

# Letters to the editor

## Election integrity

In this era of concern about election integrity, it is critically important that voters in Contra Costa County pay close attention to this year's election for Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar, our county's top election official. For the first time in 18 years, there is a contested election for this position and it's imperative that we elect a leader with the ethics, integrity and experience to do the job. Kristin Connelly is that leader.

Kristin has had a long-standing interest in election integrity that started when she was a law student and served as a non-partisan poll monitor

helping people experiencing problems voting. Kristin saw first-hand the lengths some interests will go to suppress the vote, including fraudulent signs directing voters to a non-existent polling place and a fake "MySpace" page targeted at college students erroneously stating that members of one party voted on Tuesday and members of the other major party were supposed to vote the day after the election, on Wednesday.

Misinformation about voting and elections is a threat to our democracy. Kristin believes that transparency about the elections process and battling misinformation about how to vote will be critically important

to maintaining confidence in the integrity of our elections – and our democracy.

Kristin is an East Bay native, who returned from a prestigious career on the East Coast to raise her family in Lafayette. Kristin's leadership skills have greatly benefitted Lamorinda and Contra Costa County. She is the CEO of the East Bay Leadership Council, the Executive Director of the Contra Costa Economic Partnership and a Trustee on the Acalanes Union High School District Governing Board.

I urge voters to take the time to learn more about this important office and to vote for Kristin Connelly for Contra

Costa County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar in the June 7 primary election.

Rachel Zenner Kane Orinda

## Orinda's Draft Housing Element Proposes Gas Station Monopoly

Orinda's Draft Housing Element proposes that all of the local gas stations, as well as Orinda Motors, be replaced with housing, except for the Chevron station. A monopoly would be created. Also, residents would need to drive out of town to get their vehicles serviced or smog checked. One can only wonder whether this has anything to do with Chevron's "second donation of \$5,000" to Friends of Orinda Creeks.

<https://restoresanpablocreek.org/news/#e46b43c3-aaf6-47df-a55d-abace80e0b15> As some of you know, the 1,400 long "day-lighted" segment of San Pablo Creek is a pet project of several council members, and of a small but vocal minority of residents; less than 50% of residents according to a scientific poll. See Table 5-4 (page 133-34) and Figure 5-3 (page 135). Orinda Motors (sites DPP-1 and DPP-8, Mash Gas (DPP-31), 76 (DPP-33), and Shell (DPP-36) are listed as potential housing sites in the Draft Housing Element <https://cityoforinda.app.box.com/v/Draft-HousingElement>. The Chevron station, 11 Orinda Way, is not listed as a site for housing.

Nick Waranoff Orinda

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# Easter Bunny to visit Orinda and Lafayette, April 16



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Local children will have two more opportunities to fill

their baskets with colorful eggs in Lamorinda on Sat-

urday, April 16. The Spring Egg Hunt returns to Orinda after its absence during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents and their toddlers to second-graders are invited to this free event, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Orinda. The egg hunt will take place at 11 a.m. at the Orinda Community Center Park.

In Lafayette, the Community Candy Scramble sponsored by the Lafayette Rotary Club will take place at 10 a.m. at Plaza Park in front of Sideboard, on the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road, for young children up to second grade. According to the

Lafayette Rotary, the Easter Bunny hopes kids "hop on over to the park for the egg

hunt and a real good time." – S. O'Doherty

# Lafayette opportunity sites

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... The council has always budgeted conservatively, and we're approaching [the Housing Element] in the same vein," said Elrod, who noted that the final decision was up the commissioners and the city.

The commissioners voted unanimously to recommend to staff not to upzone Area 8 north of Deer Hill, not to up-

zone the DeSilva property South (while keeping the zoning of DeSilva North at 35 du/ac), upzone Areas 1, 3 and 5 that are to the north near Highway 24 to 50 du/ac and upzone BART properties to 80 du/ac with the understanding that staff will be looking at pa-

rameters to ensure the buffer is high enough. Staff will return to the Planning Commission on April 18 to review a complete draft of the Housing Element before a final vote to forward the draft HE to the city council for consideration at its May 9 and 23 meetings.

The entire meeting can be viewed on the city of Lafayette's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOrNwPOqxm0&t=13738s>

# Pickleball

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"I worked with local Pickleball enthusiast Budd MacKenzie to organize volunteers to set up and take down the courts," says Katayanagi. "The volunteers also raised funds to purchase durable, portable outdoor nets. The (Lafayette Pickle Ball Club, an informal group founded by MacKenzie) worked with me to reach out to the Senior Services Commission to approve co-sponsorship of the volunteer pilot program that allows for free drop-in play." Volunteers of the club offer free instruction to seniors in coordination with the Senior Services Department.

The Lafayette rink was developed in 2010 with Park Facilities development fees and donations from the Roller Hockey user group. Prior to that, the PTR department set up a temporary rink several times a week in the Community Center parking lot.

The Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission showed forethought and realized that all the spaces at the Community Center, including the rink, needed to be multi-purpose to maximize use. The roller hockey rink was de-

signed with basketball courts and lined for Lacrosse. When it was time to resurface the rink in 2019, the Senior Services Commission collected feedback from the community about the needs of older adults. Pickleball came up as an activity of interest and city staff began researching; meeting with local Pickleball players and learning that a tennis court surface was necessary to allow for appropriate play.

On the city's website, "Pickleball Guidelines" detail the primary rules and advisories regarding public use, along with sport etiquette and instructions for participants. A schedule for play is posted on a bulletin board on the rink shed and notes that the rink is a reservation facility and "you must have a permit for organized play and fee programs. Single family and drop-in individual use may be allowed if the rink is not reserved."

In the city's mid-year budget, Katayanagi said council members approved staff's recommendation to replace existing rink lights with energy efficient LEDs and install a timer that will open up more nighttime drop-ins and extend the available play time during un-

derutilized winter months. An additional Automated External Defibrillator was purchased to support the activity. A Pickle Ball Club volunteer who is a firefighter gave lessons to players about proper use of the device.

Asked about other improvements or expanding the program in response to the surge of interest that continues even as the COVID-19 vaccine alters the sports landscape again, Katayanagi admits time at the rink is at a premium. Presently the program cannot expand. "The rink was already helping with the city's need for fields and now we are in a place where we need fields to open up more time (for field sports) to allow for more Pickleball on the rink. The Pickleball players love the facility so much and would use it all day, but we need to maintain the multi-use of the rink while there is still a shortage of field space in the community."

The rink remains available for other rental uses, according to Katayanagi. Information about renting can be found at [www.lovelafayette.org/rink](http://www.lovelafayette.org/rink) and group programs (larger than one or two families or fee-based rentals) must reserve the rink for a fee.

## Two new listings, pending within a week, with no preemptive offers!!



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