

Letters to the editor

Wagner Ranch Nature Area

I want to tell you about a very beautiful woodland that is enriched by streams, ponds and wildlife. For twenty years Native People of our region, led by Cherokee Elder, Chester Miner, gathered for the Fall Olive Festival and the Spring Earth Day Festival to drum, sing, dance and bless the land. Since the late 1970's more than 15,000 children have been immersed in Native American Studies taught

by Naturalist Toris Jaeger. The Wagner Ranch Nature Area is an important site for Ohlone People and the historic home and ranch of California's first Surveyor General, Theodore Wagner. For years the Orinda Historical Society and the city landmarks committee proposed to list the Wagner home as an historical site. However, to date the OUSD has declined to restrict the use of its property in any way.

It is distressing to report that for the past 15 months, the Wagner

Ranch Nature Area has been closed due to hazards such as trees felled by the 2023 storms. Facilitated by Assembly Person, Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, in September 2023 the District was awarded a grant of \$1.5M from the State to mitigate the hazards.

Despite pleas from Orinda citizens and students, the District still has not decided if it will accept the grant. A student at Miramonte High School started a Change.org petition – Save the Wagner Ranch

Nature Area – which received hundreds of signatures in the first few days and has more than 1000 to date. Paper petitions are also circulating in the community. Hundreds of signatures were turned into the District at its May 6th School Board Meeting.

The delay in accepting these funds for re-

pairing the Nature Area remains a mystery to most Orinda citizens, who support the reopening and protection of this historically and ecologically unique treasure for students and the community. If not accepted by mid-June, the \$1.5M goes back to the State's general fund.

Please help encour-

age the Orinda school board trustees to accept the grant, complete the hazard mitigation work, and re-open the Nature Area! Also, please sign the petition at www.change.org/save-the-wagner-ranch-nature-area.

Katharine D. Barrett Orinda

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence — we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate. Lamorinda Weekly reserves the right to refuse publishing a letter submission. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C #202, Moraga, CA 94556

Town of Moraga and MOFD host Fire Safety Community Meeting

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There are parcel level mitigations that involve property owner cooperation. Maintain a Zone Zero (0-5 feet from a structure) free of combustible material to include mulch and fences; home hardening retrofits; roofs and gutters maintained free of leaves and needles; annual grass and weeds cut to 3 inches or less by June 1; juniper removed

within 10 feet of a road; dead trees removed within 100 feet of structures or property; and ladder fuels removed to create six foot airgaps to tree canopy.

Watkins explained that urban conflagration is a phenomenon that is new to insurance agencies. Homeowners don't understand why they can still be considered high-risk when they've done everything they can to fire-proof their

property. However, their entire neighborhood must be in alignment with regards to home-hardening in order to be considered low-risk.

King discussed the importance for residents to register with the Community Warning System (www.cwsalerts.com) with regards to emergency information. In a statement sent through Nixle, MPD explained that CWS is "what will be used in the event of an

emergency to issue evacuation orders and warnings. CWS allows us to notify people within individual evacuation zone areas, ensuring that notifications are directed to those who need them, rather than being sent out townwide. CWS is the primary warning system that will be used, and residents should register both mobile and residence phone numbers with CWS."

The town also uses

the Genasys Protect program (www.protect.genasys.com) which displays evacuation zones and will be used with CWS in order to provide additional information to residents. The project is funded by the county's Measure X funds.

Moraga also uses Nixle to provide emergency and advisory information. Nixle is available through the Everbridge app, which can be

found in the App Store or via Google. For additional information about emergency preparedness visit: www.lamorindacert.org.

Mitnick spoke to the unlikely scenario of a complete evacuation of the town and noted that with the 1,118 Housing Element units that Moraga is required to build, staff is very mindful of the evacuation possibilities and procedures.

Peaceful protest as Saint Mary's College brings students and staff together

By Lou Fancher

Clashes between pro-Palestinian students and leaders of colleges and universities across the United States have made the headlines for months. Several protest demonstrations over the Israel-Gaza war have resulted in suspensions, arrests, forceful closure of encampments, and violent interactions between police, students, and outside demonstrators. Students in chapters of organizations such as Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace are demanding academic institutions call for a per-

manent ceasefire in Gaza, disclose financial investments—and, in some cases, academic links—to Israel, and divest of all investments associated with arms suppliers or other companies profiting from the war.

All too often what is missing from the headlines are the stories of what has happened at college campuses like Saint Mary's College in Moraga. On the evening of May 16, approximately 20 Saint Mary's students held vigil around a De La Salle statue memorial recognizing Palestinian

children killed after the Hamas invasion of Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. Students then began a peaceful occupation of the nearby chapel, including seven students who began a hunger strike. Among them was the peaceful sit-in's co-organizer Jacob Machnik, a student with the SMC chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine. He is an ethnic studies major and graduated May 25, along with the rest of the 2024 undergraduate class.

"We began with the vigil and sit-in Wednesday night and it was early

Thursday morning that an administrator came in to request an opportunity to meet with us," Machnik said in an interview. "We sent back a request to meet with the provost and they responded immediately. By that second night, we were in

negotiations."


Executive Vice President and Provost Corey Cook in a separate interview described the first interactions: "To be honest, my greatest concern was the hunger strike, not the political pressure. We were headed into fi-

nals and graduation. I needed them to eat, to get a good night's sleep. Importantly, we didn't need them to harm themselves to get our attention."

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In Memory

John Patrick Hession



John Patrick Hession passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by his children. A resident of Lafayette since 1978, he grew up in Hastings, England. Born on November 4, 1931, to John and Eileen Hession, he had two siblings, eldest sister Eileen and younger sister Rosemary.

As a young man, John worked in administration at St. Helen's hospital. At a dance, he met the love of his life, Maureen Ryan, who was studying nursing at the hospital. They married on February 8, 1956, at St. Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Hastings. That June, John and Maureen set out on a great adventure, crossing the Atlantic Ocean onboard the Queen Mary, to a new life in America.

Settling in San Jose, they started their family with the birth of their first son, Kevin, followed one year later with Michael, three years later with Eileen and three years later with Nancy.

John enjoyed a long, successful career with Dole Foods, beginning in San Jose in the late 1950s. In 1967, a career opportunity with Dole prompted a move to Brussels, Belgium, where their youngest son Chris was born. As a sales executive, John traveled extensively throughout Europe and the Middle East. Living in Europe also introduced John and Maureen's children to various cultures and countries.

In 1978, the family moved back to the United States to live in Lafayette. John continued working for Dole until he retired in 1992. His favorite pastimes included playing golf with his friends at Tilden Park Golf Course in the Berkeley hills.

Married for 66 years, John and Maureen loved being around their family including grandchildren Kathryn, Peter, Lauren, Nicole, Daniel, Conor, Claire and Sarah. They kept close ties with their family abroad through correspondence, phone calls and visits.

Parishioners for more than forty years at St. Perpetua Catholic Church, it became the center of their spiritual life for John and Maureen, who attended mass together and became greatly involved in the church community.

John was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Maureen, their dear daughter, Nancy Monaco, as well as his sisters Eileen Funnell and Rosemary Allan.

He is survived by his son Kevin and his wife Stephanie; son Michael and his wife Kristin; daughter Eileen (Dufau) and her husband Dave; son-in-law Kevin Monaco; son Chris and his wife Jamie; grandchildren Kathryn, Peter, Lauren, Nicole, Daniel, Conor, Claire and Sarah.

A memorial service will be held at 11:45 a.m., Friday, June 14, in the chapel at St. Perpetua Catholic Church, 3454 Hamlin Road, Lafayette. A private burial with the family will follow.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 200 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations or Remembrances" in the subject line.

Public Safety

Emergency response:
 Emergency: 24 Hours 911
 Police Dispatch: 24 Hours 925-284-5010
 Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or www.nixle.com
Lafayette Police Department:
 3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925-283-3680
 Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt 925-299-3221
 Police Department Tip Line 94549Tip@gmail.com
 Police Department Traffic Issues 94549Traffic@gmail.com
Moraga Police Department:
 329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055
 Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049
Orinda Police Department:
 22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820
 Chief of Police, Ryan Sullivan 925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org

Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report May 12 - May 25

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Alarms | 38 |
| 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) | 9 |
| Traffic | 194 |
| Suspicious Circumstances | 7 |
| Suspicious Subject | 22 |
| Suspicious Vehicle | 8 |
| Service to Citizen | 34 |
| Patrol Req./Security Check | 19 |
| Public/School Assembly Check | 14 |
| Supplemental Report | 28 |
| Vacation House Check | 24 |
| Welfare Check | 20 |
| Ordinance Violation | 1 |

Vehicle violations

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Auto Burglary | 900 Block Buchan Dr. |
| Dui Misd | Mt. Diablo Blvd./Lafayette Cir. |
| Hit And Run Misdemeanor | Police Department (2) 700 Block Las Trampas Rd. Stanley Blvd./Pleasant Hill Rd. (3) 1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd. (2) 3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. St Marys Rd./Glenside Dr. (3) Deer Hill Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd. 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. |
| Reckless Driving | Wb Sr 24 At Pleasant Hill Rd. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. Pleasant Hill Cir./Acalanes Ave. Upper Happy Valley Rd./El Nido Ranch Rd. St Marys Rd./Rohrer Dr. (2) Glenside Dr./St Marys Rd. |
| Tc - Property Damage | 3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. Deer Hill Rd./Orchard Rd. Condit Rd./Condit Ct. |
| Vehicle Theft | 1500 Block Rancho View Rd. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. Oak Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd. |

Other criminal activity

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fraud False Pretenses | 3300 Block Betty Ln. 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 800 Block Rosedale Ave. |
| Grand Theft | 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. |
| Identity Theft | 3200 Block Alta Ln. |
| Panhandling | 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2) 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2) Mt. Diablo Blvd./Moraga Rd. |
| Petty Theft | 3400 Block Orchard Hill Ct. 3300 Block Moraga Blvd. |
| Petty Theft From Veh | 1000 Block Lindsey Ct. |
| Shoplift | 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (8) |
| Theft Access Card | 100 Block Woodbury |

Highlands Pl. 11
 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Nuisance to the Community
 Disturbance-domestic
 1100 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.
 1000 Block Carol Ln.
 Disturbing The Peace
 10 Block Moraga Via, Ori
 Loud Music
 20 Block Toledo Ct.
 Quandt Rd./Del Arroyo Ct.
 1200 Block Del Arroyo Ct. (2)
 700 Block Moraga Rd.
 Loud Noise
 1000 Block Brown Ave.
 700 Block Solana Dr.
 Loud Party
 1200 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.
 Public Nuisance
 3300 Block Moraga Blvd.
 Vandalism
 Mt. Diablo Blvd./Dewing Ave.
 3600 Block Baker Ln.
Other
 Elder Abuse
 800 Block Moraga Rd.
 Extortion
 1000 Block Via Nueva
 Stray-traf Haz
 Oak Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd.
 Threats
 600 Block Doreen Wy
 3900 Block Woodside Ct.
 Unwanted Guest
 3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report May 14 - May 26

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|-------------------------------|----|
| Alarms | 9 |
| 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) | 4 |
| Traffic | 90 |
| Suspicious Circumstances | 6 |
| Suspicious Subject | 3 |
| Suspicious Vehicle | 2 |
| Service to Citizen | 25 |
| Patrol Req./Security Check | 29 |
| Public/School Assembly Check | 10 |
| Supplemental Report | 10 |
| Vacation House Check | 1 |
| Welfare Check | 0 |
| Ordinance Violation | 0 |

Vehicle violations

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Accident Property | Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr. |
| Excessive Speed | Cam Pablo/Camille 600 Block Rheem Blvd. Moraga Road/Moraga Way (3) Moraga Way/School St. St Andrews Dr./Moraga Way Rheem Blvd./Chalda Way 600 Block Rheem Blvd. Woodford Dr./Moraga Rd. (2) Moraga Rd. Ifo Commons Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr. |
| Hit And Run Misdemeanor | Moraga Rd./Campolindo Dr. |
| Reckless Driving | Buckingham Dr./Moraga Rd. Bollinger Canyon Rd./Joseph Dr. Moraga Commons Park Corliss Dr./Lynwood Pl. St Marys College Safeway Moraga Via/Glorietta Blvd., Ori |
| Tc - Property Damage | Country Club Dr./Canyon Rd. 300 Block Rheem Blvd. Taco Bell 200 Block Orchard Rd., Ori |

Other criminal activity

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fraud False Pretenses | Not Available 1200 Block Moraga Way |
| Shoplift | Safeway |
| Nuisance to the Community | Disturbance-domestic 10 Block Idlewood Ct. 2000 Block Ascot Dr. |
| Loud Music | Loud Music Country Club Brewery Corliss Dr./Camino Ricardo Not Available (2) |

Loud Noise
 Not Available
 1400 Block Camino Peral
 Loud Party
 Rancho Laguna Park
 200 Block Willowbrook Ln.
 Vandalism
 Moraga Swim And Tennis Club
Other
 Extortion
 1900 Block St Marys Rd.
 Mentally Ill Commit
 Not Available
 Suicide Attempt
 Not Available
 Unwanted Guest
 St Marys College
 400 Block Park St.

ORINDA POLICE

Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report May 5 - May 18

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|-------------------------------|----|
| Alarms | 39 |
| 911 Calls (includes hang-ups) | 5 |
| Traffic | 59 |
| Suspicious Circumstances | 2 |
| Suspicious Subject | 5 |
| Suspicious Vehicle | 6 |
| Service to Citizen | 61 |
| Patrol Req./Security Check | 31 |
| Public/School Assembly Check | 0 |
| Supplemental Report | 15 |
| Vacation House Check | 0 |
| Welfare Check | 9 |
| Ordinance Violation | 1 |

Vehicle violations

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Accident Property | Moraga Way/Eastwood Dr. Camino Pablo/Orinda Way Brookwood Rd./Camino Pablo |
| Tc - Property Damage | 10 Block Casa Vieja |

Other criminal activity

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Fraud False Pretenses | 300 Block Glorietta Blvd. |
| Identity Theft | Police Department |
| Panhandling | Camino Pablo |
| Shoplift | Moraga Way |
| Warrant Arrest | Santa Maria Way/Orinda Way |
| Nuisance to the Community | Disturbing The Peace 50 Block Moraga Way |
| Loud Motorcycle | 20 Block Brookwood Rd. |
| Loud Music | Miner Rd./Lombardy Ln. (2) |
| Vandalism | 20 Block Santa Lucia 10 Block Spring Ct. |

Other

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Harassment | 20 Block Woodland Rd. |
| Litter | 10 Block Los Arboles |
| Mentally Ill Commit | 600 Block Moraga Way |
| Possession Of Stolen Prop | Camino Sobrante |
| Transient Contact | Camino Pablo/Bart Track |
| Trespass | Moraga Way 100 Block Camino Pablo |