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## Lamorinda municipalities meet jointly on traffic, development

By Sora O'Doherty

The annual joint meeting of the councils of the cities of Orinda and Lafayette and the Town of Moraga got off to a surprising start when citizen Doug Home spoke in the public forum to advise that virtually all problems can be resolved by making prayers in public schools mandatory. It was not the only controversial subject to arise that night.

At the March 1 meeting, Mary Bruns made a plea to Orinda to fund the Lamorinda Spirit Van, which provides transportation for seniors in all three jurisdictions. Orinda City Council does not fund the Spirit Van because Orinda has a separate program for seniors, Seniors Around Town. However, the Orinda Community Foundation does support the Spirit Van. Orinda residents represent about a quarter of the rides provided, with the other roughly three quarters being split between Lafayette and Moraga, with Lafayette usage being somewhat higher. Seniors can also use County Connection LINK paratransit services, Road to Recovery, operated by the American

Cancer Society, Senior Helpline Services, and private providers, such as taxis, Uber and Lyft.

James Hinkamp, transportation planner for the City of Lafayette, reported that they are analyzing projected growth and trying to plan traffic mitigation measures. The primary "pinch point" is the intersection of Moraga Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Measures being considered include a second northbound right-turn lane from Moraga Road (which would require the removal of two crosswalks), a southbound left-turn pocket, and the use of smart corridors and signal timing management. These methods may be phased in gradually as needed.

Moraga is still awaiting authorization to get its sinkhole repaired, and has experienced further delay in the Rheem Boulevard closure owing to the large amount of rainfall. The all-access playground at the Commons is receiving a lot of support. As to housing development in Moraga, Planning Director Ellen Clark noted that Camino Ricardo's Harvest Court will add 20 homes

and a new public park, while Via Moraga will add 17 new homes. Other projects include Rancho Laguna on Rheem Boulevard, Bollinger Valley (126 single family homes), and Indian Valley along Moraga Road towards Canyon (71 lot subdivision).

Saint Mary's College is not anticipating substantial growth over the next 15 years and has a long range master plan. Barry Behr noted that Saint Mary's is a town within a town, a jewel we all enjoy, and employs 5,000 people.

Lafayette development projects are proceeding under its 2002 General Plan, with goals of preserving hillsides and encouraging multifamily housing downtown under its downtown specific plan. There are currently 515 units, and two more compounds will be build. Where the defunct Celia's restaurant is there will be an additional 66 units, including a restaurant space and retail space. Woodbury Highlands, over Woodbury, will add something upwards of 90 units.

Orinda Mayor Eve Phillips

spoke about Orinda's pavement repair progress. Under Measure L Orinda is spending \$10 million annually on residential road repair, and will need an additional \$3.5 million each year for ongoing maintenance. For arterials and collections \$20 million is needed annually, and for storm drains the city will need more than \$15 million. As for development, Wilder will add 245 residences when complete, J&J Ranch will add 13 homes, and eight at Lavenida Lane.

A number of Moraga residents turned out to address the situation of two houses that suffered great damage in a landslide last year, and many residents blamed EBMUD for not fixing the problem. Katy Keough and Susan Romak also asked Lafayette and Orinda to join their voices to Moraga's to urge EBMUD to act.

The meeting concluded with a presentation by Community Choice Energy of Marin (MCE). Dawn Weisz of MCE explained that when Lafayette joined MCE 11 per cent of users went to MCE in the first few months, with 2

percent of users opting for the "deep green" 100 percent renewable energy. MCE has 24 projects all over California, with \$1.6 billion committed to solar, wind, and biogas power. MCE, a not-for-profit public agency, employs union labor, with 2,800 union jobs, and pays prevailing wages. Lafayette has a goal of 20 percent greenhouse gas reduction by 2020, and is on track to meet that goal in its first year with MCE. Moraga would see a 66 percent reduction in its first year, should it choose to join MCE, and Orinda would reduce 44,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide in its first year.

In response to questions from Orinda City Council Member Inga Miller, the cities do not share in liabilities, and that customers can opt back into PG&E service at any time. Council Member Jeanette Fritsky of Moraga inquired about longterm prices and rates, and was assured that rates should stay low as there is an oversupply of generated energy and the system is not even close to saturation.

## LAC Celebrates Local Young Artists

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Top left: 2D third place by Jadey Sadoff; bottom row from left: 2D second place by Nicole Edwards; Best in Show by Abby Lapporte; and 2D first place by Anastasia Leones. Photo Andy Scheck

Over 200 student artworks were judged by a three panel jury of professional artists from the community, all volunteering their time in each of three categories: 2-D, 3-D, and photography/digital design.

Bill Carmel, co-curator for the Orinda Library Art Gallery and one of the judges in the 3-D category, said, "I've judged many student art shows around the greater East Bay, and this is by far one of the best shows I've ever seen of student work. Also, impressive is that many pieces exhibit a sense of humor which is rare. It gives me hope."

One such piece was Campolindo Freshman April Lindblad's sculpture "Light as a Feather." The piece, which features a repurposed lamp covered with brightly colored feathers, won an Honorable Mention Award in the 3-D category.

Cash awards were given for first, second and third place as

well as four Honorable Mentions in each category. The "Best of Show" Award was voted on by all nine judges and given this year to Abby Lapporte, a sophomore at Acalanes, for her Untitled acrylic painting of three figures suspended in a surreal setting.

"My piece started as a class assignment to combine collage and painting," said Lapporte. "I knew I wanted to combine things that interested me, so I chose space and nature. It was interesting to connect several images that weren't related to each other individually into one cohesive piece. This process helped me learn how to visualize my art differently."

The awards reception, held at the Orinda Library Art Gallery, included entertainment by the Campolindo Jazz Quartet and a packed house of parents, students, art teachers and other community art supporters. Denise Nomura, organizer of this year's event, said, "We had an

overwhelming response from students this year, and the level of talent exceeds our expectations every year."

Maya Jenn, a junior at Campolindo, was required to enter the contest by her Advanced Placement Photography teacher Collette Sweeney. Jenn was happy for the push as the experience paid off with a first place award in the photography/digital design category. Her photo, taken in the Mulholland Open Space Reserve, is a hauntingly beautiful portrait of her friend Lily.

Nicole Edwards, an Acalanes sophomore who won second place in the 2-D category, said, "I was very surprised when I won Second Place, especially when I saw all of the incredible artwork on display. I was inspired to make a turtle drawing from a memorable trip I had with close friends and family in Maui. It makes me very happy that people appreciated my work!"

Nathan Shin was similarly

surprised; he didn't find out until the next day that his cardboard sculpture entitled "Full Metal Alchemist" won second place in the 3-D category. "The idea for the piece came from a Manga (graphic novel) I was reading in which the characters are trying to recreate a human and fail." Shin plans to spend his winnings on taking his family out for dinner to celebrate.

First place winner in the 3-D category for his ceramic sculpture "Fish," Aidan McBride, was inspired by a wooden head sculpture he saw at the Natural History Museum in New York. It evolved from a series of ideas over a five-month period into a 50-pound hand-sculpted head with bulging eyes. McBride also won an honorable mention award in the 2D

category. McBride stated, "It was pretty exciting to win, and it was nice to see what other schools and artists are doing. I will spend the award money on my gap year travels."

Lawrence Khol, president of the Lamorinda Arts Council, presented the awards reminding all the students that "you are all winners. Your work will be seen by thousands of people during the month by visitors to the gallery. I'm in awe of the talent this year." The exhibit will run through March 30.

The contest was sponsored by the Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club, the Educational Foundation of Orinda, Lafayette Partners in Education, and the Moraga Education Foundation.

## List of winners

**Best of Show:** Untitled by Abby Lapporte, Acalanes, 10th grade

**2-D**

**1st place:** "Cara" by Anastasia Leones, Acalanes 11th grade

**2nd place:** "Fractured Hawaiian Sea Turtle" by Nicole Edwards, Acalanes 10th grade

**3rd place:** Untitled by Jadey Sadoff, Acalanes, 12th grade

**Honorable Mentions:**

"Girl" by Elle Hoarau, Acalanes, 11th grade

"Homeless" by Ana Bernardo, Campolindo, 12th grade

"Cupcakes" by Grace Schmidt, Campolindo, 11th grade

"Will to Power" by Aidan McBride, Miramonte, 11th grade

**3-D**

**1st place:** "Fish" by Aidan McBride, Miramonte, 11th grade

**2nd place:** "Full Metal Alchemist" by Nathan Shin, Las Lomas, 11th grade

**3rd place:** "Humans" by Zoe Venable, Miramonte, 11th grade

**Honorable Mentions:**

"Light as a Feather" by April Lindblad, Campolindo, 9th grade

"A Cardboard Fist" by Justin Li, Las Lomas, 9th grade

"Coil Vessel" by Charlotte Ensley, Acalanes, 12th grade

"Midnight" by Dana Chan, Miramonte, 12th grade

**Photography/Digital Design**

**1st place:** Untitled by Maya Jenn, Campolindo, 11th grade

**2nd place:** Untitled by Isabel Owens, Campolindo, 12th grade

**3rd place:** "Solitary" by Isobel Whitehead, Acalanes, 11th grade

**Honorable Mentions:**

Untitled by Emilie Naughten, Campolindo, 12th grade

Untitled by Vincent Ho, Campolindo, 12th grade

"Poking the Bubble" by Henry Braff, Bentley Upper School, 11th grade

"Dancing Through Life" by Nell Kessenich, Acalanes, 10th grade