently sit in sixth place in DFAL.



Adrian Chow-danel (4) heads the ball

Photo Doug Kohen

Stanley Wildcats Seventh Grade Girls' **Basketball**

Submitted by Lyenne Denny

Stanley Middle

grade girls' basketball team School Wildcats seventh captured the league champi-



Top Row: JulieAnne Martin, Grace Deskin, Alex Grant Hudd, Hannah Roberts, Maddy Ponzo, Julia Lyons, Bella Denny, Carly Porep, Middle Row: Coach Marcus Payne Bottom Row: Kenny Souza and Grace Bolen Photo provided

onship with a win over Piedmont Middle school on January 20 at Martinez Junior High. The Wildcats entered post-season play with a 7-2 record. The Wildcats split the series with championship opponents Piedmont Middle School. The championship game was a similar battle, but the Wildcats edged out a 24-22 victory. Kenny Souza earned the MVP award for the championship game while JulieAnne Martin was selected the tournament All-Around MVP.

The Wildcats defeated Piedmont B and Benicia to reach the championship game.

Lamorinda Schools

Lafayette School District Saves Money with Green Initiatives

By Sophie Braccini



The Green Team checks the new energy efficient lights in the Stanley Gym

Photo Steve Richard

ince its first meeting about a year ago, the Green Group of the Lafayette School District has been working with a single mandate: find opportunities to save money that also make sense from a sustainability perspective. Green Group parent volunteers recently presented to the School Board some possible changes, both large and small, that they say could save the District one million dollars over the next ten years.

At the beginning of the 2009/2010 school year, Sustainable Lafayette organized a green summit with schools and public agencies to start identifying possible ways to save money by using less energy, less water and producing less waste. After the meeting, the District Green Team was formed, composed of Superintendent Fred Brill, Rob Davies (District Operations Manager), school board members Art Kapoor and Shayne Silva, Springhill Principal Bruce Wodhams, and Sustainable Lafayette members Barbara Williams, Ann Johnston and Steve Richard. They decided to meet once a month and identify money-saving green opportunities for the district.

"Our big chance was that Ann (Johnston) was able to secure for the district a 'Bright School Program,' a free audit offered by the Department of Energy," explains Williams. "The result was a 175page report that listed areas where improvements could be made, the detailed cost associated with the changes and the payback period." Report in hand, the Green Team selected the projects with a return-oninvestment (ROI) period of 10 years or less.

"In the area of energy, we identified \$71,000 per year of saving opportunities with a short ROI, \$33,000 of potential savings on water use and \$20,000 on the waste management bill. The total of \$124,000 a year represents about 25% of the total cost of these posts in 2009," says Williams.

In the area of energy, the first recommendation was to replace the lights in the gym at Stanley Middle School. That project has already been completed, with a ROI period of less than a year, and much better lighting quality in the facility. "This is a win-win-win solution," explains Brill, "and now we are going to expand the replacement to the entire district."

One of the elements that made the move possible was that Williams and Johnston found a nointerest federal loan for the school to purchase the lights. "There are incentives, rebates, financial opportunities that we can take advantage of," states Williams.

"We are incredibly eager to move in the direction of more sustainable ways to manage our operations," says Brill, "but I'm not sure that staff had the possibility to do the study and research. The parents volunteers did all the behind the scene project management and they have been spectacular in that work. These are selfless individuals who are truly making a difference."

Many changes have already

been made and more are coming as the Green Team continues its research and pulls other resources. For example, free faucet aerators provided by EBMUD were installed and are reducing that water use by 50%; the boiler time-clock can be replaced for about \$600 and will produce \$5,500/year in sav-

Some of the recommendations will take more time to implement. For example, 70% of the district's water usage is for landscaping. "We are meeting with EBMUD to perform a detailed review of the timed watering system," explains Williams. Another measure is the planting, in front of the District office, of a drought tolerant garden by parent volunteer Brad Crane.

With only a 13% diversion rate there is room for improvement in the district's waste management plan. But most of the waste comes from lunches, meaning from food that is sent from homes - this is not an area that Brill is ready to regulate, "our policy will be to encourage, raise awareness and educate," he says.

The Green Team will continue its work and Brill sees the parent volunteers as long term partners. "We thought we would be done after the first year," says Sustainable Lafayette co-founder Steve Richard, "but we are motivated as parents. We have no agenda, only the desire to identify opportunities while the District decides to take advantage of them, or not."

Troop 237 Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Sandra McGonigle



left to right: Kyle Weikert, John Palmer, Kevin Yee, Kelly McGonigle Photo provided

oy Scouts of America Troop 237 is pleased to announce that four new Eagle Scouts have joined the Troop's Eagle family. Kelly McGonigle, John Palmer, Kyle Weikert and Kevin Yee, who are Orinda residents and juniors at Miramonte High School, were honored at BSA Troop 237's Eagle

Court of Honor on Sunday January

9, 2011. Scoutmaster Eric Jorgensen presented the Eagle awards, the highest rank in Scouting. Their Eagle projects are described below:

Kelly Joseph McGonigle conducted a backpack drive to benefit the Global Health Access Program based in Berkeley. Over 175 used backpacks were collected, cleaned and repaired for delivery to the Mae Sot Medical Clinic, on the

Thailand/Burma border.

John Kingsland Palmer dismantled and rebuilt two baseball backstops at Del Rey Elementary School in Orinda, benefiting both Del Rey School and the Orinda Baseball Association.

Kyle Robert Weikert designed, built and installed a large redwood shade arbor at Sleepy Hollow Elementary School in Orinda and dedicated it to a long-time teacher there, Kay Aaker. Kyle also re-graded the area underneath the arbor and installed a moss rocklined pathway.

Kevin Mark Yee designed and built a table and bench benefiting the City of Orinda and the Christian Science Church. The project involved cutting, sanding and staining the redwood supports set in cement and transporting the 400-lb moss rock slab tabletop.

Boy Scouts of America Troop 237, chartered by the Orinda Community Church, has been serving the Orinda community for over 58 years and has recognized 180 Eagle Scouts over its history. Each Eagle candidate must earn a minimum of 21 merit badges, including 12 Eagle-required badges. They must also demonstrate leadership, outdoor skills, Scout spirit plus successfully complete a service project with a minimum of 100 volunteer hours to earn the Eagle award.

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The Campolindo High School Orchestra

he excitement is building among the students of the Campolindo Orchestra who are looking forward to their upcoming performance tour to Beijing, China, this April. Lamorindans will have a chance to share in the fun and to hear the program the Orchestra will perform on the tour at a special benefit concert on February 24th.

The Orchestra will perform

Aaron Copland's Appalachian Spring and J.S. Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, with special arrangements of crossover pieces by guest artist Jeremy Cohen, an award winning, Grammy nominated violinist. Internationally recognized author and musician Barry Green will lead The Green Man Group Bass Ensemble during a special intermission. Cohen and Green

Photo provided are frequent visitors to the orchestra during the school year.

The suggested donation of \$10 helps the orchestra with its tour fundraising. Benstein says the China tour is, "A chance of a lifetime for our young musicians. The students have the opportunity to share the universal art of music with a foreign audience, bringing some uniquely American music to the Chinese."

But this trip is about more than performing in a different country. According to Benstein the young musicians, "Will have the opportunity to combine with a Chinese Youth Orchestra and perform together. Bridging the cultural and political differences and uniting with the sheer force and beauty of music. Additionally we all take the responsibility of representing our instrumental program, our school, community, state and nation in an outstanding manner." L.Borrowman

Campolindo Orchestra Benefit Performance

February 24th, 7:30PM Campolindo Performing Arts Center 300 Moraga Road, Moraga Suggested donation \$10

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SCHOOL CALENDAR

Acalanes Union

High School District Board Room AUHSD Office 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette

TONIGHT: Wednesday, February 2, 7:30pm Next: Wednesday, February 16, 7:30pm

Lafayette School District

LAFSD Office 3477 School Street, Lafayette Wednesday, February 9, 7pm

Orinda Union School District

OUSD Office 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda

Monday, February 14, 4pm **Moraga School District**

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga

Tuesday, February 8, at 7:30pm

Registration for Orinda students entering Kindergarten for the 2011-2012 school year will take place February 7-10; in Moraga, registration will be March 3-4.

Orinda – February 7-10 from 9am-1pm at these schools:

Del Rey Elementary 25 El Camino Moraga, 258-3099

Glorietta Elementary 15 Martha Road, 254-8770

Sleepy Hollow Elementary 20 Washington Lane, 254-8711

Wagner Ranch Elementary 350 Camino Pablo, 258-0016

Information regarding Orinda registration requirements is available at www.orindaschools.org.

Moraga - March 3-4 at these schools and times:

Camino Pablo Elementary

9-11:45am, and 1:15-3:00pm 1111 Camino Pablo, 376-4435

Los Perales Elementary

9am-2pm 22 Wakefield Drive, 631-0105

Rheem Elementary

9am-2pm

90 Laird Drive, 376-4441

Information regarding Moraga registration requirements is available at

www.moraga.k12.ca.us.

The University of California Changes the Way It Evaluates Students

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

he University of California announced some policy and admission requirement changes for students applying next year and beyond. These modifications should not change the way our students prepare for college. All college admissions offices are looking for bright and diverse students. Students should work hard in school and actively explore and demonstrate their interests both in and outside of the school environment. Although academic strength is important, every college in the country tries each year to build a wellrounded freshman class that includes budding scientists, talented musicians and athletes, communityminded individuals as well as students hailing from all parts of the nation and the world.

Combined with some old misconceptions that persist around high school corridors, the changes to UC admission requirements can be somewhat confusing. In this article I will clarify the updated UC admission requirements and emphasize how they affect students in our community.

Students Who Are Entitled to Comprehensive Review

All California high school seniors who fulfill 3 basic requirements will be entitled to a comprehensive review of their applications at each UC campus to which they apply. These requirements are:

- Complete 15 UC-required college-preparatory courses (the "a – g" courses) with 11 of these completed prior to the start of 12th grade. Courses taken in summer after junior year will be considered as part of the appli-
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better (based on a fully weighted academic GPA in these courses)
- Submit scores from the ACT with Writing or the SAT Reasoning Test

In essence this policy means that all students who meet these 3 eligibility requirements will have their applications reviewed comprehensively by the UC campuses to which they apply and these students will compete with everyone else for available seats. A comprehensive review means that students' academic and personal accomplishments will be assessed as well as the educational contexts in which they achieved them.

Students Who Receive Guaranteed Admission

Among these applicants two groups of students will be guaranteed admission. Students who are in the top 9 percent of their graduating class or in the top 9 percent of all high school graduates (based on a fully weighted academic GPA) will be guaranteed a place at one of the UC campuses, although not specifically to their first choice school. This is a substantial change in guaranteed admissions (from the original 4 percent) and allows students in all high schools to focus on learning and doing well. It is intended to level the playing field and give more California students a greater opportunity to receive an offer of admission to a UC campus.

UC Drops SAT Subject Test Requirement The UC used to require scores from

the SAT or ACT as well as two SAT Subject Tests from different disciplines. The SAT Subject Tests are intensive one hour exams that test a student's proficiency in a specific content area, such as history, biology or mathematics. The UC still requires students to take the SAT or ACT with Writing, but it has eliminated the Subject Test requirement starting with students applying for fall 2012 admission.

Although our students are not required to take and submit scores from SAT Subject Tests, they can still choose to submit Subject Test scores for consideration as part of the application. It is important to know that the UC may still recommend one or more Subject Tests for certain majors. For example, students who want to major in engineering may need to take the SAT Subject Test in math to demonstrate proficiency. Those who apply should carefully check requirements and recommendations for each major. Students in our community

often take two or even three SAT

Subject Tests in different disciplines. This prepares them for competitive college admissions to both the UC and many other selective universities. Although some colleges have reduced or eliminated Subject Test requirements, many selective schools still require or strongly recommend them. For example, Georgetown University strongly recommends three Subject Tests and MIT requires two. One reason the UC system

eliminated the SAT Subject Test requirement is because studies indicate that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to take SAT Subject Tests. The UC decided not to hamper applications from these students. That does not change the fact that SAT Subject Test scores give schools another objective way to make academic assessments. If a student attends a high school where relevant coursework is available (e.g. AP and honors classes in subject areas covered by SAT Subject tests) and the student has the resources (e.g., time, motivation, money) to prepare for and take the exams, good scores will add value to the college application.

For more detailed information on undergraduate admission requirements visit

http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions and under freshman admission.



Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D. is an educational consultant and certified college admissions advisor. Her goal is to help students and their families understand the admissions process, research college and career options, create a customized college list and submit a strong and cohesive application. Dr. LaScala is a member of NACAC, WACAC, and HECA and earned a certification in College Admissions and Career Planning from University of California at Berkeley. Contact her at (925) 891-4491 or elizabeth@doingcollege.com.

Lafayette Parcel Tax for Schools on May Ballot

... continued from page A1

She said that schools are not being adequately funded by the state, but the District still needs to provide a quality education that parents expect.

Not only are severe cuts coming from Sacramento, but there is a timing issue that exacerbates the problem. According to School Services, an organization that advises school districts, there will be a \$330 per pupil cut, which roughly equals \$1 million District-wide. This is in addition to \$2 million that has been cut over the last two years. Required notification only complicates the dilemma. The Lafayette School District is required to notify teachers by March 15 if there is the possibility of a layoff, and yet a final state budget is not anticipated

until June. How can the District know if they will have money to pay teachers if they have no idea what the budget will be?

At a recent meeting addressing the Lafayette Elementary school PTA, District Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill said, "The budget is very unsatisfying for a number of reasons - there is extra ordinary uncertainly."

"I take an incremental approach - we want to protect core systems to keep a program of the highest quality." With 89% of budget going to personnel costs, with continued cuts, teachers and aides will feel the brunt of the budget ax. There have already been cuts to custodial services and school

maintenance; teachers have taken two furlough days and administrators took three furlough days.

Last week, Brill explained that the problem is the state budget is based on a lot of questionable assumptions that may or may not pan out. "A parcel tax gives us revenue that can't be taken away by the state."

As California faces a \$25.6 billion budget deficit over the next year and a half, it's clear that something has to give. Just last week in a poll by the Public Policy Institute of California, a non-profit non-partisan think tank, 71% of likely voters responded that they were willing to pay higher taxes to support kindergarten through 12th grade education.

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Lee and Grant Exhibit Opens at Saint Mary's College

By Sophie Braccini

he *Lee and Grant* exhibition opened last weekend at Saint Mary's College Hearst Art Gallery in Moraga and will continue until March 20th. Organized by the NEH On The Road, a special initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the exhibition explores one of the most critical decades in American history through the lives of the two rival generals who led the opposing forces.

Saint Mary's College (SMC) is the only Californian location where this traveling exhibition of national importance will be shown. It includes many original documents and artifacts and will feature a live reenactment, complete with skirmishes and cannon fire, on the SMC grounds on March 19th. Local schools are invited to take advantage of the material and lesson plans provided by the Gallery.

"The Civil War, its drama, heroes, and its meanings, are important for all Americans to keep in view," says SMC professor and Civil War specialist Dr. Carl Guarneri, "But here in California the Civil War can seem a distant thing, both in time and space. It's something that happened 'back east,' we tend to think, and had little to do with California. That's not true, of course. California played an important role as a ground of struggle between the North and South for the state's allegiance, and once the state went for the Union it contributed disproportionately large amounts of troops and money to the cause. This exhibit and supporting events help to make the Civil War more present and vivid to northern Californians."

The Lee and Grant exhibition is toured by Mid-America Arts Alliance and was developed by the Virginia Historical Society. "We were lucky that I heard about it at a conference and got Saint Mary's on the waiting list," says Heidi Donner, Public Information & Educational Programs Manager at the Hearst Art Gallery. Donner believes that the presence on campus of Professor Guarneri was one of the reasons why the College got the show.

The exhibition contains material appropriate for all ages and level of knowledge. "It is even more student-friendly than I thought," noted Guarneri after its installation on campus, "there are a lot of interactive kiosks, reproduced uniforms and tents, quizzes, and questions. A key tactic seems to be to make students, from elementary grades on, evaluate history for themselves."

According to Guarneri the exhibit is particularly interesting for two reasons. First, it views the Civil War through the actions and per-

sonalities of its two leading military heroes, allowing visitors to compare and contrast Lee and Grant as men, generals, and representative types of the South and North, respectively. "Lee was the aristocratic, Christian slaveholder with a strong record and reputation who was out to defend his personal honor and regional loyalty, while Grant was an average and rather unsuccessful northern soldier and businessman who rose quite unexpectedly to greatness by harnessing the Union's vast resources behind a patriotic fight to save the nation," said Guarneri, "They had very different attitudes toward slavery, which is something this exhibit shows and which tends to get buried in all the adulation of Lee."

The second new thing about this exhibit is its focus on how these men were remembered and commemorated long after the war. Whether they were seen as heroes or disappointments depended, over the years, on such factors as people's continued devotion to the Union or the "Lost Cause," lingering comparisons with the two presidents, Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, on the desire for reconciliation between the North and South, and by the second half of the twentieth century, on a renewed sense that the cause of ending slavery was just and overdue.

The Gallery hopes to attract school groups to the exhibit. "The exhibition is free for children (the cost for adults is \$4), and we will give tours to school groups who reserve ahead of time," says Donner, "teachers can get the lessons plans before coming to visit and we will keep them available even after the exhibition is over."

On opening day Guarneri presented the lecture, "Only a Question of Time and Patience: An Inside View of Grant's Campaign against Lee," and displays by members of the National Civil War Association [NCWA] in period costume were included in the day's program. Guarneri will deliver the lecture again in mid-February. He is finishing a book on the Civil War portraying the war as seen through Lincoln's "eyes," Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana.

On March 19th a reenactment of the Civil War will take place on campus. This offers a chance to tour the camps and learn first-hand about weapons, food, army life, telegraph operations, and Civil War medicine. "Cannons blasting show that the war used modern technology to raise the level of violence and destruction," explains Guarneri, "Skirmishes in a small way evoke the noise, confusion, individual heroism, and carnage of war."







Moraga Orinda

Board of Directors Meetings

Directors are open to the public and

take place on the third Wednesday of

Meetings of the MOFD Board of

each month in the Board Room,

Next meeting(s):

February 16th, 6:30pm

Regular Board Meeting,

Station 41 (1280 Moraga

for more information)

(go to www.mofd.org as the meeting date approaches

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Two Promoted From Within MOFD Firefighting Ranks

By Lucy Amaral



MOFD Fire Chief Randy Bradley congratulates recently promoted Sean Perkins and Dan Dick at a badge pinning ceremony held January 17. From left: Battalion Chief Stephen Healy, Battalion Chief Sean Perkins, Captain Dan Dick, and Fire Chief Randy Bradley.

oraga Orinda Fire District's (MOFD) Fire Chief, Randy Bradley, welcomed newly promoted Battalion Chief Sean Perkins and Fire Captain Dan Dick at a badge pinning ceremony held January 19.

Perkins has been a firefighter since 1987. He joined Moraga Fire District in 1990, working his way up the ranks from firefighter to captain before being promoted to battalion chief. He is a Certified Chief Officer, Fire Investigator and a Strike Team Leader with the State Fire Marshal's office. Perkins, who replaces retiring Battalion Chief Randy Trumpf, will

be assigned to Station 45 in Orinda.

Dick joined MOFD as a reserve firefighter in 2004 and was hired full-time in 2006. He served as "long-term" acting Captain since 2010 before being officially promoted to the position. Dick, a Moraga native, currently serves on MOFD's committee that reviews, coordinates and processes MOFD policies and procedures, and is one of three program managers for MOFD's reserve training program. Dick will fill the position vacated by the promotion of Perkins and has been assigned to Station 42 in Moraga.

Apollo E-Cigs has its Home in Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



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Robert Freeman, with the latest version of the Apollo e-cig

f you've seen the recently released film, "The Tourist," you probably noticed Johnny Depp vaping an electronic cigarette. His character explains that he is not actually smoking a tobacco cigarette, but an e-cigarette, and that all he is releasing is water vapor. We will not be discussing product placement in movies in this article (nor do we endorse the smoking or vaping of anything), but our readers might be interested to learn that one of these companies, Apollo e-cigarettes, runs its American operation from Lafayette. We paid them a visit.

Electronic cigarettes have also been called e-cigs and vapor cigarettes. It is a small hand-held device that looks and performs like a tobacco cigarette. Its primary

Photo Sophie Braccini functions are to deliver nicotine while providing the physical experience of sucking up and releasing water vapor smoke. The e-cig does not contain tobacco, does not burn anything and is powered by a rechargeable lithium battery. When the user inhales, the heating element, the atomizer, automatically vaporizes some of the flavored liquid solution that's contained in the mouthpiece. The four levels of nicotine vary from very strong to non-existent (in the nicotine-free

The product is controversial. In July 2009, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) tested two brands of e-cigs and issued a press release discouraging the use of electronic cigarettes; while a review of

flavored options).

the FDA study by scientific consulting firm Exponent, Inc., concluded that the FDA's study did not support the claims of potential adverse health effects from the use of electronic cigarettes.

Rick Lee is one of the founders of Apollo; he lives in Lafayette where he is raising his family. "I live in Lafayette and love Lafayette," he says, "so naturally we (the partners) chose Lafayette to rent our office. Lafayette is also a community that leads and stands out in living a healthier lifestyle. We believe personal vaporizers (e-cigs) are a better alternative than tobacco cigarettes. So our company should have a good fit in this community. We will also create job opportunities in the community."

Another of the founders was manufacturing personal vaporizers for about four years in China, where the Apollo e-cigs are presently made. He teamed up with Lee and decided to start up a new company in the US to build their own brand and directly service their own customers. "We are not only doing R&D, manufacturing, quality control, but also doing direct sales and marketing for the US market," says Lee, who believes that this business model allows them to better service the American market.

Apollo's manager, Robert Freeman, is the person you will speak to when you call the

Lafayette office. A heavy smoker himself, the young man in his early thirties lives with his e-cig in his pocket. "This is not a device to quit smoking," he explains, "It delivers nicotine. But I have noticed many positive changes since I replaced my 1 ½ packages a day with my ecig." Freeman first noticed the return of his sense of smell. "I was in the check-out line at the grocery store when I suddenly picked up the smell of a customer a few people ahead of me, I couldn't believe I used to stink that way!" As a matter of fact, his office where he puffs on his e-cig does not smell of anything at all. Freeman says that his sense of taste is back and that he does not have that heavy feel when he takes his first breath when he wakes up. "E-cigs is my alternative to quitting and to smoking cigarettes," he says.

As the first contact with new customers Freeman savs he makes sure not to sell to minors. If he has any doubts about an order he personally calls the customer and has a prepared series of questions to assess their real age. "It would break my heart to see kids picking up smoking with e-cigs," he says.

According to Lee and Freeman, most of Apollo's customers are over age 45 and have been smoking for years, they switch to ecigs for economic and perceived health reason. For Freeman, the

major benefit of the e-cigarette is that it does not contain the thousands of harmful chemicals that have been found in tobacco cigarettes. Recent studies seem to agree with that claim.

A study appeared on December 9, 2010, in the advance online publication of the Journal of Public Health Policy (www.palgrave-journals.com), by Zachary Cahn (Department of Political Science, University of California at Berkelev) and Michael Siegel (Department of Community Health Sciences, Boston University School of Public Health). "Few, if any, chemicals at levels detected in electronic cigarettes raise serious health concerns," the authors said. "Although the existing research does not warrant a conclusion that electronic cigarettes are safe in absolute terms and further clinical studies are needed to comprehensively assess the safety of electronic cigarettes, a preponderance of the available evidence shows them to be much safer than tobacco cigarettes and comparable in toxicity to conventional nicotine replacement products." They conclude that, "electronic cigarettes show tremendous promise in the fight against tobacco-related morbidity and mortality."

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

business briefs

Wells Fargo becomes an **MEF Community Partner** Wells Fargo Assistant Vice President of Community Banking, Arturo Gonzalez, and Geri Echague, Assistant Manager of the Wells Fargo Moraga branch presented the Moraga Education Foundation (MEF) at the end of 2010 with a \$5000 Education Grant

MEF President,

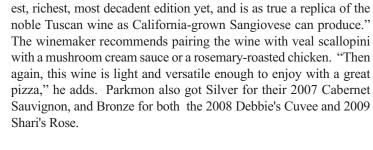


(Lto R) MEF Eric Andresen and Diana Obrand, Wells Fargo Arturo Gonzalez and Picture Courtesy of MEF Geri Echague

Diana Obrand and MEF's Chairman of Business and Community Partners, Eric Andresen (left) were pleased to nominate Wells Fargo their newest Community Partner. The Education Grant is part of Wells Fargo's commitment to community development and support. Presenting the check for The Moraga Education Foundation provides significant funding to local schools, supporting counseling, arts, music and science programs, as well as promoting community involvement in our schools.

Parkmon Vinyard Wins Big In Competition

http://web.mac.com/parkmon/iWeb/Site/PARKMON.html The San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition released the results of the testing to wine makers, ahead of the public wine testing that will be held on February 19 at Fort Mason in the City. Local Winemaker Parkmon Vineyard won several medals. "We've been participating for a few years to this competition," says Dave Parker, "previous years we won silver awards but this is the first time that we won the gold." Parkmon got the Gold metal for their 2008 Sangiovese. In his tasting notes about the Sangiovese, Parker wrote, "the Sangiovese grapes are some of the older vines in the Lamorinda region (at least 14 years old in 2008). They were planted to the same clone that has been isolated in the Montalcino area of Tuscany that contribute 100% of the fruit for the famed Brunello di Montalcinos. Our 2008 version, the third year we've produced this wine, represents the dark-



News from the three Chambers of Commerce

- Shop Lafayette Committee Meeting on February 8th from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room
- Monthly Mixer on February 9th at Wells Fargo Bank, 3525 Mt. Diablo Blvd. from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm
- Board of Directors Meeting on February 14th from 12:00 pm
- to 2:00 pm in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room Twitter Strategies (and More!) for Local Businesses on February 16th from 8:00 am to 9:30 am in the Lafayette Library & Learning Center, presented by Robin Fox, Social Media & Inbound Marketing Coach. Limited seating, reservations recommended, at workshops@lafayettechamber.org.
- Thursday: Entrepreneur's Club on February 17th from 8:30 am to 9:30 am in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room

Moraga

Grant Stubblefield was elected Business Person of the year at the January 28 Chamber meeting. The 26 years old Moraga native has been involved with the Chamber and the community since he was still a student at Saint Mary's College. A passionate proponent of community marketing, he created Community Marketing Group a company focusing on local campaigns, like Shop Moraga First, and local business websites, business consulting and serving on the Chamber Board. This



Grant Stubblefield and Edy Schwartz Photo Sophie Braccini

year, Grant began a new venture with his purchase of Neighborhood Computers, formerly owned by Paul Ghysels, a business that has been in Moraga for over a decade. "The Moraga community makes it easy to do business here, the more you plan your feet in a community, the easiest it becomes," said Stubblefield, "I am very thankful for the support I have received here and do not plan to move anytime soon." On Tuesday, February 22 starting at 6:00 pm, the Chamber and Mechanics Bank are sponsoring the Business Person of the Year Dinner at the China Moon Restaurant, 380 Park St. All Chamber members and their guests are invited. Please RSVP to Kathe Nelson at kathenelson@gmail.com by 2/15/11

Orinda

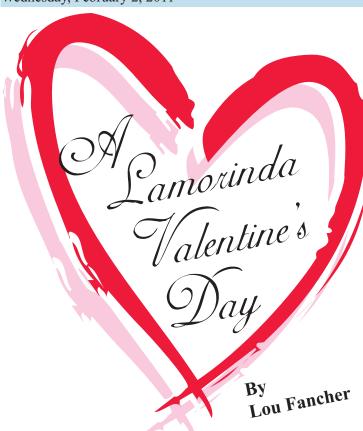
Save the date for the First Annual State of the City Address and Special Recognition Awards Dinner on Thursday, February 24, 2011 at the Orinda Country Club. Cocktails: 6:00 - 6:30 p.m., Dinner: 6:30 p.m. -8:15 p.m., Camino Sobrante, Orinda, RSVP: Re-



The Orinda Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cut ting ceremony on January 18th at Risk Concept Insurance Brokers, 3732 Mt Diablo blvd, in Lafayette, for the company that recently joined their chamber.

quired by Feb. 22. on the city's web site orindachamber.com, cost is \$65 per person. The event will recognize as Best Small Business in Orinda, Orinda Taxi: Julian Juricevic. A long-time Orinda resident, Juricevic started the business three and a half years ago with a single green, hybrid car and one driver - himself. Today, the company has six such cars, four full-time employees, and a dozen independently contracted drivers. Last August, Juricevic and his wife Tanja inaugurated the new Orinda Taxi offices at 15 Altarinda Road, in Orinda. The State of the Town Address will be given by Mayor Victoria Smith. The Chamber will also give Special Recognition Awards to Sally Hogarty, Editor of The Orinda News and columnist Valerie Hotz.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com or call the office 925-377-0977



on paper, and put them all in a hat.

Several random draws later, I had

a plan worthy of any New Year's

Moraga with \$50, and Lafayette

got the big budget at \$250 plus

change. I figured tax was like a

gift to the town and city coffers, so

didn't count that as part of the tab.

Orinda first, mistakenly regretting

the slim budget would mean V-

Day had nothing to do with vic-

Chocolate Cupcakes from Repub-

lic of Cake (\$2.75 each) satisfied

the time honored-tradition of delv-

ing into all things chocolate. Ten

percent of the cost went to support

a local charity, making the pur-

tory.

With a cap of \$25, I tackled

Two of Sam's Very Messy

Orinda paired up with \$25;

trim-the-fat resolution.

elebrating Valentine's Day without leaving Lamorinda turned out to be much harder than expected.

When the assignment came in, I thought: Piece of cake!

Literally. With bakeries, florists, gift boutiques, spas, new and established restaurants, movie theaters, and even a luxury hotel, what could be simpler?

Within 30 minutes, the list of choices was longer than the stem of any red rose I've ever had the good fortune to receive. With a price tag to match.

The article needed to be put on a diet.

I wrote the three names-Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda—on slips of paper. I wrote three budgets-\$25, \$50, \$250 and above-

For me, Orinda Books is like an open candy case to a sugarholic, so finding a collection of love poems or a slim volume on travel to exotic locations was a cinch (\$10).

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With the remaining \$9.50, an inexpensive bottle of wine from Bev Mo! was a possibility, but it lacked the truly local connection I was seeking.

Table 24, the new kid on the block, tempted me with the possibility of two iced teas (\$2.00 each) and an order of the luscious house corn bread (\$4.00), but left only \$1.50 for a tip.

Orinda Hardware came to the rescue, meeting almost any desire. Bird lover? Bird seed at \$3.99 a bag. Miss Fix-it? A \$1.99 flashlight for help in tightening a slip nut under the sink. There was even a cordless drill at \$9.97, leaving me only 47 cents over budget.

I felt flush as I descended upon Moraga with fifty dollars. That amount deserved to be spread from dawn to dusk. I decided. I started with breakfast at Terzetto's.

Valentine's Day falls on a weekday this year, so the \$4.99 special topped my list. Two eggs, two bacon, two slices of toast made for some pretty pairings. If I stuck to the organic breakfast blend coffee (\$1.75) a twosome could swing out of there for a sweet 16 bucks.

The chance to hang out at the Hearst Art Gallery's Civil War exhibit (\$4), with public hours Wednesday through Sunday, would have been an option on another day, but instead, a romantic

hike at no cost from Moraga Commons Park, to the Hacienda de las Flores and up the Mulholland Ridge filled the rest of the morn-

A pedicure at Anna Nails (\$20) in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center would leave just \$14, not quite enough for two tickets to a matinee (\$8 each) at the New Rheem Theatre.

But a bottle of polish from CVS (\$5), applied at home while watching a flick from the Red Box (\$1), allowed for a flowering plant from Moraga Garden Center (\$14) and two Caffé Cremosos at Ristorante Amoroma (\$7 each) to end the day.

It was open season in Lafayette, with \$250 and more to burn.

At Lafayette Car Wash and Detail Center a full detail (\$250) knocked down all the pins in one strike. This is for men and women whose vehicles are their sanctuaries and think they deserve to look like one.

Jewelry is a standard idea, but making it uncommon is simply a matter of visiting Ware Designs, where a low-end necklace or custom earrings will run \$150 and up.

I've always wanted to have a staycation at the Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa. The Romantic Escape packages (\$209-229) were an obvious way to spend down the Champagne, chocolate dipped strawberries, \$35 room service credit and a late check-out made this a perfect choice and left just enough dough for snacks from Diablo Foods. (Love that hummus, about \$5, or \$10 with chips.)

With all the momentum I built up exploring the wonders of Lamorinda businesses, it's lucky I didn't get a speeding ticket. Even a fool knows there's nothing ro-

mantic about spending Valentine's Day (and your budget) at the county courthouse. My advice? Take it slow, shop close to home, and love the one you're with.



Voted "Best Of" by Lamorinda Moms, San Jose Mercury News, Metro, San Francisco Magazine



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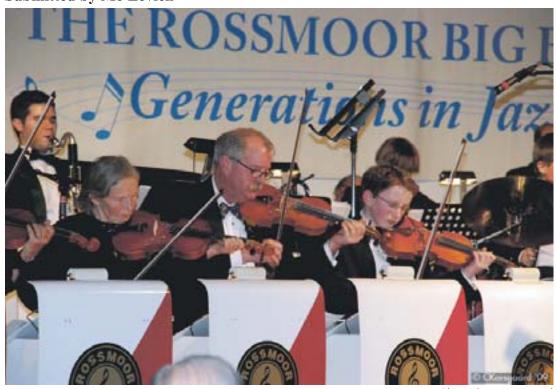
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The Big Band is Back!

Submitted by Mo Levich



enerations In Jazz is pleased Jto presents The Big Band Of Rossmoor on Feb 25th for a big band dance and concert at The Veterans Memorial Building. This is the first of the 2011 Big Band Dance and Concert series, and features vocalist Mary Anne Meltzer.

For those who have yet to see this 30 member big band the entertainment value is high. Join the generations spanning from 14 years to 92 years when the band plays the Great American Songbook from the 40's. From swing to slow the tunes will entertain you whether you dance or just listen, concert-style.

Rossmoor veteran musicians from WWII that played big band are joined by student jazz musicians from Stanley Intermediate School, Campolindo High and Acalanes High. Come listen and experience this unusual event as the music bridges the generations.

Next, on April 8th The Big Band of Rossmoor will be appearing at The New Rheem Theater on the big stage where many jazz greats have performed in years past.

On May 6th the band returns to The Veterans Memorial Building. This will be the final performance for Lafayette's own Erin Grant who will graduate from Acalanes. Erin will be featured on saxophone as Rossmoor seniors and her piers pay their respects to a wonderful young artist Photo Carry Korsgaard

and band member.

October 14th is the final big band dance of the season and will feature the arrangements of our own Frank Como. Frank served as Lionel Hampton's arranger in New York for over 20 years and wrote for the NBC Studio Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein as well as the Boston Pops.

All events begin at 7pm begin with complimentary dance lessons by Gail Enright. These events can be attended by either dancers or those who simply love the music.

Tickets to all events are available in advance from The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce or at the door. To reserve in advance call 284-7404.

Moraga Art Gallery's New Show

By Cathy Dausman



George Ehrenhaft and Beryl Glen-Reiland

oraga Art Gallery began its "Two Artists, Two Visions: A Singular Experience" show featuring local artists Beryl Glen-Reiland of Orinda and Moraga's George Ehrenhaft with an open house January 15. The show runs through March 19.

Glen-Reiland, who began painting at age 14 in her native Scotland, is exhibiting a collection of landscapes, seascapes and flowers, and some pencil sketches. One such pencil sketch features Andrea Farrell who played guitar during the open house.

"I am not sure I have a favorite medium." Glen-Reiland says. "When I draw, paint, think and study art history, my life is ab-

sorbed in the beauty..." She is proud of the thriving Lamorinda art community: "We have within our grasps one of the best alliances of art in northern California."

Ehrenhaft took up watercolors in 1996 after retiring from teaching English on the East Coast. His display of local landmarks, including the Lafayette-Moraga Trail, St. Mary's College, Theater Square, and Mt. Diablo drew high praise from Indian Valley Elementary school art teacher Heloise Levy. Levy was drawn to Ehrenhaft's mixed use of dry and wet brush techniques, and was at the open house to make a purchase.

On his website Ehrenhaft says: "I usually do the same paint-

sick of it or get it right. Three out of four end up in the trash." While painting recently on the Moraga-Lafayette trail, a passer-by stopped to comment: "I never realized that the trail was so beautiful." That, said Ehrenhaft, made his day.

ing two or three times--until I get

Photo Cathy Dausman

The Gallery includes work from about 18 artists, notes host John Diestler. Current media includes oil and watercolor paintings, photography, collage work and fused glass work and ceramics. Everything in the gallery is for sale.

The Moraga Art Gallery is in the Rheem Shopping Center, 570 Center Street. The gallery is open noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday and is closed on Monday.

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Compestine's The Runaway Wok Heralds a New Year

By Lou Fancher

he 2011 Chinese New Year begins February 3rd, and Yin Chang Compestine's The Runaway Wok (Dutton) is the perfect non-edible way to celebrate.

The Lafayette author's new children's book, illustrated with vibrant intensity by Barcelona's Sabastia Serra, tells the story of Ming, a poor boy whose happy encounter with a runaway wok brings joy to his family and neighbors.

Ming's mother sends the boy to the market with their last remaining eggs, directing him to purchase enough rice to share with others. His father laments their poverty: despite the fact that he works for Mr. Li, the richest man in Beijing, the family faces a sparse New Year's celebration.

Instead, the wok "skippityhoppity-ho's", retrieving a bounty of food, toys, and even gold coins from the stingy Li family.

Ming and his parents demonstrate their generosity amidst sudden abundance: "Mother Zhang served the food; Father Zhang divided the coins up among the families; and Ming handed out the toys to all the chil-

Compestine avoids what could have been a too-sweet,

heavy-handed lesson on sharing with a shadowy twist, when the wok swallows up the Li family and

seen again.

carries them away, never to be Cover image for The Runaway Wok provided

drafts and often exceeds even her editors' desire to "make it just this much better."

It was the fastest Compestine

has ever sold a book; she fre-

quently writes 50-60

The intensity comes, in part, from her early years and her relationship with food.

"For many years in China, food was always scarce. So people treat it with respect. You offer the people you love the food, even if it means less for you. Food represents sharing, happiness, celebration," she explained.

The author of a number of cookbooks, Compestine spends the equivalent of months on the road; visiting schools, leading cruise workshops, and addressing writer's clubs.

"I am so busy!" she exclaimed, explaining the lack of local signings for The Runaway Wok. "I love visiting children at schools."

With a son, Vinson, a junior at Campolindo High School, Compestine says her parenting style falls in between Chinese and American.

"I have high standards, but I let him have a lot of fun. We are very equal and I encourage him to be open."

She said the best thing she can do for him as a parent is to take him to the real China.

"It's harsh conditions, but it's important. I want him to really understand his roots and to see how fortunate he is. In this country, with so much, it's easy for kids to forget about sharing."

Compestine usually celebrates the New Year with a family dinner or a party with friends, but this year she will be on the road, talking about her book and encouraging readers to practice the ancient art of sharing.

Orinda's Team Ecko Takes 2nd and Campo Filmmakers Place 3rd in Iron Filmmaker Contest

I wanted to

write about Chinese culture and

traditions, but in a fun way," Com-

pestine said, in an interview about

the book's origins. "I love folk

tales. My editor, Stephanie Lurie,

asked me, 'Have you read this

Danish folk tale?' I read it at noon, wrote my story, and emailed it to

her at 11:00 that night. The next

day, she made me an offer."



Pictured from left are Bill Snider and the movie-making Dream Team: Taylor Hunt, Colter Harris, and Sam Crossley (not pictured: Aja Adair, Scott Call, Michael Chickering, and Grayson Kurthuu)

he 2011 Iron Filmmaker Contest was held on January 29th at the New Rheem Theatre. Iron Filmmaker is a

competition in which participants are given a surprise theme and 24 hours to script, shoot, edit, and submit a film based on

Photo Ohlen Alexander

that theme. This year's theme was "Be careful of what you wish for." There were 19 films submitted and shown at the

New Rheem Theatre. Each audience member was given a ballot to vote for the best films after seeing all them. The films presented cliché wishes, wishes that had a deeper meaning to them, absurd wishes, and wishes that people don't actually mean.

In the Best Picture category, a team from just down the 680 corridor won the competition with the film Bob's Day Off. An Orinda team came in 2nd place, and Campolindo student filmmakers were awarded third place. Moraga Hardware & Lumber owner Bill Snider took first place honors in the Best Performance category for his role in the three minute video. The Dream Team's film was about a man wishing on coin thrown into a fountain. B.Pennell/A.Firth

Indie Film Festival Makes its Mark in Moraga

... continued from page A1

"In this business, scripts like this don't often come along," said Merriman, who has been acting for 15 years. Merriman plays the role of Luke's older brother Jon who dedicated his football season at Wake Forest to Luke's memory and helped lead the Demon Deacons to a schoolrecord of 11 victories and firstever Orange Bowl berth. More than a tragedy to triumph sports tale, the inspirational story recounts the Abbates' decision to donate their son's organs which were given to five recipients, including his heart which saved the life of a young woman with the same uncommon blood type.

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At Sunday's Slate Awards, The 5th Quarter won for Best Music Score, and Merriman picked up the prize for Best Actor. "It's an amazing story. It changed me," said Merriman, who still

keeps in touch with the family. The second feature of the evening was the independent film Fanny, Annie & Danny, which contained all the classic elements of independent filmmaking: a story that grabs you and challenges you, characters you care about or love to hate, and exceptional acting, performances that stick with you. Over the course of a disastrous holiday dinner, writer and director Chris Brown deftly tells the

has grown apart and weary of each other's needs. Brown's wife, actress Jill Pixley, plays Fanny, a disadult abled obsessive-compulsive tendencies who tries desperately to survive within a family nucleus that is about to implode. At times painful to watch, viewers were simultaneously captivated and disturbed by the honesty of the characters and realness of the subject matter.

story of a dysfunctional family that

"That's what indie films are all about—to move you and to make you think," said Derek Zemrak, President and Founder of the CAIFF in his comments to the crowd at the program kick off.

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If you haven't had a chance to visit what Zemrak is already lauding as the most successful California Independent Film Festival ever, it's not too late. Tonight (Wednesday) there will be screenings of the documentaries Crimebuster: A Son's Search for his Father, and Beyond the Wall. There will be a closing reception on Thursday followed by the Winning Shorts Showcase, and Diamond Award actress Lea Thomson will be there with her film, Mayor Cupcake.

For more information go to www.caiff.org.

Wendy Scheck contributed to this article



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Community Service

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

Orinda Girl Scouts Make Blankets for Needy Children

Submitted by Mary Friese



Girl Scouts hold the blankets they made (from left): Chloe, Makenna, Ariana, Andrea, Jamie, Sophie, Emma, Brigette Zoe, Chantal, Carly, Emily, Emma, Lindsay, Stephanie, Tuki, Kylie, Ava, and Sophia (not pictured: Lola, Teveen and Clare). On the right is Jeanne Akin, Project Linus Chapter Coordinator for east Contra Costa County. Photo Sarah Lee

he 22 juniors of Girl Scout Troop 32300 (at Del Rey School in Orinda) recently made and donated two dozen fleece blankets to Project Linus, a national organization that accepts

Submitted by Evelyn Westlye

AAUW Enjoys the Dance

new handmade blankets for children who are in need.

"The girls were very moved by the fact that there are children their own age who are in the hospital, or living in a foster home,

In her interpre-

tive dancing Lois

Flood combined

Duncan's lyrical,

heroic dances with poetry narrated by Karen Elise. Flood

formances, which were flowing and

sensuous without being overtly sexual – a point Flood made in her comments to convey the philosophy that Duncan extolled. In describ-

ing the origins of philosophy

her

Duncan was quoted as stating that art and music are as necessary to

people as the air or bread because

art is the spiritual bread of mankind.

the music each contributed to pro-

duce a powerful stimulus to

The dancing, the poetry and

costumes reminiscent of the classical Greek style, typical of Duncan's

per-

and

dramatic

and who would be comforted by something as simple as a blanket," said Sarah Lee, the parent who organized the project for the

"This was an extremely pos-

itive community service project for our troop," said troop leader Mary Friese. "The girls were able to do it all themselves -- including budgeting, shopping and actually creating the blankets. It was very rewarding for them!"

The girls voted to use some of their earnings from cookie sales to buy the material for the blankets, collectively deciding to forego the usual sales incentives in favor of having more money to spend on the project. They then selected the material, and each girl made her 'own' blanket that was given to a Project Linus volunteer to be distributed to a child in need.

"That was the hard part," laughed Lee. "Many of the girls did not want to let go of 'their' blanket when it was done!" But let go they did... and now the blankets are on their way to children in need across Contra Costa County.

SAFE Smashes the Record

Submitted by Brian South



From left: Volunteer CSO Scott Inouye, volunteer Cadet Claire Damon and Officer Bob Ortiz were among the many volunteers helping with

he Moraga Police Officers Animals for Emergencies (S.A.F.E.) program collected a total of 1578 stuffed animals over the holiday season, more than doubling the previous record! Our community really got into it this

izens for their generosity and as-

S.A.F.E. distributes stuffed animals to children in need – for example, donated stuffed animals are stored in police cars so officers can give them to children they may encounter in any type of traumatic



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Walnut Creek January 25, 2010 ebruary 24, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. Adults only, please! 55 Eckley Lane (925) 934-1507



the SAFE collection. Photo provided

heighten the sheer beauty of the performance, to the delighted and appreciative audience. For more information about the OML Branch of AAUW go to www.aauwoml.org or call Judy Hammon at (925) 253-4972.

Photo K. DeGroot

Association's 2010 Stuffed

year, and we'd like to thank the cit-

or tragic situation.



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Music lessons

Lois Ann Flood

n audience of members and A guests was wowed at the Jan-

uary 18th meeting of the Orinda-

Moraga-Lafayette (OML) Branch

of the American Association of

University Women (AAUW).

Dancer Lois Flood did a reprise of

the dancing of Isadora Duncan,

who is conceded to be the most fa-

mous dancer of the 20th century in

the aesthetics of modern dance and

who impacted the world of dance

like no other while making a great

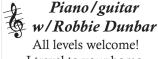
impression on many of the famous

artists of her time.

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Not to be missed

150 Years after the Civil War an **NEH-sponsored exhibition**, Lee and Grant, will be on view through Sunday, Mar. 20 at The Hearst Art Gallery at Saint Mary's College in Moraga. The museum is open to the public Wednesdays through Sundays, 11am- 4:30pm. Adult admission is \$4; admission is free for K-12th grade students and Hearst members. A battlefield re-enactment, featuring nearly one hundred NCWA volunteers, is planned for Saturday, March 19, on the Saint Mary's College campus.

Information: (925) 631-4379. See article page L1

The Lafayette Gallery is presenting the Heart Throb Exhibit. There will be a "meet the artists" reception from 6:30-8:30pm on Friday, February 4. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 11am-5pm. Located at 50 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Admission is free. For more information please call (925) 284-2788 or go to www.lafayettegallery.net.

The Moraga Art Gallery's new show, 2 plus 2 = 1, shorthand for "Two Artists, Two Visions: A Singular Experience," The exhibit brings together paintings in various media by Orinda's Beryl Glen-Reiland and watercolors by Moraga's George Ehrenhaft. The gallery is located at the Rheem Shopping Center, 570 Center Street, Moraga. For more information call (925) 376-5407. See article page L3.

MUSIC

First Friday Forum: Jonathan Dimmock, organist at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian (LOPC) Church will present "Organs, Churches and Acoustics: Working Together", on February 4 at 1:30pm in the sanctuary of LOPC, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. This is a free event open to all. Refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall at 1:00pm. For further information call (925) 283-8722 or go to www.LOPC.org.

Generations In Jazz presents The Big Band Of Rossmoor Feb 25 for a big band dance and concert at The Veterans Memorial Building. Tickets are on sale at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce for \$10. Reserve tickets at 284-7404 or purchase at the door. Free dance lessons are available from 7-8pm with instructor Gail Enright. Then the dance and concert be-

Campolindo Jazz Dinner Dance featuring the Campolindo High School Jazz Band, is coming up on Saturday, February 26 at Temple Isaiah in Lafayette. Tickets are \$55 (\$60 after February 7) and on sale now. Visit www.campomusic.org or contact Diane Haley, 631-1439.

Campolindo Orchestra Winter Concert on Thursday, February 24 at 7:30 in the CPAC. This will be a benefit concert with the proceeds to assist the Campolindo Orchestra's trip to Beijing. Featuring violinist Jeremy Cohen, a three-time Grammy nominee, and Barry Green with his Green Man Bass Group as guest artists. An evening of great music not to be missed! Tickets are \$10 only and on sale now. Call 270-8083 to reserve your ticket. More information on website www.campomusic.org. See article page S4

THEATER

Town Hall Theatre presents The Glass Menagerie, by Tennessee Williams, February 19-March 19, with previews on February 17 & 18. For exact dates and show times, contact Town Hall Theatre Box Office at (925) 283-1557, or go to www.TownHallTheatre.com. Town Hall Theatre is located at 3535 School St. in Lafayette.

Diablo Theatre Company presents East Bay premiere of "The Drowsy Chaperone," the award-winning Broadway show about a musical theatre addict known as "The Man in the Chair," whose favorite musical magically bursts to life in a combo of every classic, clichéd plot thread ever to grace the stage. At 8pm Feb. 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26 and March 4, 5. 2pm Feb. 20, 26, 27. (\$17-\$48). Lesher Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek (925)

943-7469, www.lesherartscenter.org.

"OnstageTheatre" continues its 33rd Season with the timeless spirited comedy classic Heaven Can Wait, opening Feb. 11 and running through March 6 at the Lesher Arts Center in Walnut Creek. This comedy/fantasy, which opens the weekend before Valentine's Day, features married couple Edwin and Jennifer Brown Peabody in the romantic

LECTURES & LITERATURE

leads. For more information call

(925) 943-SHOW. Admission is, \$20

general \$16 seniors \$10 youth to 17.

On Saturday, February 5 at 3pm, two storytellers will spin Asian tales at the Orinda Library to welcome in the Year of the Rabbit. Clara Yen has been telling stories to the families of the Bay Area for more than twenty years. This event is free and appropriate for families. It takes place in the auditorium of the Orinda Library, which is at 26 Orinda Way

Commonwealth Club presents The Obama Effect: Where Does the African American Community Stand Now? Monday, Feb. 7, 6:30pm, Lafayette Veterans Memorial Hall, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Time: 5:45 p.m. check-in, 6:30 p.m. program. Cost: \$12 members, \$22 non-members, \$7 students. For tickets go to commonwealthclub.org or call (415) 597-6705.

Finding Solutions for Relation**ships: Plan B:** How to Get Unstuck from Work, Family, and Relationship Problems. February 9, from 7-9pm, at the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Parish Hall (lower level) 66 St. Stephens Dr. Orinda. Stephanie Asker, retired psychotherapist and marriage counselor and author of Plan B, draws on her many years of experience to present an evening helping couples, families, and others in important relationships, find solutions to problems that trouble your everyday life.

The Lafayette Historical Society Speakers Series presents, Old Bones in a New Tunnel. Wednesday, February 11, at 3pm in the Art and Science room in the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Limited seating, \$10 for members, \$15 for non members, donations requested.

The Friends Corner Book Shop announces its Winter Half Price Book Sale! The door will open and 9am and stay open until 5pm. The shop is located at 3491 Mount Diablo Boulevard, #107, Lafayette.

The Moraga Library is having a book sale. Saturday February 5 from 10am-2pm. 1500 Saint Mary's Road,

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

The award-winning Diablo Ballet of Walnut Creek brings to life the popular children's book "Angelina Ballerina" at several Saturday morning story times around Contra Costa County. Angelina Ballerina story times are Saturday February 5 at 11am at Borders Bookstore Pleasant Hill, and Saturday February 12 at 10:30am at the Walnut Creek Library (Storybook room). The events are free and great for children ages 3-10 years old.

Building Jewish Bridges presents Welcoming Ceremonies for Jewish Babies on Sunday, Feb 13, from 9:15-10:30am, at Temple Isaiah, 3800 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Having a Jewish baby? Learn about ceremonies that welcome babies. Come for answers. Cost is free. For more info see http://buildingjewishbridges.org or call (510) 845-6420.

Contra Costa County Search and Rescue, a volunteer team of the Sheriff's Department, is sponsoring an Outdoor Safety Poster Design Contest open to all Contra Costa County resident students in middle school, high school and college. The registration deadline is February 4th. Contest details are available on the Search and Rescue www.contracostasar.org.

The Orinda Arts Council is **pleased to announce** that it will hold its 8th Annual High School Visual Arts Competition for high school students living or attending school in Orinda, Lafayette or Moraga. Online registration, as well as detailed information regarding the competition, is available at www.OrindaArtsCoun-

Not to be missed

cil.org. Deadline for all entries is midnight, February 17 with all artwork submitted Feb. 27-28. Esteemed judges include professional artists and art teachers. Cash prizes are awarded and all accepted entries will be displayed at the Orinda Library Art Gallery March 2-30.

Campolindo High School Parents

Club and Healthy Choices Committee will present a Teen Drug Symposium hosted in the Campolindo High School Library on Monday, Feb. 28 from 7-8:30pm. The Symposium will feature testimonials from local parents and students who have dealt first-hand with drug addiction and recovery. Additionally, we will hear from Dr. Timothy Browne, a local Psychologist and addiction specialist. For More Information and to RSVP please contact Roxy Klein at roxygklein@comcast.net.

OTHER

Small Vineyard Series and Viticulture Classes held at CaptainVineyards in Moraga are designed for home and boutique winegrowers; non-growers and wine enthusiasts are welcomed too. Classes cover basic principles of viticulture and practical aspects of small vineyard management. Instructions and handouts will help growers, with little or no previous experience in grape growing to learn about sustainability and environmental practices. Fee for each 2 hour class, including wine tasting, is \$ 42.00. Register with Moraga Park and Recreation: http://moraga.ca.us or call (925) 888-7045.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend a reception February 7, from 4-6pm at the Orinda Library Gallery to celebrate the first anniversary of the founding of the Orinda community foundation and its 2010 grand recip-

The Orinda Mandarin Chinese Language Program is inviting the public to its Chinese New Year Celebration on Wednesday, February 9. From 4:15-5:30pm there will be class performances, activities and food. Miramonte High School students will emcee. Everyone is welcome to this free event.

On Tuesday, February 15, the **OML Branch of AAUW** will hold its general meeting at the Serbian Cultural Center, 1700 School St. in Moraga at 9:30 am. A lecture by local author Kurt Beyer, an entrepreneur in computers and programming, will tell us of his admiration for Grace Hopper, one of the few women in U.S. history to attain the rank of Rear Admiral in the U.S. Navy, who was his mentor and inspiration at the Naval Academy. This program is free and open to the public.

The Ninth Annual "A Nite at the Races" will be staged by Rotary Club of Moraga on Saturday, March 12, at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center on School Street in Moraga. The cost is \$45 per person. The proceeds from this event will help Moraga Rotary fund its local and international youth, educational, and humanitarian causes. For information or reservations, please contact Rotarian Frank May at (925) 376-8195 or at mayfrl@comcast.net.

The Moraga TreeLine Triathlon



will take place on Saturday, April 30, 7:30 am at the Soda Aquatic Center, Campolindo High School, 300 Moraga Road. The event is ideal for the beginning triathlete as well as the more advanced competitor. The swim is a challenging 400 meter sprint, followed by a 22 K bike ride out to Canyon, and culminating with a 5 K run. New youth divisions have been added this year. Ages 5-7 will have a 200 meter swim, .6 mile bike, and a .5 mile run. The 8-11 division will swim 200 meters, bike .85 miles and run .9 miles. For more information and route details go to www.moragatri.com, or call (925) 888-7035.

Registration is open now.

POLITICAL GATHERINGS

Assembly Member Nancy Skinner presents Your Chance to Fix California's State Budget on Thursday, Feb 10, from 7-8:30pm, at Acalanes High School, 1200 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette. Come balance the state budget. Choose how much to spend on schools, health, prisons, the environment, and how to pay for them. This event is free. For more http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/me mbers/a14/Budget-Challenge/default.aspx or call (510) 286-1400.

Senator Mike Gravel will be speaking on Wikileaks and its Importance to Democracy, Friday, February 4 at 7pm. At the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek. \$12 General, \$9 Members \$5 Students admissions, Donations suggested. Suggested donation: \$12 General, \$9 Members \$5 Students. No one turned away for lack of funds. Wheel chair accessible. Flyer for the event is available at www.mtdpc.org.

SENIORS

Moraga Movers' next luncheon falls on Valentine's Day, February 14, at St. Mary's College Soda Center. Social hour is at 11am with lunch served at noon. Guest speaker is John Muir Laws, a direct descendant of John Muir. His sketches of birds and wildflowers have been captured in a book treasured by local residents who have heard his stories. Books will be on sale at the luncheon.

It's challenging to care for someone with memory loss! Enrich your understanding and behaviors by attending the LARC Movie Night! Wednesday, February 2, 7-9pm. "It's All In Your Approach" featuring dementia expert Teepa Snow. Snow educates, imitates, and energetically engages us to understand what it's like to have dementia, and how best to relate to our loved ones with this disease. Please join us for an enjoyable learning experience. Popcorn and hot chocolate will be served. This is a free event and everyone is welcome. Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church 433 Moraga Way, Orinda.

GARDEN

Lafayette Garden Club meets at 9:30am, second Thursdays monthly, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette. Thurs day, Feb. 10 there will be a general meeting, the topic is "Propagation." This will be a hands-on workshop with instructions from our own master gardeners. For more information contact: petersonb4@aol.com.

Moraga Garden Club, February 17, 2011—Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga: 9:30 general meeting-10:00 a.m. program. The speaker will be Joan Morris, Editor of Home and Garden Section at CCT on the topic "Our Garden at the Contra Costa Times." This event is free and all are welcome.

Montelindo Club general meeting and speaker is every third Friday of the month, September through May at Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Meeting place for February will be the Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Dr., Walnut Creek. Refreshments at 9am, meeting at 9:30, and speaker at 10:30. The meeting is free and welcomes guests and new members. For more information please go to http://www.montelindogarden.com.

CLUBS

Sons in Retirement, Lamorinda Branch 171 meets the first Wednesday monthly at Holy Trinity Culture Center, 1700 School St. Moraga. Social hour begins at 11am and lunch at 12pm. The after lunch speaker will be Jay Gaskill, former Alameda County Public Defender. He will share insights from three decades of experience working with the criminal population especially those considered thugs. For membership information, call Larry at (925) 631-

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From Paris, with Love

By Susie Iventosch

It seems fitting, that since Paris is the "City of Romance" we invoke two traditional French dessert recipes for Valentine's Day! Who can deny the incredible allure of a silky chocolate mousse or the ecstasy of indulging in a delectable browned butter-pistachioraspberry cake?

Financiers, individual cakes made with finely chopped nuts-usually blanched almonds -are a delightful Parisian delicacy. Named after the wealthy bankers who, in the late 1800s, frequented a certain boulangerie situated near the Paris Bourse, the city's stock exchange, 'financiers" were a specialty of the house. This week's featured recipe is a variation on the original, made with finely chopped, unsalted pistachios, raspberries and an apricot glaze.

Chocolate mousse is another wonderful dessert for special occasions. Not only is it

*How to Pasteurize Raw Eggs

ke Pasteurized Eggs Cooking With Raw Eggs

http://www.christonium.com/culinaryreview/How_To_Ma

Place the eggs in a pot with cold water. Put the water on

water to exceed 150 degrees. If you want to be exact, keep

a thermometer probe in the water. When you pasteurize

eggs, you bring them up to about 140-150 degrees for 3-5

minutes depending on the age and the size of the eggs. If

egg.When you reach this temperature, try to keep it there

eggs won't completely eliminate the risks that eating raw

eggs bring, but it will reduce the chance of contamination.

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and watch so the temperature doesn't rise. Pasteurizing

••• updated January 5, 2011 •••

American

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Nation's Giant Hamburgers, 400 Park, Mor,

Geppetto's caffe, 87 Orinda Way, Ori,

Artisan Bistro, 1005 Brown St., Laf

Shelby's, 2 Theatre Sq, Ori,

Table 24, Theatre Sq, Ori,

Chinese

Coffee Shop

Metro Lafayette, 3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

La Boulange, 3597 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

Rising Loafer, 3643 Mt. Diablo Blvd Ste B, Laf,

Susan Foord Catering & Cafe, 965 Mt. View Dr., Laf,

Asia Palace Restaurant, 1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor,

Chef Chao Restaurant, 343 Rheem Blvd, Mor,

The Great Wall Rest., 3500 Golden Gate Way,

Hsiangs Mandarin Cuisine, 1 Orinda Way # 1, Ori,

Szechwan Chinese Restaurant, 79 Orinda Way, Ori,

China Moon Restaurant, 380 Park St, Mor,

Lily's House, 3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #A, Laf,

Mandarin Flower, 581 Moraga Rd, Mor,

Panda Express, 3608 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Uncle Yu's Szechuan, 999 Oak Hill Rd, Laf,

Yan's Restaurant, 3444 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Millie's Kitchen, 1018 Oak Hill Rd #A, Laf,

Squirrel's Coffee Shop, 998 Moraga Rd, Laf,

Village Inn Café, 204 Village Square, Ori,

Nation's Giant Hamburgers, 76 Moraga Way, Ori,

Ferrari-Lucca Delicatessens, 23 Lafayette Cir, Laf,

Flippers, 960 Moraga Rd, Laf,

The Cheese Steak Shop, 3455 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

the temperature goes any higher you start to cook the

medium heat. You don't want the temperature of the

pretty, but it can also be made a day ahead of time, and you can use any flavoring you like, such as extracts, liqueurs, coffee, or fresh fruit! Mousse literally means "foam" in French and the foam comes from the use of beaten egg whites. Because I shy away from using raw eggs, the Deb El "Just Whites" powdered egg whites come in very handy. They work just as well as real egg whites in this recipe, and there are no worries or concerns about using raw eggs. That said, I also pasteurize the egg in the shell before adding the egg yolks to the melted chocolate mixture. You can use the egg white after this process too, if you don't like the idea of the powdered egg white. See below for directions on how to pasteurize the raw eggs.

Whether you try one of these recipes, or an old favorite from your old "romance" recipe

Have a Sweet Valentine's Day!

Pistachio-Raspberry Financiers

(Makes 6 three-inch individual cakes)

INGREDIENTS

½ cup all-purpose flour ½ teaspoon salt 1 cup roasted, unsalted

pistachios (available at Trader Joe's and Whole Foods)

1 cup powdered sugar 12 tablespoons unsalted butter (1 1/2 sticks)

1 teaspoon vanilla extract 6 large egg whites

½ cup fresh raspberries for cake

Apricot-Raspberry Glaze

½ cup apricot preserves

¼ cup raspberries

Heat jam in small saucepan, just until warm and slightly thinned. In a food processor, puree jam with raspberries. Reheat to serve warm over cakes and garnish with any extra raspberries.

INSTRUCTIONS

Sift flour and salt together into a small bowl and set aside. In a food processor, chop the pistachios until finely ground, about 1 minute. Add sugar and pulse until well combined, about 10 pulses. Transfer mixture to a large bowl. Melt butter in a medium frying pan over medium-low heat, until butter turns amber and smells nutty, about 7 minutes, or so, depending upon your stove's heat. Swirl the pan occasionally to heat butter evenly and keep from getting too dark. Strain butter through a mesh sieve into a separate bowl. Add vanilla. Beat egg whites in a medium bowl until frothy. Stir into pistachio-sugar mixture with a rubber spatula, until just combined. Gently stir butter into flour mixture, just until evenly combined. Cover batter with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour. Preheat oven to 450°. Using a muffin tin with six cups (each about 3-inches in diameter) spray or grease each cup well. Fill each with batter and bake for 6 minutes at 450°. Reduce heat to 400° and bake financiers just until beginning to brown around the edges, about 8 more minutes. Remove from oven, turn cakes out from pan and cool on rack.

To serve, spoon Apricot-Raspberry Glaze over top and garnish

Mucho wraps, 1375-B Moraga Way, Mor,

El Balazo, 3518D Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Lamorinda Pizza, 382 Park St, Mor,

Pennini's, 1375 Moraga Rd, Mor,

Sandwiches/Deli

Maya Mexican Grill, 74 Moraga Way, Ori,

Mountain Mike's Pizza, 504 Center St, Mor,

Round Table Pizza, 361 Rheem Blvd, Mor,

Village Pizza, 19 Orinda Way # Ab, Ori,

Bianca's Deli, 1480 Moraga Rd # A, Mor,

Kasper's Hot Dogs, 103 Moraga Way, Ori,

Noah's Bagels, 3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Subway, 3322 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf,

Yankee Pier, 3593 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

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Amarin Thai Cuisine, 3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf, 283-8883

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Subway, 396 Park St., Mor,

Subway, Theatre Square, Ori,

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Baan Thai, 99 Orinda Way, Ori,

Vietnamese

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Siam Orchid, 23 Orinda Way # F, Ori,

Round Table Pizza , 3637 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

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with fresh raspberries.

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Vino Restaurant, 3531 Plaza Way, Laf,

Fuz, 3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Hawaiian Grill

Roya's Garlic Garden, 3576 Mt Diablo Blvd, Laf

Chevalier Restaurant, 960 Moraga Road, Laf,

Lava Pit Fire Grill, 3647 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Giardino, 3406 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Michael's, 1375 Moraga Way, Mor,

Pizza Antica, 3600 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Ristorante Amoroma, 360 Park St, Mor,

Blue Ginko, 3518-A Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Kane Sushi, 3474 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Fuz, 3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Kirin Sushi, 356 Park Street, Mor

Yu Sushi, 19 Moraga Way, Ori,

Petra Café, 2 Theatre Sq # 105, Ori,

Oasis Café, 3594 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Mediterranean

Asia Palace Sushi Bar, 1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor,

Niwa Restaurant, 1 Camino Sobrante # 6, Ori,

Oyama Sushi, 3651 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Serika Restaurant, 2 Theatre Sq # 118, Ori,

Trattoria Lupetti, 65 Moraga Way, Ori

Postino, 3565 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

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Chocolate Mousse



(Serves 5-8, depending upon serving size)

INGREDIENTS

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283-8288

284-8700

258-9049

299-1333

376-4040

377-6453

376-1515

376-1411

283-0404

254-1200

254-2800

376-4400

254-7202

253-0766

299-0716

254-1990

376-2959

284-2627

258-0470

283-4100

254-2981

283-2226

254-2206

253-0989

377-0420

253-1975

4 1/2 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into small pieces ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

1-2 tablespoons Grand Marnier (or your favorite liqueur-

Amaretto, Kahlua, etc.) 1 cup heavy cream

3 large eggs, separated(or powdered egg whites and

pasteurized egg yolk)

1 tablespoon sugar

Garnish: Raspberries and extra whipped cream **DIRECTIONS**

Beat heavy cream to stiff peaks, and refrigerate until ready to

In a double boiler, combine the chocolate, butter and vanilla and cook over simmering water, stirring all the while, until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Remove from the heat and let cool until chocolate is just warm, but not cold. Once cooled, stir in pasteurized egg yolks* and Grand Marnier. Mix well. Set aside.

While chocolate is cooling, beat egg whites (or egg white substitute) until foamy. Add 1 tablespoon sugar and continue to beat until stiff peaks form.

Using a spatula or wooden spoon, fold about 1/3 of the whipped cream into chocolate-egg yolk mixture. Fold in half the whites just until incorporated, and then fold in the remaining whites. Gently fold in remaining whipped cream. Spoon the mousse into a serving bowl or individual dishes. You can also layer with fresh berries or whipped cream and sprinkle with chocolate shavings. Refrigerate for several hours. (The mousse can be refrigerated for up to a day.)

Susie Iventosch is the author of

Susie can be reached at suziven@gmail.com.



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El Jaro Mexican Cafe, 3563 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-6639 download our Restaurant Guide from our web site Duck Club Restaurant, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf, 283-7108 La Cocina Mexicana, 23 Orinda Way, Ori, 258-9987 at www.lamorindaweekly.com

Turquoise Mediterranean Grill, 70 Moraga Way, Ori, 253-2004

360 Gourmet Burrito, 3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

Casa Gourmet Burrito, 3322 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,

El Charro Mexican Dining, 3339 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf,





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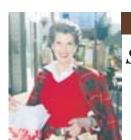
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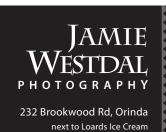
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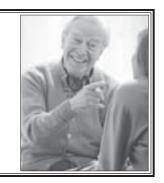
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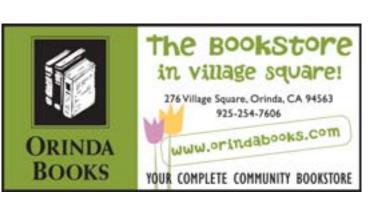


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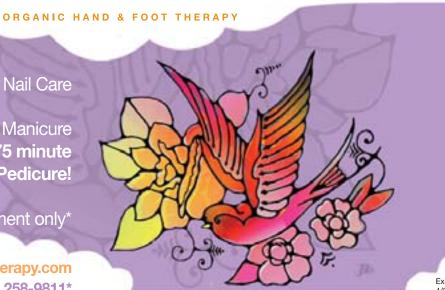
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COURTHONES Lamorinda Weekly Volume 04 Issue 24 Wednesday, February 2, 2011



Moving the Carefree Way

By Andrea A. Firth

racy loves interior design, and she likes unpacking. Kate owned her own gift basket company, so she hit the ground running. Florence had a long career in academia, and she now has extra time and energy. What do these three women have in common? They all have the organization gene—order is intrinsic to their nature—they know what to keep, what to throw away, and what to put where. And, they all work for Carefree Moves, a Lamorinda-based firm that will pack, unpack, organize, and stage your home when it's time for you to move.

"When it comes to organization, women get it. They have an instinct for how things should be put together," says Cynthia Nolan who, along with partner Dee Vance, owns and operates the all-female moving business Carefree Moves.

*There are real benefits to the company's all-female work force say Nolan and Vance. Most of the company's lady movers are from Lamorinda, and many have already raised a family and had a career. "They want flexibility, but they also want to help people, and they all have that inherent organization trait," says Vance. "We provide a complete array of moving service support, at the conclusion of a job, you see the beginning, middle, and end. The women we work with love seeing the finished, well-organized product so quickly."

Nolan and Vance brought their own penchant

for organization to the business when they purchased Carefree Moves two years ago. Nolan, a longtime resident of Orinda, has a background in design and managed a home staging business for over a decade. Vance who raised a family in Lafayette and now lives in Montclair, has over 25 years experience as a time management/organization consultant and life coach When the two friends reconnected at a holiday gathering, they decided their skill sets were complementary and set out to launch a business together. Throughnetworking they met the previous owner of Carefree Moves and within a few weeks they were in the moving business.

...continued on page OH4



Carefree Moves' owners Cynthia Nolan and Dee Vance (on left) with Kate Apple (in back) and Tracy Gittings.

Glenn and Kellie Beaubelle present...

Moraga~ Coming Soon Breathtaking Views



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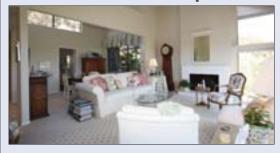
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SOLDWING TO SERVICE TO

OUR HOMES Wed., February 2, 2011 Page: OH 2

Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

LAFAYETTELast reported: 4LOWEST AMOUNT:\$325,000HIGHEST AMOUNT:\$1,165,000MORAGALast reported: 1

LOWEST AMOUNT: \$702,500 HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$702,500

ORINDA Last reported: 8

LOWEST AMOUNT: \$575,000

HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,174,000

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

LAFAYETTE

141 Peaceful Lane, \$1,165,000, 5 Bdrms, 3489 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 12-30-10; Previous Sale: \$768,000, 09-24-09

12 Ruth Court, \$325,000, 3 Bdrms, 1624 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 12-28-10; Previous Sale: \$5,000, 06-09-72

1093 Upper Happy Valley Rd., \$1,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 3598 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 1-5-11; Previous Sale: \$720,000, 02-28-03

3384 Woodview Drive, \$810,000, 5 Bdrms, 2322 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 12-30-10; Previous Sale: \$820,000, 01-30-04

MORAGA

131 Hazelwood Place, \$702,500, 3 Bdrms, 1909 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 12-29-10; Previous Sale: \$500,000, 07-21-99

ORINDA

11 Aspinwall Court, \$875,000, 4 Bdrms, 1905 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 12-30-10; Previous Sale: \$945,000, 06-21-05

390 Camino Sobrante, \$620,000, 4 Bdrms, 2344 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 12-23-10; Previous Sale: \$428,000, 03-26-01

10 Dias Dorados, \$1,174,000, 4 Bdrms, 2536 SqFt, 2008 YrBlt, 12-30-10; Previous Sale: \$720,000, 05-23-08

149 Ivy Drive, \$655,000, 3 Bdrms, 1393 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 1-5-11

37 Las Cascadas Road, \$800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2660 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 12-28-10; Previous Sale: \$415,000, 02-29-96

30 Knickerbocker Lane, \$1,170,000, 4 Bdrms, 3567 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 1-3-11; Previous Sale: \$818,000, 05-09-03

181 Moraga Way, \$575,000, 2 Bdrms, 1678 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 12-28-10

25 Risa Court, \$780,000, 3 Bdrms, 1799 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 1-7-11; Previous Sale: \$978,000, 03-24-05

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1031 Sunrise Ridge Drive, 94549, JP Morgan Chase Bank, 01-10-11, \$1,004,500, 3422 sf, 4 bd

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Page: OH4 LAMORINDA WEEKLY OUR HOMES www.lamorindaweekly.com \$\mathcal{C}\$ 925-377-0977 Wednesday, February 2, 2011

Moving the Carefree Way

...Continued from page OH1



While the name Carefree Moves might seem to be an oxymoron to many who consider moving time stressful, chaotic, and anything but organized, Nolan and Vance calmly assure that moving does not need to be that way. Starting with a clear plan is the key to easy set up on the other end, but they acknowledge that the process can be challenging. "Clients may have 40 years of life in their home to be moved, and the realtor has presented them with a deadline within a few weeks. They

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don't know where to start," says Vance. Carefree Moves goes to the clients' next destination to determine what furniture and belongings will fit best, makes some recommendations, and creates a moving plan. "As a third party, they'll listen to us, and they appreciate the advice," adds Vance.

"The unpacking—that's one of the best assets our company provides," says Nolan. "Our professional organizers meet the moving truck at the other end. They line the kitchen shelves, organize the closets, and make the beds. That's what people love." Carefree Moves takes unpacking to the next level. They arrange furniture, hang pictures, and help clients create a new look. But if a client wants their new home to look just like the last, Carefree Moves is ready to oblige. They take photos to ensure they can recreate the same home arrangements. One of Carefree Moves' signature special touches is providing the transplants with a pot of homemade soup and fresh bread for their first dinner in their new home.

Despite the recent housing slump, Carefree Moves has been busy, and their team has expanded to include 14 lady movers. "We really focus on baby boomers," says Vance. We work with boomers who are downsizing, help their parents move to alternate living settings, and relocate their working kids who are busy and moving up." Carefree Moves provides an array of services, and clients can choose their level of moving support. Nolan and Vance pride themselves in the green aspects they bring to the moving process. They carefully reuse packing materials when possible and recycle and donate unwanted salvageable items.

Every move is different, and each project is a new challenge, but the outcome is always the same according to Vance and Nolan. "Once we have a plan, we're set to go. We can see the light at the end of the tunnel," says Vance. "And then it's gratifying to see the client thrilled at the end. We all feel satisfied," says Nolan.

Carefree Moves Cynthia Nolan and Dee Vance Office: (510) 336-2455 Cell: (925) 330-1988 carefreemoves@yahoo.com www.carefreemoves.net



Kate at work packing the kitchen.

Photos Doug Kohen

Cynthia Brian's Digging Deep Gardening Guide For Febuary

"There are two ways you can live your life - one as if nothing is a miracle, and the other as if everything is a miracle." -- Albert Einstein

Thank the heavens for the unfussy ubiquitous jonquil that waft away the weariness of winter's dark days with delicious scents. The crocus surprise and delight us as they pop up in the landscape. I personally am fond of the deep velvety moss covering brick walks, stone paths, and benches. The verdant green carpet reminds me of prehistoric forests. The occasional early daffodil stretches its golden head toward the scattered sunshine. February's dreariness is lessened with miracles from the garden.

- **BOOST** your spirits by buying a flowering houseplant for the kitchen.
- **ENROLL** in a gardening class.
- **SOAK** seeds of radishes, peas, beans, and alfalfa in a jar of water, drain, sprout, and eat.
- **READ** seed catalogues in preparation for choosing spring delights.
- EXPLORE a cactus garden. How about visiting the Ruth Bancroft Gardens in Walnut Creek? http://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/
- **EXPERIMENT** with more sustainable methods of gardening by not using synthetic fertilizers or pesticides.
- **EXPERIENCE** the healthy heart benefits of the ripening citrus and add the juice to your freshly picked kale, Swiss chard, and spinach.
- SHARE your best rose canes with neighbors and friends. If you are interested in receiving any cuttings from my prize winning roses, email me at Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com.
- **FIGHT** child obesity by growing your own vegetables and donating extras to a food pantry. If you have winter produce, share the wealth.
- **PROTECT** your hands from winter wear by applying lotion before putting on your garden gloves.
- **CLEAN** and sharpen your tools now. Make any repairs or replacements before spring springs.
- **FILL** your bird feeders weekly to keep our feathered friends in your garden during the cold season. If you feed them, they will come.
- **PHOTOGRAPH** an area of your garden and repeat every month to watch the changes.
- **WRITE** in your journal so you'll remember what each week brings to your outdoor sanctuary.
- **BRIGHTEN** the dismal days with a window box or porch pot of color spots available at your local garden center.
- PLANT succulents or cactus in a special sunny spot.
- **COVER** any frost tender plants with blankets or move inside the garage during the cold nights.
- **COMPOST**, compost, compost. I know you are tired of hearing me prod you, but this is an imperative ingredient of natural, organic gardening. Feed your soil and it will feed you.
- HARVEST winter cabbages, kale, Swiss chard, and spinach.
- **REMEMBER** your loved one on Valentine's Day with the gift of flowers from the florist or your backyard. (Add some dark chocolate for the lady in your life)

 Keep warm. Think sunny thoughts. Dream of spring light. Explore, experiment, experience. The splendor of the desert awaits your visit.

Happy gardening to you!

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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian-Prickly, Pretty, and Practical

"To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves." -Mahatma Gandhi



Close up of the cornucopia of colors of succulents

side from celebrating Valentine's Day, February may be the least favorite month of the year for gardeners who live in the continental United States. It is wet, dark, dreary, and not very conducive to digging in the dirt. For me, February is the time to dream of tropical oases and desert charmers

My parents gave each of us five children a small parcel of dirt on our farm with instructions to do whatever we wished with our gift. We could plant flowers, vegetables, weeds, or leave the land fallow. My brother chose to grow cactus for three reasons:

- 1. they were easy to maintain
- 2. they required little to no water
- 3. they kept away the rest of us

In my formative years, I didn't have an appreciation for succulents, cacti, or other desert plants. As an adult I'd like to add a fourth superlative to my brother's three – cactus and succulents are beautiful.

What are cacti? Part of the Cactaceae plant family, cacti is the plural for cactus, largest and most well known of succulent

plants with more than two thousand species growing in the Americas. Because their stems store water, they are excellent choices for plantings in arid, dry conditions or where water usage is restricted. All cacti are succulents but not all succulents are cactus. Succulents store water not only in their stems, but also in their leaves and roots often giving them a fleshy appearance. They developed in the Old World, whereas cactus evolved in our hemisphere. Only succulents that have spines can be called cactus. The good news is that you don't have to live in the desert to grow beautiful succulents and cactus.

When our children were quite young, we rode horses at a dude ranch in Arizona where the wilderness overflowed with cacti including thirty foot high Saguaro and two foot wide fish hook barrels. The cholas, with their dangerous needles and sharp barbs jumped out to grab us as we trotted. We didn't like cholas and made a note to never plant them. The kids were each given a tiny cactus in a pot as a souvenir. Over the

years they kept their respective cactus on their windowsills. Two decades later, these cacti are still thriving in the same containers, totally neglected, yet elegantly growing. Cacti require almost zero attention and if restricted, grow only as large as the pots in which they are planted.

My sister gave me a tiny prickly pear and my dad donated an agave. The flowers from the prickly pear are reminiscent of an orange sunset while the pear fruit adds zest to my salads. The nopales (the pads) are delicious as a cooked vegetable, tasting similar to green beans with a bit more fleshiness. (Note to the chef: Use tongs to peel both the pear and the nopales as they are prickly...hence the name prickly pear!) Planted in the ground, both have grown to many times their original size. The five-inch diameter agave gift has grown to twelve feet and spawned many an offspring. I have yet to attempt to make tequila but I thoroughly enjoy its impressive architecture in the land-

Since I'm not a fan of needles, my preference leans towards the spineless succulents. Here are a few of my very favorite specimens.

Sedum is a spectacular succulent for hot, sunny spots. With many different varieties, sedums combine color, texture, form, and flowers to interest any gardener. Many are low growing ground covers, others may reach 18 inches or more. Perfect for rock gardens and spilling out of containers.

Aeconium aborium- the black rose plant, is green with red edges, grows as a shrub to three feet both indoors and outdoors in full sun. Water every two weeks.

Crassula argentea-jade plant, is a succulent with tiny white blooms. Don't allow the soil to dry out. They are more finicky indoors but do great outdoors growing in bright light to ten feet. Great container plant, although the deer do love to eat them.

Sempervivum tectorum-hens and chicks produce clusters of rosettes which are the hens with the smaller rosettes being the chickens. Foliage can be red, light green, or a combination thereof. Easy to grow, they spread to two feet or more. Having always raised poultry, I adore this species of succulents. Propagate by picking off the chicks and planting elsewhere.

Agavoideae-agave plants are popular as ornamentals with their long, thick flesh leaves ending in a sharp point with a spine. Agaves are not cacti and they are not related to aloe. Stalks, flowers, leaves, and sap are edible. Only the Weber blue agave plants make tequila labeled as 100% blue agave. Be aware that getting the juice on your skin may cause a severe rash and acute dermatitis. Handle agaves with gloves and care.

...continued on page OH7



Succulent, Aeconium Aborium

Photos Cynthia Brian

Digging Deep

... Continued from page OH6

Aloe-aloe vera is plant that needs to be in a container in everyone's kitchen. It's an excellent first air remedy for burns, bites, and scratches. I break off a leaf and pour the thick gel directly on the wound. Aloe vera relieves itching and pain almost instantly.

Schlumbergera-Christmas Cactus is a favorite of every family for the holidays. The tips of the plant begin to grow darker, then magically a flower bursts into bloom in shades of pink, red, or white. They need more care than other cactus and are worth the trouble.

Hylotelephium-Formerly called a Sedum, Autumn Joy is a favorite low maintenance mainstay in my garden containers. Deep rose enation are borne on burgundy stems with green-blue leaves. Sedum is best pruned back in spring, then it sprouts again bearing clusters of flush pink flowers from summer through fall. You can break off a stem to plant anywhere. It grows with little water.

Stenocereus thurberi-organ pipe cactus is covered in spines and can grow to twenty-five feet with numerous ribs, but in a container it will remain small, which is the only way I'd want this cactus around. It boasts a pretty white cactus flower and requires only a few drops of water a month to thrive in a pot.

How to grow succulents

There are thousands of succulents and cacti that will adapt well in Lamorinda gardens. Choose the forms, colors, and flowering patterns that you prefer. Succulents are excellent in rock gardens as well as containers and cacti may used as privacy hedges. Peruse your local garden center, ask lots of questions, and get the information you need about growing patterns, especially height, width, and root depth. Succulents prefer bright light, thriving in cool nights with warm days. They aren't that fussy about soil as long as it drains well. Add sand or perlite to increase aeration and drainage. In the summer months, succulents are thirsty. In winter, they may only require water every couple of months. Overwatering is the main cause of the demise of succulents. Better dry than die!

Cacti are macho plants. Use caution with these menacing monsters. Those spiky thorns protect the plants from animals and humans. Always wear long sleeves, pants, and gloves when handling cacti. My sister created a cacti fence around her barn to keep out the predators. It works! Succulents make wonderful dormitory gifts for university students who want a bit of nature inside but have little time for nurturing.

Looking back, my brother made a great choice for his plot of land. As water prices rise, we may be wise to look to these prickly, pretty, and practical plants as a viable alternative to living green.



Who says cactus don't grow in pine groves? Pine nuts and tequila anyone?

Photo Cynthia Brian

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