



Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, May 1, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, May 8, at 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Finance Advisory Committee

Special Meeting:
Wednesday, May 9, at 6:00 pm
Community Room, City Hall
22 Orinda Way

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District
Monday, May 14, 6:00 pm
OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org
Phone (925) 253-4200

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



Police Report

Pipe dreams, 4/16/12 When report of a suspicious subject came in, Orinda police stopped a 49-year-old male driver. Said driver was found to have a pipe and white powder. Not being Frosty the Snowman, the pipe wasn't corn cob, it was glass, and the suspicious powder wasn't snow, but looked like methamphetamine. Tests showed it was methamphetamine. The subject, already on active probation, was arrested and booked; his car was towed.

All of the above, 4/16/12 A 27-year-old male pulled over for a traffic stop presented police with a California ID card instead of a license. He volunteered that his license was suspended for a variety of reasons – a) driving under the influence, b) not having insurance, c) expired auto registration and d) past parking violations. Police added an on-site arrest to his resume, the man was released at the site and his car towed.

Ring in the rain, 4/11/12 A 22-year-old male was found walking barefoot in the rain in 40-50 degree weather, going door to door ringing door bells. His clothes were soaked, his speech was slurred, he reeked of alcohol and he didn't know what city he was in or how he got here (hint: it was Orinda). He admitted to police he drank "around ten drinks last night." He was arrested, transported and booked into Martinez Detention Facility, where he presumably dried out, inside and out.



Open only on Sunday the 29th, 1-5 or by appointment



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Of Fences and Neighbors

By Laurie Snyder



Gate between Knickerbocker and Stein Way

Photo Laurie Snyder

The great gate debate rages on as residents of Orinda's Knickerbocker Lane and Stein Way recently laid concerns about a gate separating their two neighborhoods at the feet of Orinda City Council members.

Multiple presenters on April 10 stressed that the debate, which has grown decidedly discordant over the last few months, should not be thought of as neighborhood against neighborhood, but rather as a disagreement between those who favor keeping the gate in place

with those wanting it removed – the pro-gaters versus the no-gaters.

"This is not two neighborhoods locked in combat," observed Steve Schnier, Chair of the Orinda Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC), as he also explained why TSAC members voted to ask the Council to permanently remove the gate.

Often on the receiving end of praise, TSAC has been criticized in the gate debate of late for overstepping its "traffic calming bounds."

"We are purely advisory,"

began Schnier. "We do not conduct hearings. We do not make decisions," he said as he recalled opportunities area residents were given over the past several months to express support for or against the gate.

"We had been asked by City Council to consider this. We considered it," Schnier said. "In the end, there was one value that carried the day.... We did not even want to take a single step," he continued, toward supporting a gate that would contribute to making Orinda "a patchwork of gated enclaves."

Pro-gaters cited guarantees made by the developer, real estate agents, and even City personnel to keep the gate in place to reduce traffic and speeding. "We don't think it's fair to ignore promises made," said the group's lead presenter, who also stated that there is "no motivation to exclude Orindans," and observed that the gate in question was placed on the street

because that street "was never intended to be a through road."

Another pro-gater advised Council members of the existence of a formal agreement between the City and Castlegate regarding the structure, and warned that opening the gate would cause problems. When the gate came down before, she said, traffic and speed increased – as did vandalism.

"It's not geography, but ideology," said Mike Low, who served as the no-gaters' chief spokesperson, and asked the Council to consider what action would serve the greatest amount of good.

No-gaters cited the wear-and-tear on the neighborhood's roads and environmental degradation from residents forced to drive 1.5 miles with the gate instead of 0.5 miles without – estimated by the group to be an increase in travel of 160 percent. Several felt the gate was un-neighborly and created an undesired enclave feel to the area.

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Jeffries Named Orinda Police Department's Officer of the Year

By Laurie Snyder



"This has been my best assignment in 20 years," says Detective Danny Jeffries, of his time with the Orinda Police Department. Photo Cathy Dausman

Orinda Police Detective Danny Jeffries describes himself as simply a generalist. "I am not an award guy. I just enjoy doing my stuff."

His direct supervisor, Detective Sergeant Neil Rafanan, tells it differently. Explaining to Orinda City Council why Jeffries was being honored as Orinda's 2011 Officer of the Year April 10, Rafanan credited Jeffries with the arrest of over 24 suspects last year.

Reached later for comment, Rafanan commended the investigative abilities of his friend. "He's got great perspective... natural instinct."

Jeffries got his start with his high school Explorers club, and recommends it as "a great program" for young people interested in law enforcement.

His first job was as an officer for the Oakland Housing Authority Police, followed by stints in Kensington, Hayward, and Kensington again, where he received a promotion to the rank of Sergeant before

moving to the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department (CCSD).

He's been with the Orinda Police Department (OPD) for five years, and is described by Rafanan as the best partner he's ever had. The two share a warm camaraderie. Both speak highly of their chief, Jeffrey Jennings.

Interviews with the three were punctuated by active chatter coming in over new P-25 radios, illustrating just how frenetic OPD days are.

"You get some hard core people coming to Orinda to commit crimes," said Jeffries, who noted the majority come from outside of the area. "A couple have even made me shudder."

"Orinda is a target-rich environment," added Rafanan. Laptops, big screen televisions, and other electronics are the most popular items.

They can be easily grabbed and sold.

"That's why we created the home security audit," said Jeffries. The free assessments average 15 minutes and help make homes less vulnerable. Residents who have not yet had one done may contact OPD for details: (925) 254-6820.

When the worst happens, he said, call OPD promptly. The quicker police can get cracking on tracking, the more likely they are to be successful. They've recovered a significant amount of stolen property, including priceless and irreplaceable heirloom jewelry which had been passed down to one resident from her great-grandmother.

"Be vigilant in your neighborhoods," Jeffries advised, "and look out for one another."

Jeffries will rotate out of Orinda for a new assignment in June.

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informaorinda.com

**Grand Opening
April 30th**



"Dr. Laurie" Langford

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