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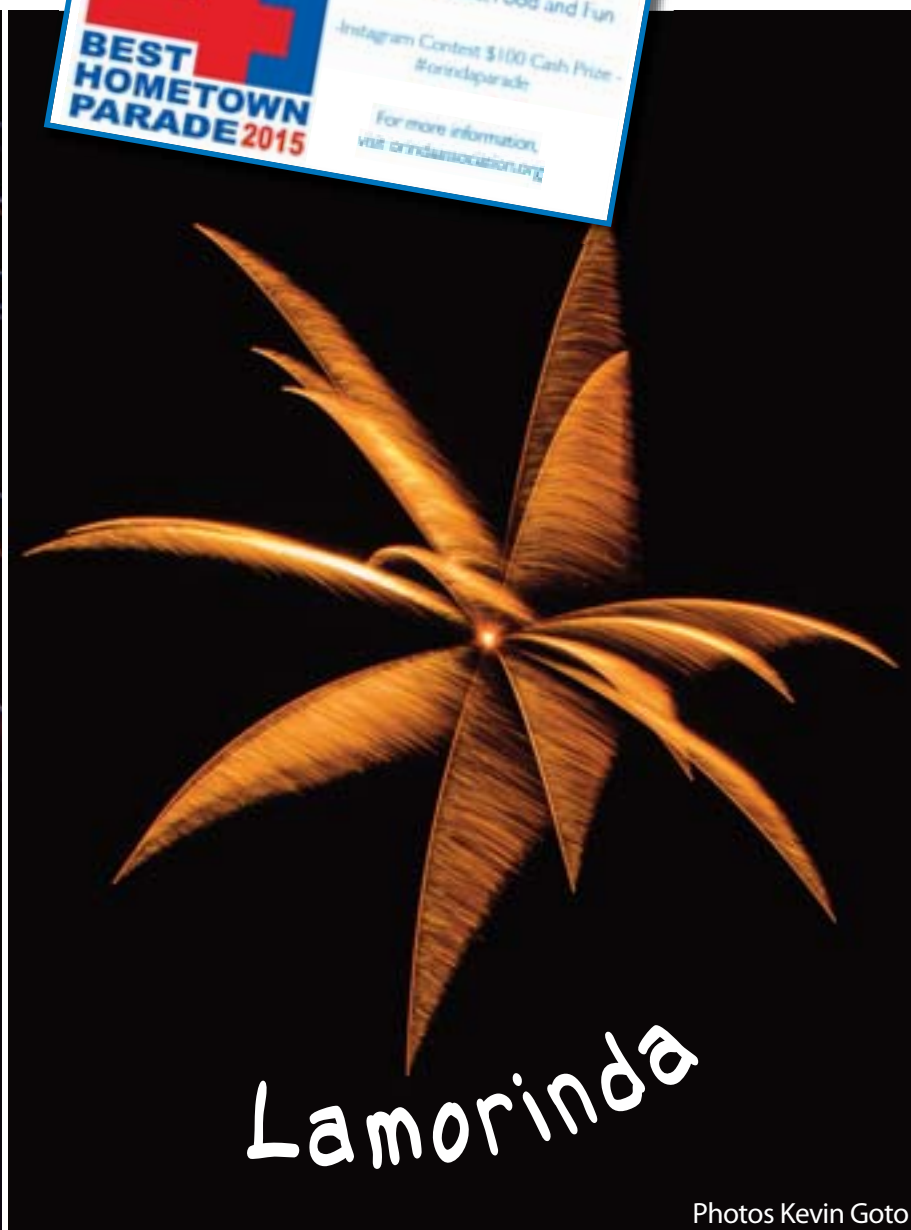
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Happy 4th of July



Lamorinda

Photos Kevin Goto

Do Not Try This at Home

Enjoy only the public fireworks displays, urge Lamorinda fire officials

By Nick Marnell

The combination of July 4 falling on a Saturday night coupled with severe drought conditions will have Lamorinda fire agencies on high alert this holiday weekend, as officials once again warn those who mess with illegal fireworks of the potential disastrous consequences.

Each year, dozens of people are injured by fireworks and fire-

crackers in Contra Costa County, according to Stephen Healy, fire chief of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. "Some of these injuries have been severe, including the loss of hands and fingers," he said.

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District investigator Vic Massenkoff recalled a pyrotechnics incident that he responded to years ago.

Three teenagers were driving along a highway, the front floor of the passenger side of their car loaded with two and a half inch mortar shells. The passenger in the front seat fired the shells out the side window. One of the shells bounced off the front door of the car and caromed into the pile of explosives on the floor by the front seat.

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First Steps Made for Moraga Community Foundation

Will help come in time to save the Rheem?

By Cathy Tyson

"We need to buy the place!" suggested one resident among roughly 100 who turned out for a kickoff meeting to discuss forming a nonprofit community foundation to save the Rheem Theatre.

The focus of the evening was to outline for concerned residents what it takes to start a foundation that could support many other nonprofit and service organizations, with an initial goal of raising money to buy the theater.

The property has been for sale since September of 2014, at a reported asking price of \$4.6 million for the theater and adjacent structures down to Ristorante Amoroma. There have been no takers so far, and it is unclear what the cost would be for only the theater portion of the parcel. Currently Town Manager Jill Keimach has negotiated a reprieve for the theater after meeting with property owner Mahesh Puri and theater op-

erator Derek Zemrak; all intend to work on a long-term solution to keep the theater open.

The publisher of the Lamorinda Weekly, Andy Scheck, organized the launch event and has already filed the corporation papers for the Moraga Community Foundation, but official approval from the IRS for the nonprofit status takes some time. Meanwhile the Lafayette Community Foundation has set up a separate fund for the Moraga Community Foundation to receive tax-deductible donations.

Two guest speakers who have experience in starting foundations came from Lafayette and Orinda to share advice. Anne Grodin is one of the original organizers of the Lafayette Community Foundation, and Mark Roberts, former citizen of the year in Orinda was a member of the Orinda Community Foundation for three years.

"The Lafayette Community Foundation

started with five folks in my living room in 1999," said Grodin, explaining that it was simply "a group of folks who got together because they love Lafayette so much." A key helping hand in getting the ball rolling was the East Bay Community Foundation, founded in 1928, which offered instruction on setting up bylaws, policies and procedures and gave direction about doing a feasibility study. The Lafayette Community Foundation annually gives away thousands of dollars, but its big focus early on was helping to fund the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center, ultimately donating \$12.7 million dollars.

She cautioned there are "many steps before serious fundraising" and the foundation currently participates in a number of fundraising efforts to raise about \$50,000 per year – from its successful garage tour to the Taste of Lafayette event.

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