

LAMORINDA

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FREE

19th Annual Lafayette Reservoir Run
 Sponsored by Oakwood
Sunday, October 30, 2011
8:00am Downtown Lafayette
 2 Mile Run/Walk (8:00am) • 5K (8:30am) • 10K (8:45am)
 Register at www.active.com or www.lafayettechamber.org or call 925-284-7404



A kaleidoscope of kindergarten butterflies alight on the playground at Rheem Elementary School

Photo Doug Kohen

Butterflies are Free

By Cathy Dausman

Mention a school parade in October, and thoughts naturally turn to Halloween. This parade, although also predominately colored orange and black, was not. It was the annual Donald Rheem Elementary Butterfly Parade and release. Three classes of kindergarteners, with their fifth grade “buddies,” for an audience and a host of parents, families and friends marched

the playground in decorated cardboard butterfly wings before watching the Painted Lady butterflies they had raised fly away. Painted Ladies, also known as thistle butterflies, or cosmopolitan, look like a slightly smaller version of the Monarch butterfly.

Principal Elaine Frank said this year’s Butterfly Parade was the school’s 37th, with retired Rheem kindergarten teachers Al-

berta Svendsen, Kathi Beadleson and Maryeda Theer in attendance, and a second generation kindergarten student participating. Stephanie Kusinski’s daughter Hania made her own wings this year; after the parade the pair met with Theer, who was Stephanie’s kindergarten teacher.

... continued on page A10

Quote of the Week:

"I am writing this as part of the Communications merit badge."
 Orinda Boy Scouts speak out - read Letters to the Editor, page A8

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Lafayette Draft Downtown Plan Ready for Final Hearings

By Cathy Tyson

It’s a massive document almost five years in the making. Forget the latest thriller, civic-minded Lafayette residents have an early Christmas gift, of sorts, with the newly released Revised Draft Downtown Specific Plan (r DSP), available on-line from the city website, www.lovelafayette.org. The r DSP is meant to compliment Lafayette’s existing General Plan with more detailed land use and a design framework for future growth to preserve and enhance this small city.

Although the document is complete, it has not yet been adopted by the City Council. The Planning Commission will be holding hearings on the r DSP and form recommendations for the City Council at meetings slated for November 7, November 21 and December 5. “We hope to take the recommendations to the City Council by late January for adoption of

the DSP and certification of the EIR (Environmental Impact Report),” said Special Projects Manager Ann Merideth.

At just over a hundred pages with photos, charts and graphs, this is one-stop shopping for municipal planning and design goals. If eventually adopted by the City Council it will serve as an integral guideline for steering development for the next twenty years. A vision for growth is specified, and priorities to accomplish that vision are spelled out.

It’s fair to say when the process started the Specific Plan was not embraced by the public. The final version looks different from the original draft plan by consultant team Wallace Roberts and Todd. The City used the firm, but after significant blow back from the public, decided to customize a Plan from the ground up. “While both plans are based on a district-

based strategy and place heavy emphasis on maintaining Lafayette’s downtown character, the revised DSP is more consistent with the General Plan’s goals and polices for the downtown,” said Merideth. “The WRT plan called for higher height limits by right and higher residential densities in some parts of the downtown. The revised DSP maintains the height limits and densities that are in the General Plan, and, like the General Plan, only allows greater height when certain findings can be made.”

The height component of the r DSP has been the most controversial element of the Plan from the start. Residents were clearly concerned about changing the character of the City and even speculated that taller buildings would lead to the ‘Walnut Creek-ization’ of Lafayette. ... continued on page A3

Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Not Shaken During Quake Drill



By Cathy Dausman

Over 1200 Miramonte High School students, faculty and staff took an hour last Thursday morning to duck, cover and evacuate their classrooms as participants in this year’s Great California ... read on page B1

Sports C1-C3

Campolindo Dominates in the Battle of the Unbeatens



By Alex Kozela

Campolindo turned the battle of local unbeatens into one of the most lopsided results of the season, blowing out Miramonte with a 42-6 home victory. After finishing the last ... read on page C1

Our Homes D1-D12

Happy Haunting



By Lee Borrowman

The signs are unmistakable—they appear on front yards and driveways, in doorways and windows. Everything from scarecrows to skeletons, pumpkin patches to graveyards, and all manner of creepy crawlies ...read on page D1