

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Photo Sora O'Doherty

Dancing with the Cars and car show feature Mustangs and Cobras

By Sora O'Doherty

This year, the theme of the 2024 Orinda Car Show and the fund-raising Dancing with the Cars event feature Mustangs. And no, despite the charming poster for the event, horses will not be present. However, there will be a good representation of Ford Mustang cars, including a number of Cobras from The Cobra Experience in Martinez.

As usual, the dinner dance will be the evening before the car show. The Orinda Classic Car Show weekend will feature Dancing with the Cars on Friday, Sept. 6 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on the Orinda Library Upper Plaza. This is the 20th annual fundraiser party sponsored by Rotary Club of Orinda. Proceeds will benefit seniors, students, food banks, and other community projects sponsored by the Club. Tickets are available at www.orindarotaryfundraiser.com through Aug. 30.

On Saturday, Sept. 7, the 20th Annual car show,

in partnership with Orinda Motors and Orinda Classic Car Center, will be showcasing 200 classic cars, and will also feature music, food, and special exhibits. This event is always free to spectators.

Drew Serb, who formerly lived in Orinda for 25 years, will be bringing a contingent of 14 Cobras to the Car Show. Two of the cars belong to Serb. The Cobras were manufactured by Ford, as are Mustangs.

According to The Cobra Experience website "In the 1960's, the Cobra captured the heart and imagination of car racing enthusiasts. Carroll Shelby, the facilitator of the famous Cobra, GT40, Daytona Coupe, GT350, and GT500, amongst others, campaigned cars from 1962 to 1968 at Shelby American in Southern California. These cars remain giants for their contributions to the evolution of the muscle car industry in this country."

As the car show reaches its 20th year, Serb has entered cars about 15 times. Serb saw the opportunity to open a museum, The Cobra Experience, dedicated to the Cobra when he bought a 25,000 square foot building in Martinez. Serb actually owns about half of the 32 cars on display at the museum, which is open to the public the third Sunday of each month and for other special events throughout the year.

All of the owners of the Cobras will attend the car show, because shortly thereafter they will join Serb for a thousand mile drive through California, with stops in Truckee, Castle Crags State Park five miles south of Dunsmuir, and Graeagle in the high Sierras, before returning to the Lafayette Park Hotel. Serb has been leading the Cobra drives for 30 years.

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Moraga town council appoints all candidates to fill upcoming vacant seats

By Vera Kochan

This upcoming election, Moraga voters would have been tasked to vote for three candidates to fill the seats of incumbent town council members whose terms are ending at the end of the year (Mayor Teresa Onoda, Council Members Renata Sos, and David Shapiro). Given that only three candidates threw their hats into the ring, the town council held a special meeting on Aug. 21 in order to appoint those candidates to fill the seats and save Moraga's taxpayers the expense of a local election this Nov. 5.

Town Clerk Amy Heavener's staff report stated that "Brian Dolan, Lisa Maglio, and Graham Thiel filed nomination paperwork and qualified as official candidates by the Contra Costa County Elections Division." The

report continued, "According to State Elections Code 10229, when an equal number of qualified candidates equals the number of open seats, Town Council may, at a regular or special meeting held before the municipal election, adopt one of the following courses of action: Appoint to Town Council the individuals who have been nominated; or hold the Town Council election on Nov. 5."

By choosing to appoint the three candidates to the town council, Moraga is expected to save a significant amount of money. The County estimates that, at a cost of \$3.26 per registered voter (which as of June 5 was 12,783), the town's savings could amount to nearly \$41,700.

... continued on Page 4

Creek access behind construction site raises issues

By Sora O'Doherty

The Friends of Orinda's Creeks are feeling frustrated by not being able to irrigate riparian plantings beside San Pablo Creek in Orinda, including behind the old Bank of America (BoFA) building that is being redeveloped.

BoFA closed their Orinda office, and the building was vacant for several years. It was sold to the new owner, Orinda Way LLC, owned by Paymun. The new owner, Bahadour (Ben) Zarrin of Paymun, plans to redevelop the property to house three restaurants downstairs,



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Steps constructed behind 25 Orinda Way leading to Creek Trail.

with offices above, including the offices of Paymun.

The plans were approved by the City of

Orinda and then building permits had to be obtained from Contra Costa County.

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Our Homes

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See public meetings schedule on these pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Lafayette:
 www.lovelafayette.org
 Phone: (925) 284-1968
Chamber of Commerce:
 www.lafayettechamber.org

Lafayette Public Meetings
City Council

Regular Meeting: Monday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Planning Commission Meeting
 Monday, Sept. 3, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

Design Review
 Monday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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Lafayette to sponsor Lamorinda School Bus Program

By Elaine Borden Chandler

Created in 1994 to reduce traffic, the Lamorinda School Bus Program (LSBP) provides transportation for elementary and intermediate schools in the Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda Union, and

Acalanes Union school district and at present serves 1100 students annually. The program is a joint powers authority (JPA) — a stand-alone organization created by public authorities, such as cities, to

work together on a project that crosses their boundaries. The LSBP does not receive funding from any of the cities. Instead, it has been funded by Measure J and by bus pass revenue since its start.

Recently the LSBP applied to the Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCTA) for funding from the Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA). The LSBP received pre-approval for \$85,763.31 of funding from CCTA. However, as a JPA it needed a sponsor, such as a city, in order to receive the funds. Because the LSBP has been housed under the City of Lafayette since its inception, Lafayette was chosen. On July 22, the Lafayette City Council voted for the city to

act as Project Sponsor for the LSBP's application.

The main reason that the LSBP has applied for this grant was so that it can continue to provide the same amount of service, 19 buses going to 10 different schools. The LSBP's budget comes 60% from Measure J and 40% from pass sales. This just covers the program's costs. At the April 24 meeting, the Lamorinda School Bus Agency noted, "Identifying additional funding for the [LSBP] program is essential."

The LSBP hopes that the grant funding will also allow them to begin using alternative fuel school buses. According to the Department of Energy, most buses in the

United States are diesel fueled and the fastest growing alternative is hybrid. The EPA states that the most environmental option is electric buses, which have zero tailpipe pollution, reduce greenhouse gas emission, make less noise pollution, have less maintenance cost, and can provide power to the grid during shutdowns.

The LSBP contracts out to school bus companies that provide the buses and drivers for the program. Their current contract with First Student Inc. is ending soon and they are now accepting bids for a new contract, which will determine their options regarding alternative fuel buses.

The funding that

LSBP is applying for now is from the TFCA, which itself receives funds from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District collecting a fee of approximately \$4 per vehicle per year to reduce vehicle air pollution. 40% of TFCA funds are allocated to the designated county agencies, such as the CCTA, who then in turn chose which programs to grant funds. The LSBP was able to apply for these funds for the first time because CCTA approved a TFCA 40% Fund Policy on April 4, changing which projects count as eligible, which now includes the LSBP. With the sponsorship of Lafayette, the LSBP will receive its grant in 2025 and be able to move forward with its plans.



Rotary LamorindaSunrise.org

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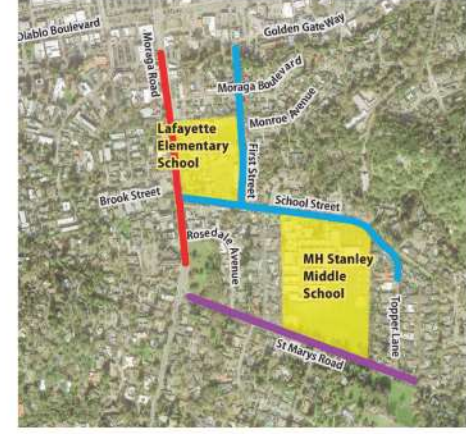
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Speed limits reduced around Lafayette

By Elaine Borden Chandler

Lafayette Elementary School and HM Stanley Middle School



LEGEND
 Reduced Speed Limit School Zone (15 mph)
 Primary School Zone (25 mph)
 School Zone (existing 25 mph speed limit)

Acalanes High School

Images courtesy City of Lafayette



LEGEND
 Reduced Speed Limit School Zone (15 mph)
 Primary School Zone (25 mph)
 School Zone (existing 25 mph speed limit)

Beginning at the end of July, new speed limit signs could be seen going up around Lafayette. These changes were part of a series of speed limit reductions around Lafayette, mostly in the areas around schools. They are the most recent part of Lafayette's efforts in the last couple of years to increase traffic safety, which

have included the Go Slow Lafayette campaign and the Traffic Calming Program.

These new speed reductions are focused on improving safety for vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly children, seniors, people with disabilities, people who use assistive devices, and the unhoused. "Years ago,

we used to talk about complete streets," said Parametrix engineer David Hoffman when he presented the speed reductions at the April 8 City Council Meeting. "It was the 8-80 question: if you're eight or 80 years old, would you be equally safe on this road?"

These changes come from two studies conducted in the last

year. In the fall of 2023, the Engineering and Traffic Study Survey (E&TS) recommended that eight roadway segments have their speed limits reduced by five miles per hour. These segments are legally outside of school zones, but several of them are close to schools and have been changed in part for student and parent safety. These new speed limits range from 25 to 40 mph.

A follow up study to E&TS was the School Zone Speed Limit Study in early 2024. This study recommended reduced speeds in specific areas around the elementary, middle, and high schools in Lafayette. California law stipulates that the speed limit with 500 feet of a school is 25 mph when children are present, but that jurisdictions can lower these speed limits down to 15 mph, as well as extending the 25 mph zone to 1000 feet.

... continued on Page 3

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Fall CERT Classes

Lamorinda residents are invited to attend the Fall series of CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) classes beginning September 12, 2024 at the Orinda Library Garden Room. This interactive in-person class series covers topics such as disaster preparedness, emergency medical aid, GMRS radio use, fire extinguisher use, pet preparedness, and light search and rescue. No experience is necessary, and the material taught is vital should a disaster occur in our area. Classes are held on Thursday nights from 6:30 - 9:30pm and run from 9/12 - 11/7. To register for this class series go to the website at: <https://classes.lamorindacert.org>

Longtime Lafayette institution Clocks, Etc. closing

By Elaine Borden Chandler



Photo Elaine Borden Chandler

Scott Hampton and Wendy Tamis in Clocks Etc. holding a clock they have reserved for themselves.

Clocks, Etc., the beloved clock and art store, has officially announced that it will be permanently closing soon. Located in La Fiesta Square, the store and its variety of antique grandfather clocks, whimsical animal clocks, birdfeeders, wooden earrings, reliable Seiko alarms, and local art is a familiar spot for most Lafayette residents. The owners — Scott Hampton, a clockmaker, and Wendy Tamis, a professional harpist — could be seen in the shop almost every day for years. Both of which will still be working once the store closes, but closing the store will give them some time to relax after a 48-year run.

Hampton went to school in San Francisco to become a clockmaker. He opened The Old Timer Watch and Clock Shop in Lafayette in 1976, selling antique clocks in the space that now houses Wine Thieves. After Hampton started to add in new clocks and art, he changed the store's name to Clocks, Etc. During this time, Hampton and Tamis met at a food co-op meeting, splitting a flat of eggs and exchanging phone numbers.

Together they continued to expand Clocks, Etc. and in 1999 they moved to the much larger and more central space in La Fiesta Square. "Scott had been there for 23 years but when we moved here,

people thought we were a new business," said Tamis.

Tamis received her university degree in flute performance but, having also majored in harp, quit playing flute once she had her degree and focused exclusively on harp. She now performs both solo and with several orchestras in the Bay Area. As the principal harpist of the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, she performed with Beck this July. She has also played harp with Pavarotti, Ray Charles, Frank Sinatra, Josh Groban, and Idina Menzel.

One of her favorite jobs is playing at Rêve Bistro, where she plays pop music and ballads on their patio two nights a week during summertime. She began to play there after Covid began and all her other harpist jobs abruptly stopped, and has returned there every summer since then. She has also played with the Campolindo orchestra for two of their shows, "Phantom of the Opera" and "Cinderella." "That's another one my really favorite jobs," Tamis said wholeheartedly, "Those kids are amazing."

At Clocks, Etc., Hampton's favorite jobs usually involve French carriage clocks. Very small and made with intricate inner movements, they are the kind of challenge that Hampton enjoys. One of his favorite repairs to come to the shop was an Au-

docron by Chrono-Art, a 1979 mushroom shaped clock that, when compressed, chimed out the hours and minutes. "The guy was a genius with electronics," Hampton explained with admiration. Another clock he fixed, an English fusée mahogany wall clock, was so beautiful he told the owner to call him if he ever sold it. 10 years later, Hampton received a call and enthusiastically bought the fusée clock for their home.

For Hampton, one of the best parts of Clocks Etc. is getting to work with well-designed and crafted clocks. "I'll do not so nice quality," he laughed a little. "But I really like quality pieces." For Tamis, one of the most interesting parts has been seeing the unusual clocks made by artisans that customers have found on their travels and brought to the store.

The store itself carries a variety of local art, reflecting their connection and commitment to their community. Hampton started the Lafayette Arts and Wine Festival and Tamis devised the Lafayette Artisan Walk. They have known many of their customers for years and have been receiving a combination of congratulations on their retirement and mourning for the loss of the store. "It's been an outpouring of love," said Tamis. "We feel really connected."

Once the store officially closes and they have that extra time, Tamis and Hampton plan on camping in the mountains this year and traveling next year. They are currently looking for a small office space for customers to pick up and drop off repairs and will be volunteering at the Arts and Wine Festival. "We're still going to be involved in things," added Tamis, "We love this community. We're just going try to have a little more time."

Clocks Etc. will officially close when everything is sold.

Speed limits reduced around Lafayette

... continued from Page 2

The majority of the new speed limits within Lafayette school zones are 15 mph. These lower range speed limits were chosen because the mortality rate of a

pedestrian hit by a car declines steeply with reduced speed. 70% of people die when hit by a car driving 50 mph, 10% die at 23 mph, and only 5% of people die at 15 mph. These speed limits apply only to when chil-

dren are present, so primarily around school pickup, drop off, and lunchtime recess.

All new speed limits are marked with signage and are now legally enforceable.

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community. Send a letter to the editor: letters@lamorindaweekly.com



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The next classes are on September 13 at the Orinda Community Center.

Lamorinda CERT Foundation is a 501(c)(3) foundation supporting Lamorinda CERT

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 Wed., Aug. 28, 5:30 p.m.
Town Council Meetings:
 Wed., Aug. 28, 5:30 p.m.
 Wed., Sept. 11, 5:30 p.m.
Planning Commission:
 Tuesday, Sept. 3, 6:30 p.m.
Parks and Recreation Commission:
 Mon., Sept. 9, 6:30 p.m.



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LINDA EHRICH



Moraga Council Member Kerry Hillis has another title — winegrower

By Vera Kochan

Besides serving on Moraga's town council, Kerry Hillis has another passion — turning his grapes into wine. Having acquired about 10 grape vines in 2020 when he and his family moved into their home, he decided to take up the banner and try his hand producing grapes good enough to bottle for wine.

"I wasn't sure how to take care of grapes, and received an educa-

tion from my landscaper and a wine guy," stated Hillis. The next thing he knew, Hillis was busy fertilizing and giving fungal treatments made of a sulfur compound to his vines (two cabernet sauvignon, two zinfandel, and six merlot) that would prevent mildew through Moraga's micro-climate and occasional morning fog. Summer heat waves can also have an adverse affect on the grape-growing process even with the proper irrigation.

Feeling confident enough to expand, the following year Hillis added an additional 18 vines (14 cabernet sauvignon and four cabernet franc -- "to bring out the flavor"). This year saw a planting of six more vines (sangiovese) in the hopes of producing chianti, with a blend of 70% sangiovese and a 30% mix of merlot/cabernet sauvignon. However, he'll have to wait a bit. "It takes about 3-4 years

before you get grapes," he explained. "But, the roots grow really deep once the vine is established."

About two months before Hillis spots actual grapes on his vines, he puts netting around them to keep the birds and other critters from eventually munching on the fruit. "I'm the caretaker through the year," he said. "I call the wine guy [Brian Wheeler] when my grapes are starting to turn purple, and he performs periodic tests for sweetness before he finally picks them."

This year's harvest is scheduled to take place between late August and early September. Wheeler is responsible for the grapes and eventual wine from the minute he leaves with the harvest. The grapes are crushed immediately, and according to Hillis yeast, sulfur dioxide, and oak chips are added to the mix. A process called "racking" begins when fermented wine is transferred



Photo Vera Kochan

Kerry Hillis' back yard grape vines produce his "Hillis House" wines

from one carboy (typically a 5-gallon jug) to another to erase the sediment or "leeds" from the bottom of the jug in order to have a clearer wine juice. The final product, his bottled wine, gets delivered back to Hillis in March.

Producing approximately three-and-a-half cases of wine each year, the "Hillis House" label sports a colorful image of a monarch butterfly — an homage to the Moraga Garden Club's efforts to save the endangered species. As an added touch, the 2024

label carries the royal blue seal (depicted on town-wide banners) honoring Moraga's 50th anniversary of incorporation. Each bottle is sealed with a wax cap for added elegance. For the most part, Hillis keeps the final product in careful storage at home for personal consumption, but acknowledges that he's given bottles away as gifts.

Hillis admits that being a winegrower takes a lot of time and work, but "It's a labor of love."

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Town council appoints all candidates to fill upcoming vacant seats

... continued from Page 1

With a vote of 4-0 (Council Member David Shapiro was absent), the council appointed the three candidates to the Moraga Town Council and canceled the Nov. 5 local election.

During the meeting, it was noted how qualified for the positions the incoming candidates are. Dolan has recently served as Interim Town Manager, Maglio besides being an attorney has served on the Planning Commission and is a vice president with the Moraga Community Foundation, and Thiel is into his second

term with the Planning Commission.

While Dolan could not be present during the meeting, Maglio and Thiel had the opportunity to say a few words. "There are some big challenges that I'm looking forward to, and one of those, I do agree with many, is implementing the Housing Element -- I have a great interest in that," said Maglio. "I have a great interest in affordable housing, and I look forward to working with the town on making sure we are able to implement our fair share of affordable housing, but there are many

other challenges that I look forward to, too."

"It has been an honor and privilege working in my current capacity as a planning commissioner for the Town of Moraga," Thiel stated. "I look forward to working with you -- the ones who remain, and I wish to thank the ones who are departing for their time and service and commitment to this town. I look forward to doing them the similar honor in continuing on in the work we have yet to accomplish."

"It's a wonderful time for our town as we look to the future with

optimism and hope," Onoda said. "We are fortunate to have three outstanding candidates stepping forward for the town council. Each brings unique strengths and a deep commitment to our community. Their dedication to our town's values and their vision for our shared future makes them more than qualified to lead us forward."

The three candidates will officially be sworn in as council members during the Dec. 11 regular meeting.

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MOFN sends letter to Sacramento targeting homeowners/fire insurance cancellation crisis

By Vera Kochan

This past spring, approximately 28,750 State Farm General Insurance Company homeowners/fire insurance policies across California were non-renewed. This move by State Farm sent dropped customers scrambling to find coverage just before what is considered the fire season.

Locally, 167 Moraga residents were not renewed and 55% of Orinda's State Farm customers (1,703) were left to find insurance elsewhere – the highest number in any California city. In an effort to attract focused attention to the issue, the Moraga Orinda Firewise Network (MOFN) sent a letter to Sacramento addressed to Governor Gavin Newsom, Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, State Senator Steve Glazer, and Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan.

First, flashback to a March 20, 2024 communication from State Farm to Lara, where the insurance company stated, "we write to reinforce our need, and express hope and appreciation, for the role the Department of Insurance must play in our financial recovery, to the benefit of California consumers. As we discussed, SFG's capital position has severely deteriorated, and we are increasingly concerned about its financial well-being."

State Farm added, "Policyholder surplus was \$2.2 billion and \$1.3 billion at year-end 2022 and 2023 respectively, in contrast to \$4.1 billion at year-end 2016. Although there

haven't been significant wildfire losses for several years, windstorm catastrophes in early 2023 and increasing trends in non-catastrophe water losses and liability claims (especially commercial lines and personal umbrella policies), without the additional premium needed to support those cost increases, have generated large underwriting losses."

Those homeowners whose policies were not dropped noticed a significant increase in their renewal premiums. State Farm acknowledged the Department of Insurance's rate hike approval, saying that the company's "surplus position won't begin until March 2025, since the rate is applied to policies as they renew on a rolling 12-month basis," adding that "it's clear more rate is still needed."

The Aug. 8, MOFN letter to Sacramento, co-written by Chairperson Marc Evans and Co-leader of the Home Insurance Subcommittee Jorge Escobar, explained that it represents 34 Recognized Firewise USA Neighborhoods that collaborate with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD). "The public needs to be informed, through all means available, about your short and longer-term deadlines to resolve this crisis, which started brewing years ago when many of us lost our home insurance," it stated. "We have participated in the California Insurance Department workshops, its staff presentation at an Orinda town hall meeting

in May, heard interviews and received emails from some of you, etc., but a keen sense of urgency by our elected officials in Sacramento is lacking."

Several suggestions were made in the letter, such as: requiring insurance companies to contact local fire districts with regards to community efforts for wildfire mitigation; ensuring that insurance premium models are agreed upon by the Department of Insurance and insurance companies based on fire district data; fixing the "dysfunctional" aspects of the California FAIR Plan; adjusting the minimum non-renewal insurance policy notice of 75 days; updating legislation to allow residents to get realistic premiums for different risk areas; and consider a state-wide measure that provides materials or funding to homeowners for wildfire risk reduction.

"I am very supportive of MOFN's outreach to leadership in Sacramento regarding the insurance crisis and appreciate additional voices urging the state to give it the highest priority," stated Orinda Mayor Darlene Gee. "The insurance challenges being faced by Orinda and many other communities in California are not only causing personal hardship and frustration but are beginning to create significant economic impacts that are only going to grow. The real estate market, local property taxes, and the myriad financial elements associated with housing values are seeing real ef-

fects when a property can't obtain homeowner's insurance. Our state leadership needs to do everything possible and as soon as possible to return California to a more functional insurance market."

"The Town of Moraga is working with our Orinda neighbor and MOFD to try to find a solution to our insurance challenge," Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda said. "What we as residents can do is listen to MOFD and do what they suggest, because our greatest tool in our tool box is to harden our homes from fire. I understand it might mean taking out bushes and even trees within 5 feet of our house, going to the fire department and getting those special vents and of course gutter guards, all of which you can get for free from MOFD. Please talk to your neighbors and let's make our town safe and fire wise."

Escobar stressed that "the intent of the letter is to join the voices of many key elected, appointed, and resident stakeholders in our Moraga and Orinda communities to demand a higher sense of urgency from our state elected officials to take and better inform the public of effective actions and deadlines to address the home insurance crisis affecting high-risk areas like ours. We are doing this with a positive mind bringing some suggestions, too."

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Annual pear harvest a huge success

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

Luckily there were enough adults, teens,

and children on hand who volunteered for

the annual pear harvest, because this year's crop yielded 5,631 pounds of fruit to deliver to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. The Moraga Park Foundation, along with the Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley, orchestrated the Aug. 17 event that brought pear pickers to the tiny orchard at the corner of Camino Pablo/Canyon Road and the additional trees in front of St. Monica Catholic Church.



Moraga General Plan 2040 Update

The Town is encouraging all residents, business owners and property owners to attend the upcoming General Plan 2040 meetings. An important aspect of the General Plan is the Values and Guiding Principles which were initially discussed in October and November 2023 and will be updated in the new General Plan. Going forward the Council will discuss the entirety of the General Plan including the Values and Guiding Principles. The formal meetings will be held as follows:

- August 28, 2024:** Focused discussion on the Transportation Element
- September 11, 2024:** Joint Town Council and Planning Commission Meeting with a Pre-view Draft of the entire General Plan
- October 22, 2024:** Planning Commission Study Session on Draft General Plan
- October 23, 2024:** Town Council Study Session on Draft General Plan
- November 4, 2024:** Special Planning Commission Meeting on Final General Plan
- November 13, 2024:** Town Council Meeting on Adoption of General Plan

To learn more about the General Plan initiative, go to makemoragahome.org. Meeting locations, times and reports will be posted on the Town of Moraga website. If you have any questions, please contact Afshan Hamid, Community Development Director at ahamid@moraga.ca.us.



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Planning Commission
 Tuesday, Sept. 10, 7 p.m.
 Orinda Library Auditorium
Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission
 Wednesday, Sept. 11, 6:30 p.m.
 Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way

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Caltrans updates Orinda City Council about vegetation management on Highway 24

By Sora O'Doherty

How Caltrans deals with wildfire fuel along Highway 24 through Orinda was explained to the City Council on Aug. 20 by Helen Blackmore, Acting District 4 Office Chief and Dave Despain, Maintenance Manager for the East Bay/Delta Region. District 4 covers 2.8 million people, representing 36% of the Bay Area.

With a PowerPoint presentation, they reviewed the history and future of vegetation management since 1987, when the agency adopted a policy of removing vegetation within four to eight feet of roadway pavement with pre-emergent pesticides.

In 1992, however, a programmatic environmental impact report triggered a new, more holistic integrated vegetation management policy, allowing for site specific treatments. Tools

available to CalTrans were expanded to include mowing, weed-wacking, hand removal, herbicides, mulch or concrete, and other design elements. This resulted in much reduced use of herbicides. Herbicide use was cut in half from 1992 to 2000 and is still trending downwards.

Blackmore thanked the Moraga Orinda Fire District, because their efforts to have Caltrans address wildfire fuel on Highway 24 in 2019 led to statewide efforts being adopted. The Caltrans representatives particularly called out MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker for his instrumental role in getting fire fuel reduction not only in Orinda but throughout California.

From 2020 to 2021, workshops were held with local fire departments, and in 2021 the

pilot East Bay Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) was published – the first such plan in the state.

In 2022, Caltrans began scaling up its statewide practices to include permanent Caltrans fuels reduction crews, strike teams, and fuels reductions service contracts. District 4, which includes Orinda, was the first ever Caltrans district to have a VMP and fuels reduction service contracts.

In 2025, all 12 Caltrans districts will publish their first five-year VMP, outlining all vegetation management activities and priorities. Next year Caltrans headquarters also plans to publish a public-facing vegetation and wildfire map viewer. District 4 plans to reach out to the City of Orinda three times a year with updates.

Caltrans has a fuels reduction contract for

State Route 24 through Orinda for 2025/26 that includes application of pre-emergent herbicides every November, mowing and weed-eating every March/April, and year-round tree trimming, as needed.

During council discussion, City Manager David Biggs talked about interaction with Caltrans and other agencies such as East Bay Municipal Utility District in areas where each has some responsibility for fuel reduction.

One public commenter addressed an area in the city where there appears to be a disagreement between the city and Caltrans about who is responsible and requested clarification and a written agreement. Mayor Darlene Gee said that she hopes that an agreement can be worked out to not leave any areas uncovered.



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2024 Lamorinda Idols selected at Orinda Theatre

By Sora O'Doherty

Master of Ceremonies Steve Harwood, "The Voice of Orinda," declared that the Lamorinda Idol 2024 Finals event "was nothing less than magical!" The free event was held on Aug. 18 at the Orinda Theatre.

This year, the winner of the K-2 Solo competition was Erin Koh. 3-5 Solo winner was Piper Lillquist. Quinn Pennington won 6-8 Solo, and Sadie Poole won in the 9-12 grade solo category.

There were also solo competitions for groups in three groups. K-5



Photo provided

Group was won by Dafne & Oliver; group members Dafne Evans and Oliver Cacovean. Triple Threat won the 6-8 Group; group members were Colette Goodman, Cara Impallomeni,

and Ceci Bayley. Lila Weis and Mia Cortesio, performing as Mia & Lila, won the 9-12 group award.

The audience gave its award to Margaret Meckes. TV anchors Diane Dwyer and Claudine Wong were the Masters of Ceremonies, along with Alec Home, former Lamorinda Idol winner, singer, and actor. The competition was judged by Sally Hogarty, Raz Kennedy, Teresa Kali, Lois Grandi, Kelly Fosdahl Burge, Lleyton Allen, David Pinkham, Tielle Baker, and Jackie

Purcell. Details about the judges are available on the Lamorinda Arts Council website.

Established in 2006, Lamorinda Idol is a singing program open to Kindergarten through 12th grade students who either attend a school or reside in Lamorinda. Singers may enter as soloists or in groups. Students outside Lamorinda can participate in the group categories, provided that at least one group member meets the residential requirement.

Photos and videos of the finalists and the award winning performances will be posted later on the Lamorinda Arts Council website. <https://lamorindaarts.org/idol-2/>

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Creek access behind construction site raises issues

... continued from Page 1

Recently, construction began on the site, and fencing was erected. Construction is expected to be completed around the end of 2025.

The Friends of the Creeks say that the fence is connected to an existing fence on the property occupied by the U.S. Post Office, and that this is effectively preventing them from irrigating riparian plants that they had planted along the creek.

Zarrin, who says that he supports the vision of the Friends, also says that the planting was done on his property without his consent. Fencing construction sites is necessary for public safety during construction. He added that the Friends had only talked about access to the property behind the gate, but had not

told him that the issue concerned water for plants. That being said, Zarrin was also concerned that the water was being taken from a federal agency for use on other privately owned properties.

Both the Friends and Zarrin report that there has had difficulty in communicating. Zarrin says that he was unaware of the riparian planting issue. However, he reports that "We've witnessed teenagers along the backside of our property and neighboring properties smoking, drinking, and leaving broken bottles behind," which is a safety concern. On Aug. 22, drug paraphernalia was found in the back corner of the site.

Orinda Assistant Planner Darin Hughes, who has taken an interest in the restoration of

San Pablo Creek, has been appealed to by the Friends, but says that the city plays no real role in the dispute because the property beside the creek is private property and the city does not hold any easements.

There has been confusion about whether or not the fence on the Post Office Parcel could be removed. The Friends say that the Postmaster agreed that it could, and the Property Owner says that they will support any decision by the Postmaster. Zarrin, according to Tom McKinnon of the Friends, says that the Postmaster told him that Paymun could use the post office site during construction. Unfortunately, the Postmaster was on vacation at the time of writing this story and could not be contacted.

However, Zarrin provided The Lamorinda Weekly with a copy of a letter sent to Hughes signed by himself and Ric Tolero, the Postmaster. The letter confirmed that no one had granted permission to remove the fence or grant access to the construction site, and cited reasons of public safety, liability, increased costs, and the need to carry out the construction quickly, safely, and effectively. Tolero signed the letter on June 14, based on new

information.

According to McKinnon, the Friends plan to contact the Postmaster, update him on the situation, and ask again if they have permission to remove the portion of the fence on the Post Office property. They expect that if this is done, the county building department would have to mandate Paymun to rebuild the fence on their own property.

Zarrin expressed to the Lamorinda Weekly that he has concerns

about the safety of some aspects of the Friends' efforts to restore the creek. For example, he cited a stairway he believes was constructed by the Friends. The stairway is connected to 25 Orinda Way, which is the building that currently houses Zarrin's business, Paymun Inc.

Hughes hopes that there can be amicable relationships between The Friends and the private property owners along the creek.

Orinda Citizen of the Year!

Nominations for Orinda Citizen of the Year are now open until Oct. 1, 2024. Send nominations to OrindaFoundation@gmail.com. For more details, see the OrindaFoundation.org website. Nonprofit Grant Applications are being accepted from September 1 to Oct. 25, 2024. The application form and details are on the website: OrindaFoundation.org



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In Memory

Jerome Martin "Marty" Sivesind Jr.

March 19, 1943 - May 9, 2024



Marty was born in Oklahoma on a military base while his father, Jerome Sivesind, served overseas in World War II.

In 1961 he also met Bonnie Richard and within two years they married. In 1970, Marty purchased Cherry's Express Moving and Storage and successfully ran the Oakland-based business for more than two decades.

two decades. His business took him all over the state of California, and as a result, his knowledge of the highways and backroads of this beautiful state, as well as its history, was vast.

Marty raised his family of five children with Bonnie in Lafayette. He was an active member of the community coaching the teams of his children, and had years of devoted volunteerism at Lafayette Little League and Las Trampas Pool.

An avid reader, his passion for learning never ceased and he enjoyed debating any topic with friends and family.

Marty died May 9th peacefully and surrounded by his loved ones after a brief but heroic battle with leukemia. He is survived by Bonnie, along with their children Jerome, Kjell, Catherine, Kari, and Elizabeth; and their spouses Sarah, Tisha, Sean Micallef, Eduardo Montero, and Ryan Siamas.

He will be remembered as a loving husband, father, and Opa. A celebration of Marty's life will take place Sunday, October 13th in Moraga.

In Memory

Helen Constance "Connie" Chandler Mueser

January 18, 1937 - August 10, 2024



Helen Constance "Connie" Chandler Mueser passed away peacefully on August 10, 2024. She was born on January 18, 1937, in Salt Lake City, Utah, to Harry W. Chandler and Helen Mae Merrill Chandler.

From an early age, Connie was a voracious reader, walking regularly to the library to check out the maximum number of books, then returning days later to resupply. She graduated from East High School, where she sang in their acclaimed choir.

After college, Connie and her roommate, Jess Nourse, moved to San Francisco in an intrepid search for new opportunities. She worked as a legal secretary, with phenomenal skills, where the finished product would be vastly improved over any original dictation as her writing skills were unmatched.

In San Francisco, in an effort to meet new people, she joined the Young Republicans, and it was there that she met William "Bill" H. Mueser, Jr., a civil engineer. Though opposites in many ways, he dated on her for the next 60 years.

In 1969, Connie and Bill settled in Moraga, California, where they became integral members of the community. Bill served on the planning commission, while Connie contributed to the establishment of the Moraga Library and served on the school board.

After her children were grown, Connie returned to work as a paralegal and office manager, where her intelligence, organizational skills, and ability to recognize talent made her an invaluable asset.

Connie had an abiding faith, which was central to her life. Raised in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, she later found a spiritual home with Bill at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church.

Connie loved the symphony, ballet, opera, and theater. She was also an avid fan of the original Oakland Raiders, the Golden State Warriors, and Stanford Cardinal sports teams.

In their retirement years, Connie and Bill traveled world-wide, ever planning their next sight-seeing/cultural adventure. France was Connie's favorite, so trips included a Paris layover whenever possible.

Connie was always kind and gracious, whip-smart, and keenly engaged in current events. She adored her grandchildren, Zachary, Kacey, and Michael. She was their biggest fan and best shuttle driver, and loved to spoil them whenever possible.

Connie is survived by her daughters, Heidi Michele Mueser and Erica "Riki" Mueser Sorenson; her son-in-law, Andrew Lee Sorenson; her grandchildren, Zachary William Sorenson, Kathryn "Kacey" Chandler Sorenson, and Michael Andrew Sorenson; her brother, Douglas Chandler; and sisters-in-law, Jaylene Chandler and Sharon Chandler.

Letters to the editor

Lafayette City Council election

Dear Editor,

As a forty year resident of Lafayette, I urge voters to re-elect Carl Anduri to the Lafayette City Council this November. Carl continues to demonstrate talents that make him an effective community advocate and problem solver.

I have witnessed Carl's impressive and balanced leadership qualities while serving with him on Lafayette's Environmental Task Force and observing his work on the City Council and as mayor. I am particularly impressed with Carl's careful, responsible, inclusive approach to all problems, his excellent organizational skills, extensive background knowledge and clear and thoughtful communication skills.

We are lucky that Carl has agreed to continue to serve our community by running for re-election. I look forward to benefiting from his experienced judgment and leadership for years to come.

Sincerely, Janet Thomas Lafayette

Read the Eventbrite Privacy Policy Before Using

I have recently encountered some websites where, in order to register to attend a free event, one must use the Eventbrite platform. When you engage with the platform, its privacy and cookie policies are right on your screen - just a click away. I urge peo-

ple to look at those policies before providing your personal information. There is a saying about the internet: "If you're not paying, you're the product." Meaning your personal data. Eventbrite isn't the only platform or app where this issue arises. Be smart about your privacy.

Nick Waranoff Orinda

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Each ecosystem contains a Native flora and fauna that Identify the ecosystem.

There are 2 ponds and 2 creeks. There are 5 Native trees over 400 years old and historical ruins from the Wagers' time.

There are over 80 Eagle scout projects completed on the site. Unfortunately, the NATURE AREA has been closed to access since 3/8/23.

We can continue to encourage OUSD to accept the \$ 1.5 to get the tree work done.

A team of very dedicated and skilled volunteers can restore the pond, restore the trails, clean up the kitchen, dining room and craft area.

This is a very personal issue for me since I have been the Naturalist at the NATURE AREA for 46 years.

Toris A. Jaeger, Naturalist 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).

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St Marys College



Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report July 28 - Aug. 10

Table with 2 columns: Incident Type and Count. Includes Alarms (40), 911 Calls (6), Traffic (94), Suspicious Circumstances (6), Suspicious Subject (7), Suspicious Vehicle (11), Service to Citizen (63), Patrol Req./Security Check (45), Public/School Assembly Check (2), Supplemental Report (23), Vacation House Check (0), Welfare Check (7), Ordinance Violation (5), Accident Injury (10), Accident Property (20), Hit And Run Misdemeanor (1), Camino Sobrante (1), Camino Sobrante (1), 70 Block Van Ripper Ln. (2), 50 Block Moraga Way (2), Reckless Driving (1), Lombardy Ln./Van Ripper Ln. (1), Eb Sr 24 At St Stephens Dr. (1), 200 Block Glorietta Blvd. (1), Camino Pablo/Camino Encinas (1), Moraga Way/Orchard Rd. (1), Tc - Minor Injuries (1), 100 Block Camino Pablo (1), Tc - Property Damage (1), Moraga Way/Overhill Rd. (1), Other criminal activity (1), Burglary (1), Camino Sobrante (1), Commercial Burglary (1), 200 Block Village Sq (1), Identity Theft (1), 100 Block Ivy Dr. (1), Police Department (1), Petty Theft (1), 50 Block Brookwood Rd. (1), Warrant Arrest (1), Camino Sobrante (2), 3000 Block California (1), St-berkeley (1), 200 Block Orinda Way (1), Theatre Square (1), Nuisance to the Community (1), Disturbing The Peace (1), Moraga Way/Camino Pablo (1), Drunk In Public (1), 10 Block Camino Sobrante (1), Loud Music (1), 10 Block Rio Vista (1), 20 Block Heather Ln. (1), Loud Noise (1), 30 Block Meadow View Rd. (1), Camino Pablo/Ardilla Rd. (1), Public Nuisance (1), 100 Block Oak Rd. (1), 10 Block Lost Valley Dr. (1), Orinda Way (1), Other (1), Failure To Obey (1), Orindawoods Dr./Kite Hill Rd. (1), Police Department (1), Fireworks (1), Moraga Way (1), Mentally Ill Commit (1), 50 Block Stanton Ave. (2), 10 Block Camino Encinas (1), 60 Block Moraga Way (1), Transient Contact (1), Camino Sobrante (2), Moraga Way (3), Bart Orinda Station (1), Camino Pablo/Camino Sobrante (1), Trespass (1), 10 Block Camino Sobrante (1), 500 Block Orindawoods Dr. (1)

Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report Aug. 4 - Aug. 17

Alarms 42
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 14
Traffic 179
Suspicious Circumstances 7
Suspicious Subject 20
Suspicious Vehicle 10
Service to Citizen 38
Patrol Req./Security Check 24
Public/School Assembly Check 11
Supplemental Report 21
Vacation House Check 12
Welfare Check 15
Ordinance Violation 2
Vehicle violations
Auto Burglary 7
3500 Block Terrace Way
900 Block Mountain View Dr.
1000 Block Carol Ln.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor
1000 Block N Thompson Rd.
1800 Block Reliez Valley Rd. (2)
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
400 Block Florence Dr.
800 Block Avalon Ave.
900 Block Hough Ave.
Reckless Driving
Pleasant Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd.
Oak Hill Rd./Lafayette Cir.
Reliez Valley Rd./Fairholm Ct.
Reliez Valley Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd.
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
300 Block St Marys Rd.
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Police Department
Dianne Ct/Diablo Oaks Way
Pleasant Hill Rd./Wb Sr 24
Vehicle Theft
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Carol Ln.

Other criminal activity
Fraud Credit Card Felony
1000 Block Woodbury Rd.
Fraud False Pretenses
3300 Block St Marys Rd.
300 Block Shire Oaks Ct.
800 Block Moraga Rd.
Identity Theft
500 Block Silverado Dr.
1800 Block Ivanhoe Ave.
Panhandling
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Petty Theft
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (5)
Petty Theft Pickpocket
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Shoplift
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (6)
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Warrant Service
1700 Block Toyon Rd.
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic
400 Block Castello Rd.
Deer Hill Rd./1st St.
Mt. Diablo Blvd./Dewing Ave.
3200 Block Quandt Rd.
Loud Music
600 Block Lancaster Dr.
Loud Party

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report Aug. 6 - Aug. 18

Alarms 11
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 14
Traffic 73
Suspicious Circumstances 3
Suspicious Subject 10
Suspicious Vehicle 1
Service to Citizen 25
Patrol Req./Security Check 16
Public/School Assembly Check 11
Supplemental Report 16
Vacation House Check 0
Welfare Check 11
Ordinance Violation 2
Vehicle violations
Excessive Speed
Rheem Blvd./Center St.
Moraga Rd./St Marys Rd. (2)
Ivy Dr./Moraga Way (2)
Corliss Dr./Lynwood (2)
Moraga Rd./Moraga Way (2)
300 Block Rheem Blvd.
St Andrews Dr./
Country Club Dr. (2)
Moraga Way Ifo Station 41
Moraga Rd./Ascot Dr.
Moraga Way/St Andrews Dr.
200 Block Rheem Blvd.
Moraga Rd./Lucas Dr.
Reckless Driving
Moraga Rd./Via Granada
Corliss Dr./Camino Ricardo
Campolino High School
Moraga Rd./Campolino Dr.
Rheem Blvd./Moraga Rd.
Tc - Property Damage
300 Block Tharp Dr.
20 Block Hour Fitness
Vehicle Theft
10 Block Ross Dr.
Moraga Way/Ivy Dr.
Other criminal activity
Grand Theft
Tjmaxx
Identity Theft
1100 Block Cedarwood Dr.
Panhandling
Rheem Blvd./Moraga Rd.
Petty Theft From Veh
1000 Block Country Club Dr.
Nuisance to the Community
Loud Music
Canyon Club Brewery
Moraga Country Club
Loud Noise
70 Block Shuey Dr.
Public Nuisance
500 Block Moraga Rd.
1900 Block St Andrews Dr.
Vandalism
Moraga Commons Park
300 Block Rheem Blvd.

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.

Wasabi glaze grilled salmon

By Susie Iventosch



Photos Susie Iventosch

This is one of our favorite ways to prepare chicken thighs, and one day we decided to try it on salmon and absolutely loved the way it turned out! The flavors complement the fish so well and the marinade creates a sort of crust once it cooks that is a little bit sweet from the ginger root, a little bit hot from the wasabi, and a little bit salty from the soy sauce! If you can find steelhead

at the fish market, it's fabulous with that too. When we grill fish, we usually pick up a big filet with the skin still on one side and cook it on a piece of foil with the skin

side down. The skin sticks to the foil during the grilling process so you can easily separate the meat from the skin when you go to serve it. Before brushing the filet with the wasabi marinade, we sprinkle a peppercorn seasoning on top of the fish and then add the marinade. Use about half the marinade when you first put the fish on the grill, and then brush the fish again with extra marinade about halfway through the cooking.

On our grill, the fish cooks for about 7-8 minutes all together, but each grill is different so just cook the fish until your desired doneness.



Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs salmon filet (with skin on one side)
 - 1 tbsp. Peppercorn Perfection (or your favorite peppercorn seasoning blend or rub)
 - 1/2 cup soy sauce
 - 1.5 oz. prepared wasabi (1 tube)
 - 2 tbsp. Dijon mustard
 - 3 tbsp. toasted sesame oil
 - 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
 - 1 tsp. ground black pepper
 - 1 tsp. minced fresh ginger root
- Garnish:
Toasted sesame seeds
Lemon wedges
Parsley sprigs

DIRECTIONS

Add all of the marinade ingredients to a jar or bowl. Whisk to blend and set aside. You can make this ahead of time and refrigerate until ready to use.

Preheat grill to medium-high.

Place the foil with the fish on it in the center of grill and cook for about 5 minutes. Baste the top of the fish with a little more wasabi glaze and continue to cook for another 2-3 minutes, or until desired doneness.

Remove from grill and, using a metal spatula, separate the fish from the foil so that the fish skin stays on the foil, and you're left with a skinless filet to serve. Garnish with lemons, parsley and toasted sesame seeds.



Bentley drama students shine at Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland

By Emma Wong



Photo Josslyn Grover

Bentley drama students shine at Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland

Live concerts, acrobatic acts, and improv specials. Nearly 4000 events, featuring performers from all corners of the world — and among them, a small group of Lamorinda teens. From July 31 to Aug. 9, Bentley Upper School's Advanced Drama class embarked on a trip to Scotland, where they performed shows at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Held in Scotland's capital, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival is the world's largest performing arts event. Drama instructor GG Grilli guided students through the trip and performance process. "Edinburgh is the only festival of its kind," Grilli said. "Events take place in tiny back alleyways, on the lawn and parks, in streets, and

in all kinds of other venues."

This year, students performed through the American High School Theatre Festival, an arts organization accommodating students from the U.S. and Canada. The trip kicked off with two days spent in London, where students watched productions by acclaimed theater companies.

On the third day, students rode a 10-hour trip by coach to Edinburgh, where they took up residence at the University of Edinburgh's Pollock Hall and presented their first show.

For four days, students performed 70-minute renditions of "On the Flip Side," a collection of audience-interactive skits. Grilli created "On the Flip

Side" years ago as director of the theater company BrickaBrack. "During the show, a mailbox gets passed around the audience. A postcard is drawn with a prompt on it that we perform," Grilli said. When the performance ends, actors call out, "Delivered!" before the next card is drawn. Each script was created by a student, with styles varying from humorous dialogue to sorrowful movement. With different cards being drawn, every show was unique.

Preparation began months before the big performance. During class, Bentley Upper School students brainstormed creative elements to experiment with, including improvisation, lighting, and even puppets. Rehearsals began in February, and the first live performance was held in Lafayette in May.

"We had been working on this production for about five months," rising senior Josslyn Grover said. "It felt so rewarding to be on one of the Fringe stages."

Edinburgh's frenzied pace required students to think — and perform — on their feet. "Students must have all costumes, props, and scenic pieces ready at the start," Grilli said. "They have just 15 minutes to load in and get ready."

The class arrived at Central Hall, an over 750-capacity auditorium, where students finally

performed on the international stage.

"My favorite act was a piece my group created called 'Heads Up,' rising senior Annika Svahn said. "It's a silent movement piece where six of us tell a story with bedsheets and no words. It's a calming piece to do — almost like a dance."

Audience volunteers were also featured in a piece called "A Light at the Cabin Door." "Another actor and I narrate a story about love and an alien invasion, and the characters we describe must be acted out by two audience members," Grover said. "It's always fun for everyone involved."

Offstage, students immersed themselves in Scotland's historic cultural scene. They visited Edinburgh Castle, the over 1,000-year-old stone fortress towering over Castle Rock; walked the

Royal Mile, the main road running through Edinburgh's Old Town; and woke up at 4 a.m. to hike Arthur's Seat to watch the sunrise. Free time was spent exploring dining options or attending more Fringe shows, including those by other high schools from the American High School Theatre Festival.

Grilli hopes the trip expands students' artistic horizons. "This festival draws top talents from around the world. I'm excited to see how this shifts my students' understanding of what's possible in theater," Grilli said.

Though initially intimidating, performing at the Fringe proved eye-opening, especially for rising seniors. "It wasn't easy living in a foreign country for two weeks away from my parents, but I made the most of it," Svahn said. "Scotland

showed me that there's more to life than my small world. Every student should do something like this to shift their perspectives."

Acting onstage in a foreign place tightened bonds among Bentley Upper School's drama circle. "I will take with me the friendships I have made over the process of creating the show," Grover said. "There is a special type of bond created when nineteen people in a tiny backstage perform a randomized order show. It's chaotic but so fun, and there is a trust built by doing the show so many times."

"What I love about theater is that it's connected to the root experience of sharing stories and seeking empathy with others," Grilli said. "It's all those things that connect us."

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary announces another handcraft project

Submitted by Tom Guyette



Photo provided

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary announced its latest raffle, offering a chance to win a stunning outdoor furniture set.

The prize set includes two Adirondack chairs and a nesting table, all meticulously handcrafted from durable solid domestic white ash.

The group has a proud tradition of craftsmanship, with past projects including two canoes, a teardrop trailer, a flower/beverage cart, and benches now placed in a Quiet Space at Las Trampas.

"Our woodworking projects are a

labor of love and a testament to our commitment to the community," said Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary President Fred Stambaugh. "We are excited to offer this beautiful Adirondack set as a prize, knowing that the funds raised will support meaningful projects that make a real difference in our community."

The proceeds from the raffle will support various community service projects, including the Rotary HOME Team, which provides free basic home maintenance to seniors, ensuring their comfort and safety at home.

Tickets can be purchased for \$20 each, with discounts for bulk purchases. To obtain tickets or for more information, please visit www.LamorindaSunrise.org or email us at email@lamorindasunrise.org. Tickets will also be available at many Lamorinda summer and fall community events.



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Not to be missed

Art

Art Gallery at the Orinda Library: Stories We Tell – Contemporary and Ancient. The Lamorinda Arts Council invites you to view original artwork that demonstrates the power of storytelling using symbols and metaphors from Sept. 3 to Nov. 1. The public is invited to a reception with light refreshments in honor of the exhibiting artists on Saturday, Oct. 5 from 2 to 4 p.m. Artists in this show include Gina Barretta, John Brown, Joy Chew, Suellen Cox, Nancy Daniels, Elaine Drew, Jennifer Granat, Karina and Shun-Fei Hou, Georgianna Krieger, Lori J. Larks, Mary Leigh Miller, Connie Vaccaro Millholland, Denise Nomura, Jenny Rosen, Michiko Sakai, Susanne Simas, Ruth Stanton, Betsy Streeter, Sharon Tama and Nancy Vachani. Visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits-library-gallery/> for more information or call (925) 359.9940.

Art Gallery at Wilder:

"Whiskers and Zen" Paintings by Joy Chew. The Lamorinda Arts Council invites you to view featured artist Joy Chew's digital paintings of cats and capybara ("Whiskers and Zen") from Sept. 9 to Oct. 6. Meet the artist on Sunday, Sept. 15 at a reception in her honor from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. where light refreshments will be served in the Art Gallery at Wilder, 20 Orinda Fields Way, Orinda. Visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits-wilder/> to learn more. If you plan on attending, please download the directions.

The Second Annual East Bay Gallery Tour has added 6 Benicia Art Galleries to the Tour this year, bringing the total to 13 Art Galleries for you to visit during the month of October. You have the whole month to visit them and get your Gallery Tour postcard stamped for a chance to win a prize worth \$300! This event is free and open to anyone who'd like to participate. Visit any of the galleries listed on the website at the end of September or in October to pick up your postcard with a map and addresses of all the Art Galleries. The galleries will start stamping postcards on Oct. 1. Visit www.mainstreetarts.net/east-bay-gallery-tour-2024.html for more information.

A new exhibit, "Expressions," opened on Aug. 21 at the Moraga Art Gallery and highlights works by two Lamorinda artists: Dalia Alekna, a painter of strikingly colorful acrylic abstractions, and Mary Leigh Miller, a compelling Raku ceramicist. Alys Briggs will join Alekna and Miller as the featured guest artist. 432 Center Street in Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center. A free opening reception for art lovers of all ages will be held on Saturday, Sept. 14 from 5 to 7 p.m. Come to view the collection, meet the artists, listen to live music, enjoy wine and refreshments. The gallery is open Wednesday to Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. For more information visit: www.moragaartgallery.com or call (925)376-5407.

Not to be missed

Music

Discovering Opera: Mozart's "The Magic Flute". Presented by Bradford Wade, opera lover for over 45 years, on Tuesday, Sept. 17 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. in the Arts & Science Room, Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Perfect for audiences of all ages, this fairytale story follows a handsome young prince Tamino and a silly bird-catcher Papageno on their quest to storm the castle and free the clever princess Pamina. With their magical musical instruments, these two new friends face a vengeful Queen of the Night, a world of sorcerers and serpents, trouble and trials that test their loyalty, love, and persistence. Lecturer Bradford Wade will give a guided tour of "The Magic Flute," with a description of the plot interspersed with musical examples. This lecture is given in conjunction with Opera San Jose's production of "The Magic Flute, Sept. 14 through 29. Free.

Literature

Saint Mary's MFA in Creative Writing is excited to kick off their Fall Visiting Writers Series by hosting Dorianne Laux, 2020 Pulitzer Prize Finalist in Poetry, for a free afternoon reading open to the public. Join their community of writers in De La Salle Hall's Hagerty Lounge on SMC's campus on Sept. 11 from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. as Laux shares work from her seven collections of poetry. www.stmarys-ca.edu/mfa

Join the Sweet Thursday Author Series on Thursday, Sept. 19 at 7 p.m. in the Don Tatzin Concert Hall at the Lafayette Library to hear author John King discuss his book, "Portal." This is a free event, but registration is required at Tinyurl.com/sweet-Sept2024. The doors will be open at 6:30 p.m. for coffee and treats.

Other

The Kapnek Trust USA Family Fun 5K Run, 1K Run/Walk and Carnival will be held at Moraga Commons Park on Sunday, Sept. 8 at 9 a.m. Participants will enjoy a commemorative t-shirt, brunch, music, arts/crafts, carnival games, music, and FUN! All proceeds from this family event help to improve the health and wellness of children in Zimbabwe! Strollers and dogs welcome! Go to: <https://kapnektrustsafunrun24.eventbrite.com>

Home Maintenance Tips with Mark Shaw, local realtor. It's difficult to keep track of the many home maintenance tasks that should be done throughout the year: monthly, quarterly, seasonally, annually, etc. Mark will share his home maintenance schedule with you and talk about some of the most important tasks that will keep your house in tip-top form and help you avoid costly repairs down the road. Tuesday, Sept. 10, 10:30 a.m. to noon in the Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Members: Free Non-Members: \$10

Traditional Chinese Exercise: 8-Section Brocades (Ba Duan Jin) with

Clara Wu in partnership with Lamorinda Village. Looking for a low-impact, slow, gentle, and easy exercise to improve your balance, agility, blood circulation, muscle strengthening, and stress reduction? Join for a trial session to learn this form of more than 1000-year-old Chinese traditional and popular exercise movement. It is characterized by interplay between symmetrical physical postures and movements, mind, and breathing in a harmonious manner. You must register ahead of time for this class. Limited to 12 people. Thursday, Sept. 12, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Buckeye Room, Lafayette Community Center. Free.

The Art of Making Handmade Cards with instructor Jennifer Gerst. Learn how easy and fun it is to make beautiful cards using papers, ink, stamps, and embellishments. Step-by-step instructions and all materials will be provided to complete 4 cards per class. Session 1: Autumn Holidays – create cards for birthdays, friendship/thinking of you, and Autumn holidays Wednesday, Sept. 11 & 18, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Session 2: Winter Holidays – create cards for birthdays, encouragement, and Winter holidays Wednesday, Oct. 9 & 16, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Elderberry Room, Lafayette Community Center. Materials Fee: \$20 per session, payable to instructor. Minimum 4, maximum 10 attendees.

2nd Annual Lamorinda Public Safety Fair – Sept. 14 at 10 a.m. Fun for the kids, treats and information for Everyone! Police drones and vehicles, Fire truck, Search and Rescue, Ham Radio Operators and MORE! Free to the public. St. Anselm's Church, 682 Michael Lane, Lafayette.

AARP Tax-Aide is looking for volunteers to become members of a team providing free tax preparation service in Contra Costa County. Tax-Aide needs individuals with diverse back-

grounds and experiences. While prior tax preparation experience is beneficial, it is not a requirement. The program provides comprehensive training and ongoing support to ensure all volunteers feel confident and capable in their roles. Volunteer positions include Tax Counselors, who are trained by Tax-Aide and certified by the IRS, and Client Facilitators, who schedule appointments and assist clients at tax sites. To learn more and apply on-line, visit www.aarpfoundation.org/taxaidevolunteer or call (925) 726-3199 for additional information.

Garden

The Walnut Creek Garden Club will hold its FREE monthly meeting on Monday Sept. 9 at The Gardens at Heather Farms in Walnut Creek. Join them for a special program Stefani Bittner: The Fragrant Flower Garden. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a brief meeting, social time and an educational program. Complimentary tea, coffee & snacks are available. 1540 Marchbanks Dr, Walnut Creek. Open to the public. For more information, please visit: www.WalnutCreekGardenClub.org

The Lafayette Community Garden and Outdoor Learning Center is celebrating its 13th year with a community open house on Sunday, Sept. 8, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The community garden is located across from the reservoir at 3932 Mt. Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette. The event is free and will highlight the amazing life and importance of bees and the craft of beekeeping. In addition to the speakers, there will be guided tours of the garden, information on raising chickens, master gardening, bee crafts, bee tasting, iced tea and lemonade, and an opportunity to walk a labyrinth and see the garden's Miwok Village. If you have questions, you can call (925) 946-0563 or visit their website at www.lafayettecommunitygarden.org.

Please submit events to:
calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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Lamorinda Weekly

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Contact us:

Letters to the editor (max 350 words): letters@lamorindaweekly.com

Delivery issues: homedelivery@lamorindaweekly.com

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General interest stories/Business press releases/Community Service: storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Sport stories/pictures: sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Publishers/Owners: Andy and Wendy Scheck; andy@lamorindaweekly.com, wendy@lamorindaweekly.com

Editor: Jaya Griggs; jaya@lamorindaweekly.com

Advertising: 925-377-0977, Wendy Scheck; wendy@lamorindaweekly.com

Staff Writers: Vera Kochan; vera@lamorindaweekly.com, Sora O'Doherty; sora@lamorindaweekly.com, Jon Kingdon; sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com, Elaine Borden Chandler; lamorindaweekly.ebc@gmail.com

Digging Deep: Cynthia Brian; Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com, Food: Susie Iventosch; suziventosch@gmail.com

Contributing Writers: Conrad Bassett, Sophie Braccini, Diane Claytor, Moya Stone, Linda Fodrin-Johnson, Elizabeth LaScala, Lou Fancher, Sharon K. Sobotta, Emma Wong, Jim Hurley, Casey Scheiner

Photos: Tod Fierner, Jeff Heyman

Mailing address: Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road STE C #202, Moraga, CA 94556, Phone: 925-377-0977; email: info@lamorindaweekly.com web: www.lamorindaweekly.com

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Submit sports stories and story ideas to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

i9 Youth Sports brings a new model for youth sports to Lamorinda

By Jon Kingdon

In the past few years, we have witnessed a massive growth of competitive sports, with sports-specific clubs almost becoming the norm for young kids. However, research from the Aspen Institute, the US Olympic Committee, the Clinton Foundation, and major think tanks have suggested that there is a need for more recreational style programs that also put the needs of the kids in the first place.

"The problem is that the structure is set up, where if you have resources and the talent, you're going to have options within the club system," according to Sebastien Dubois, a business owner with i9 Sports, an organization with 4.5 million kids participating around the country which began offering programs in Lamorinda in 2024.

The name "i9 Sports" means "i to the ninth power," representing the nine key differences in its approach to youth sports: imaginative, innovative, interactive,

integrity-driven, impassioned, inspirational, instructional, insightful, and inclusive.

The goal of i9 Sports looks to involve boys and girls in sports regardless of their athletic ability. "Every child has value inherent in them, so we don't just highlight their athletic ability, we honor whatever they bring to the sports engagement and teach a sportsmanship value every day," DuBois said. "For example, we talk about positivity with the kids - always having a positive attitude and encouraging your teammates, and we honor individuals with sportsmanship awards. I'm a huge fan of competitive sports but what we are providing with i9 are more options by opening doors to more kids, teaching life lessons through sports, and trying to help kids be active for life."

The i9 program is in its early stages in Lamorinda and utilizes the fields at Campolindo High School. "Our primary sports in Lamorinda are soccer, flag football, and seven and under baseball, but we will be adding a number of different sports in the future," DuBois said. "We offer three sports simultaneously year-round so if the kids are playing one sport, they can see the other sports, which may lead them to try that sport the next season. We are fully operational now and we're looking to have more kids involved with our programs because the more kids we have, the better the experience and the more lives we touch."

To DuBois, there are too many poor examples set by athletes and their coaches, down to the lower levels, and that is what he is looking to address early to the participants in i9. "Our mission is to help our kids succeed in life through sports and where that can really make a difference is teaching a different sportsmanship value every week."

Kids range in age from three to 14 and they are broken up into age groups of 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12 and up depending on the numbers. A lot of organizations don't work with three-year-olds, as they can be easily distracted. The American Developmental Model for Youth Sports was created in part to support age-appropriate instruction. "Age-appropriate instruction is absolutely one of the biggest differentiators," DuBois said. "Our staff and coaches are trained to work with that specific age group. All of our programs are backed by the science of teaching kids."

The program also involves the parents, and the lessons learned are expected to carry over into their lives away from sports. "Along with playing the sports, we call the kids and their parents together and go over the sportsmanship value of the day," DuBois said. "One day it might be about respect, making sure that the kids and parents know what it means and that is fundamental to the experience

that we're delivering and then go back to practicing. We want the lessons to transcend the field to carry over to their households and schools."

The lessons learned by winning and losing also carry value with i9 Sports. "Our values are not just humility and respect, but also entails determination and teamwork. We phrase it healthy competition and we will ultimately have awards for the team that finishes in first place," DuBois said. "I got involved with this because

I believe in the model and more community-based type programs that put the needs of kids in first place and secondly, I wanted to be absolutely involved with the community where my kids grew up."



Photo provided

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Signing up has already begun for the fall season with a fee of \$239.00. Each session is for seven weeks with practices and games held on the same day, making it convenient for the parents. Parents can sign their kids up at i9sports.com

Thirty years of success with Orinda Aquatics in and out of the pool

By Jon Kingdon



30th graduating class of Orinda Aquatics

Photo provided

When Don and Ron Heidary began Orinda Aquatics, they had a vision that was at the time unique, and have stayed true to their ideals as they have recently celebrated their 30th anniversary.

"Over these years, we believe that we have created a model that is atypical, not only in swimming but in youth sports with a character driven culture," Don said. "We've created a culture that is based in deep values of integrity, respect, compassion, and embraced effort; and a training program that is based on efficiency rather than volume. We care about every member, and we found that if you focus on building a culture out of character and integrity, it becomes a rising tide that elevates everybody to a much higher level of effort, performance, and

team commitment. It has been an extraordinary and extremely rewarding experience for us and, we believe, a life-changing experience for many young people.

Orinda Aquatics has had athletes on U.S. Olympic teams such as Kim Vandenberg, who won a bronze medal (800 Free Relay) and Peter Varelles, who was on the U.S. water polo team. In Paris, Daniela Moroz, a long-time Orinda Aquatics swimmer, competed in kite sailing, having been a perennial World Champion. Additionally, Orinda Aquatics has trained or developed 30 Olympic Trials qualifiers.

A byproduct of the culture is career longevity, and as a result, athletes remain in the program, with the vast majority going on to com-

pete at the collegiate level. This year in particular, Orinda Aquatics has twenty-one graduating seniors (from a team of 150). "We have had a number of extraordinary classes, but this year's senior class is as strong as any and an extraordinary example of the student-athlete model at the highest level," Don said. "And it is clearly elevated by parental and peer group support."

This year, 17 of the 21 graduates have committed to swim in college. "That's a very high percentage and the ones that are not swimming would compete if the opportunity was available," Don said. "To have 21 athletes that have stayed in the program through graduation speaks to the culture of Orinda Aquatics and the love of the sport, as

many of them say that they could not imagine their life without swimming."

Success in the water but not in the classroom is anathema to one of the key tenets at Orinda Aquatic - academic excellence. "The academic achievements of our kids are a who's who of high school and university achievement, and counter the misconception that the demands of year-round swimming detract from academics," Don said. "In reality, it is the opposite, as virtually all of the graduates are NISCA Academic All Americans, USA Swimming Scholastic All Americans or CIF Scholar Athletes with an average GPA of 4.0 for our 90-member senior group."

Becoming a collegiate leader is also very important to the Heidarys, and is an extension of the very heart of the program. "While we take great pride in the number of our graduates that go on to become team leaders and captains of their collegiate teams, which is well over 60, we know that virtually everyone leaving our program could have been," Don said. "We've built this into the organization from the start, with our youngest groups, by talking about the importance of leadership, and by speaking about and demanding the very components of leadership-integrity, compassion, service, hu-

mility, and team commitment. Ultimately, it just becomes part of the Orinda Aquatics culture, to be a leader and a role model. At our banquet, we recognized this year's graduates, and part of the introduction of the group was recognizing them as the very pinnacle of a student-athlete-leader model, and that every one of them could walk into a program and be a collegiate captain today. They are extraordinarily mature, and they have come out of a culture that breeds that level of awareness that makes them want to be a role model and to make to a difference."

The colleges this class will be attending is split between Division I and Division III schools on the East and West Coast with graduates attending schools such as Cal, Santa Barbara, Pomona, USC, Cal Poly, UOP, Occidental, and Westmont on the West Coast, and Georgetown, Dartmouth, Brown, Amherst, Tufts, Middlebury, and Carlton on the East Coast.

"What we try to do is to find the best overall fit that suits their academic pursuits and swimming objective, with some leaning more to academics and others towards athletics," Don said.

An example of the confluence of culture and training philosophy and methodology, is that Orinda Aquatics had 53

swimmers out of their 150 total, qualify for the USA Swimming Sectional Championship meet. "It's unheard of for a team of this size to produce those numbers," Don said. "When asked by USA swimming we suggested that it is the model that supports it, and again, that our coaches care deeply about the development and potential of each swimmer."

Not to be overlooked was the success of the Campolindo High School girls swim team, and swim team in general, coached by Ron, which won the North Coast Sectional for the 18th time (men and women), and finished second in the state last year and eighth this year. "There is a heavy crossover from Orinda Aquatics to Campolindo," Don said. "I know that Ron is proud at Campolindo's success along with it also representing Orinda Aquatics."

The success of Orinda Aquatics did not go unnoticed by Tim Hinchey, the president and CEO of USA Swimming, who wrote a personal note to Don that said: "Orinda Aquatics is certainly the gold standard for clubs your size in our country. Congrats on the amazing anniversary as well. Thanks for all you do for USA swimming."

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Miramonte Grad Class of 24 makes US rowing team second year in a row

Submitted by Joseph Heinz



Miramonte graduate of 2024 Keenan Heinz was rowing for team USA at the U19 World Rowing Championships in St. Catherines, Canada Aug. 18-25. This is his second year representing the United States. Keenan competed for USA in a four with coxswain in the World Rowing Championships last year in Paris.

This year he is in the stroke seat (eighth) of the eight-plus boat. Two other teammates from his rowing club, Oakland Strokes, have also been selected. Ori Radwin of Albany is in the five seat of the eight-plus and Aemon Morlan of Alameda is in the first seat of the four with coxswain. The U19 roster includes

Photo provided

athletes from 18 states and two athletes from the District of Columbia. California leads the way with 12 athletes.

Keenan spent most of July at the Olympic Training Site in Chula Vista, CA. U.S. Rowing invited the top rowers in the nation to compete for spots on the team. The U.S. had crews competing in nine events, including the men's and women's quadruple sculls, four with coxswain, and eight, as well as the men's single sculls, double sculls, and pair.

After Worlds, Keenan will be attending UPenn in the school of Engineering and Applied Science. He is excited to represent the UPenn rowing team in the Ivy League.

Lamorinda Water Polo Club at Junior Olympics

Submitted by Rebecca Metz



Lamorinda Water Polo Club took second place in the Platinum division at Junior Olympics 2024 in the championship game against SET Water Polo Club held at Stanford University. LAMO advanced to the finals after their victorious semifinal game against Legacy Water Polo Club (Orange County) with a final score of 14-8.

Photo USA Water Polo/KLC Fotos/Nancy Paiva

Lamorinda Gold Rush Girls!



Lamorinda's Jr Gold Rush cheerleaders at a 49ers game on Aug. 18. Submitted by Danielle Piol

LLL 11U Allstars state champs 2024

Submitted by Lee Fishman



Photo provided by Lauren Fishman

Players: Alex Plaza, Brendan McNeil, Dan Franssen, Declan Nicolini, Grayson Reed, Harry Williams, Kevin Charo, Rye McVay, Tilden Welcome, Will Bolger, Will Fishman and Wyatt Clayton; Coaches: Jeff Clayton, Mike McVay and JP Reed

Last month, the 11u Lafayette Little League (LLL) All Star team won the Northern California State Championship defeating the 11u Maidu All Stars in Chico, California. The LLL All Stars went undefeated in the State championship bracket and capped off an amazing summer of Little League baseball.

It was a long road to the state championship for the LLL All Stars. The team played in the Little League D4 district tournament in late June into early July. The team lost to South Oakland 4-3 in the semifinals and had to defeat Alameda and win back-to-back games against South Oakland to secure the district title and head to the Section 1 tournament in American Canyon.

In the Section 1 tournament, the LLL All Stars lost 3-0 to Petaluma National in

the quarterfinals and had to defeat Benicia and win back-to-back games 2-1 and 3-1 against Petaluma National to be crowned Section 1 champions and to play in Chico against the top seven teams in Northern California.

The LLL All Stars found their stride in the state championship defeating Chowchilla 20-2, Lincoln Glen 4-2, Granada 5-3 and Maidu 6-1. The LLL All Stars defense was stifling with sliding catches in the outfield, diving plays in the infield and seven double plays. Every player made contributions throughout districts, sectionals and state, and the boys came together off the field and on the field as a team to propel them forward. Congratulations to the 11u All Stars and coaches!

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WENDY MEANS

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 18 Issue 14 Wednesday, Aug. 28, 2024



Lamorinda Home Sales

... read on Page OH2

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **Naturally Naked**

By Cynthia Brian



Lighter pink Naked ladies shine at night.

Photos Cynthia Brian

"Nature loves to hide." Heraclitus

In the winter, these ladies are wrapped in lush green mantaus that glisten in the rain. When warmer weather commences in late spring, their coats turn brown and eventually dry out. This is when we pull off their straps, leaving them lumpy and bumpy, hiding in plain sight. Sitting silently, they endure all measure of inconspicuousness. Then a sudden surprise transpires as they push their long slender necks skyward, shimmering in the summer sun.

Amaryllis belladonna—magic lily, resurrection lily, surprise lily—the stunning Naked ladies have arrived! Just as most perennials in the garden have taken their final bow, these breathtaking bulbs fill my orchard and garden with their picture-perfect pink flowers. What began with the gift of a single bulb many years ago, has metamorphosed into a fabulous field of dreams because every season I dig up a few bulbs to plant in other areas.

Amaryllis belladonna is the botanical name of the flower, "Naked



With blue agapanthus and red-veined Chinese lantern as a background, Naked ladies are magical.

lady". Belladonna means "beautiful lady" in Italian. These plants are called Naked Ladies because of their unique bloom pattern. In the winter, the bulbs produce a bounty of beautiful, shiny green leaves like the leaves of agapanthus. Those leaves wither and die in spring around the same time that the strappy leaves of daffodils are browning. With so many bulbs, it takes me awhile to remove and compost the dead leaves. With the leaves gone, dirt-colored bulbs resemble rough turtle shells as their rounded heads form clusters. In August, single stems sprout from the ground. Finally, flowers emerge at the top of the stems giving them a striking appearance as if they're "naked" because they are standing alone without leaves.

Here are some key things to know about Naked ladies:

Appearance: Naked ladies produce tall, elegant stems that can reach up to two feet in height, bearing masses of trumpet-shaped flowers that are usually pink, but can also be white or red. My Naked ladies showcase either a deep pink or blush color.

... continued on Page 8

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	11	\$950,000	\$3,100,000
MORAGA	5	\$620,000	\$2,700,000
ORINDA	5	\$1,495,000	\$3,400,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

3347 Beechwood Drive, \$1,850,000, 3 Bdrms, 1422 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 07-23-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,057,500, 11-15-16

3354 Betty Lane, \$1,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1154 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 07-15-24

1145 Garden Lane, \$1,399,000, 3 Bdrms, 1774 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 07-23-24

3252 Hillview Lane, \$1,483,500, 5 Bdrms, 2324 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-16-24

116 Haslemere Court, \$1,338,000, 3 Bdrms, 2025 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 07-24-24,
Previous Sale: \$868,000, 10-31-05

3098 Hedaro Court, \$950,000, 3 Bdrms, 1403 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 07-23-24

17 Silverhill Way, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 2981 SqFt, 1986 YrBlt, 07-23-24

624 Sky Hy Circle, \$3,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2979 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 07-17-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,590,000, 04-23-14

3172 Stanley Boulevard, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 1930 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 07-24-24,
Previous Sale: \$2,200,000, 02-18-22

1343 Summit Road, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2592 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 07-15-24,
Previous Sale: \$155,000, 10-01-77

3143 Sweetbrier Circle, \$1,675,000, 3 Bdrms, 1511 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 07-23-24

MORAGA

2016 Ascot Drive #2a, \$620,000, 2 Bdrms, 1169 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 07-25-24,
Previous Sale: \$505,000, 08-31-17

25 Brandt Drive, \$1,795,000, 3 Bdrms, 2678 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 07-23-24,
Previous Sale: \$120,000, 05-01-87

12 Corte Annette, \$2,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 2341 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 07-23-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,565,000, 04-17-23

824 Country Club Drive, \$1,335,000, 3 Bdrms, 1749 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 07-19-24,
Previous Sale: \$775,000, 12-21-05

192 Draeger Drive, \$2,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 2458 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 07-23-24,
Previous Sale: \$2,501,000, 05-12-23

1155 Sanders Drive, \$1,639,000, 3 Bdrms, 1604 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 07-23-24,
Previous Sale: \$242,500, 12-01-86

ORINDA

342 El Toyonal, \$1,495,000, 5 Bdrms, 2211 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 07-26-24

10 La Cresta Road, \$2,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 2753 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 07-24-24,
Previous Sale: \$895,000, 11-13-01

15 Lost Valley Drive, \$2,550,000, 4 Bdrms, 3022 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 07-15-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,231,000, 08-05-11

56 Rheem Boulevard, \$3,328,000, 5 Bdrms, 3883 SqFt, 2002 YrBlt, 07-23-24

125 Silver Oak Terrace, \$3,400,000, 5 Bdrms, 4571 SqFt, 1993 YrBlt, 07-16-24



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Turning Up the Rock Star Treatment

From Grocery Cart to Chaos: Overbuying Food

Jennifer Raftis, CPO, Efficiency Matters, LLC



Shutterstock

Food management might not be your favorite topic, but saving \$1,000 a year might be! Many of my clients struggle with overbuying food products and then end up throwing them away. Here are some key reasons this happens and ways to prevent it.

Why we overbuy

I've noticed that many of us are reeled into food purchases because of impulse buying, shopping without a list, and shopping when we are hungry (GUILTY).

There is a reason grocery stores have products next to the checkout stand – impulse shoppers, especially HUNGRY impulse shoppers.

Vendors pay prime rates for those spaces because their market research shows that shoppers purchase those items at an alarming rate. Shopping without a list probably means you have not planned your food needs for the week, and of course shopping while hungry is down right self sabotage.

Consequences of overbuying

Food waste, overspending, and unhealthy habits are a few of the top consequences of overbuying. Food waste and overspending are self explanatory, but the unhealthy habits might not be.

In many cases, overbuying food leads to overeating. You and your family will eat what is available and if you are concerned about a healthy lifestyle, you need to manage what everyone has access to in your home. It can be so much easier to limit the purchase of the sweets and snacks than to monitor them once they are in the house.

It can be a constant battle; I know, I raised 3 kids of my own and being the food police is not fun.

How to prevent overbuying

- Shop your pantry, refrigerator and freezer first. Take inventory of what needs to be eaten and what you are running low on.
- Keep like items together in your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer. I know that sounds like overkill, but if you try it, you will be amazed at

how much money you will save when you are not throwing out expired food or buying more than you need because you didn't realize you already had it.

- Create a meal plan for the week ahead based on your family's current calendar. This needs to be done each week as your schedule will constantly change with different activities. If you look at your current schedule and see if you have work events, kids activities, dinner dates, etc. you will need to pack dinners or plan on eating out for some of the nights.

- Consider if your family likes to eat leftovers; if they don't, maybe pair down the amount of food you are making for one dinner. Use recipes that are smaller and feed a family of 4 rather than a larger recipe that results in a lot of leftovers. For example, you could divide the 6 pack of chicken breasts and freeze half for another meal.

- Be very cautious of bulk purchases, especially if you do not have the space to store the items. Also, remember that fresh food-bulk purchases are a commitment: bread, fruit, veggies and dairy can be tricky as they expire quickly. Ask yourself if your family will really eat 25 apples a week! Trying to keep food in the house for a large family is very time consuming, and purchasing in bulk can be very helpful. I have even recommended that clients share the bulk purchases with other families so they can both benefit with the cost savings. The caution with bulk purchases is they have to be managed. I find this to be most problematic with frozen bulk purchases. Freezers are often hard to keep organized and therefore many items get lost and die in the back or the bottom. I know this might sound ridiculous but it's advisable to keep a current inventory after your shopping trip of what is in the freezer. Keep in mind that the effort you put into this can save you hundreds of dollars a year.

- Keep an ongoing grocery list, either on your phone or a paper copy. Having a list can be very helpful and curb impulse purchases (this takes a little discipline). There are many apps that can be instrumental in planning meals, creating shopping lists, and even help with the inventory. Cozy Family Organizer and Yummly are a few apps you can check out.

- Limit your quantities by using a container as a limiter. In other words, if the container is full of the product, don't purchase any more. It's also an easy inventory visual to glance at in the pantry and see that the container is full or needs refilling.

Food Organization Tips Refrigerator/Freezer

In the refrigerator, keep categories of products together in one section (for example, dairy products such as milk, cheese, yogurt, etc.).

- Meat should be kept on the lower shelves to prevent any drips from contaminating other foods.

- Fruits and veggies should be in a drawer in the refrigerator to maintain freshness. You could even use produce-specific storage containers to extend the life of the item.

- Condiments and sauces usually fit nicely in the door of the refrigerator for easy access, and then they don't get lost in the back.

- Try using a shelf riser inside the refrigerator -- trust me, this is a game changer.

Pantry

- You can arrange your pantry several ways.

Some of my clients like to keep categories such as dinner, breakfast, snacks and sweets together; others like to keep it by type such as pasta/rice, canned goods, baking mixes, and snacks together. One of my clients kept the food organized by the household member!

- If you are tight on space, try using the vertical space on the inside of the door. Container Store sells an over the door basket system by Elfa that holds a ton of products on the door.

Once you get the hang of this, you won't be throwing out food and you'll start saving money. The only catch to this is YOU HAVE TO MAINTAIN IT!! Good luck and happy organizing!

Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPO® founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals.

She is also an independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more.

In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. Jennifer@efficiencymattersllc.com, 925-698-3756 www.efficiencymattersllc.com





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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Naturally Naked



The hillside and orchard are filled with stunning *Amaryllis belladonna*, Naked ladies.

... continued from Page OH1

Their long throats stretch to face the sun, wherever it may be during the day.

Bloom Time: They generally bloom in late summer to early fall, making them a beautiful and unexpected addition to the garden at a time when many other plants are winding down. I have found that planting bulbs throughout the year allows various blooming times from August through October.

Growing Conditions: Naked ladies prefer well-drained soil and full sun to partial shade. They are hardy and tolerate various soil conditions, though they do best in dry soil, which works well in our drought-ridden area. Naked ladies do not like having their feet overly wet.

Planting: Naked ladies are grown from bulbs, which can be planted or transplanted at any time during the year with the optimal time being in late fall after all the flowers have faded. The bulbs can be placed about four to six inches deep with the top of their heads above ground. I suggest spacing them at least 18 inches apart to allow the bulb clusters to form. Wherever bulbs are planted, nothing else will grow on their “turtle tops”, which can easily reach two feet in diameter.

Care: Once established, Naked ladies require minimal care. They are drought-tolerant and don't require regular fertilization. In colder climates, mulch is suggested to be scattered around the base to protect the bulbs from freezing temperatures. The “minimal care” may be a bit of a misnomer when multitudes of Naked ladies are in the garden. The dried winter leaves must be pruned in spring and the dead stalks must be cut to the



Naked ladies are the stars of this shade garden. Photos Cynthia Brian

ground after blossoms fade. These tasks are easy to do, yet very time-consuming.

Toxicity: The plant is mildly toxic if ingested. Keep pets away from nibbling on plants. Instruct children never to taste or eat any plant without approval for its edible content. The toxicity is due to compounds called alkaloids present in the plant.

I adore my Naked ladies for filling my landscape with their distinctive, eye-catching blooms, and their ability to thrive and naturalize with minimal maintenance. Nature hides their beauty when only the bulb is visible. They then sprout as my naturally naked summer stunners.

My favorite showy summer tree is the crape myrtle. *Lagerstroemia*, native to Asia, provides year-round interest and is a popular choice in gregarious garden design. Here's why I recommend crape myrtles.

Long Blooming Period: Crape myrtles are renowned for their extended flowering season with a dense canopy of bright blooms. Depending on the variety and climate, they can bloom from late spring through fall. Their vibrant flowers come in a range of colors. I grow watermelon pink, purple, and lavender, with my preferred tree being watermelon pink. Other available colors are red and white.

Attractive Foliage: The leaves of crape myrtle trees are also visually appealing. They can display a range of colors throughout the seasons, including lush green in spring and summer, turning to brilliant red, burgundy, and orange in autumn.

... continued on Page 10

*Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener,
Cynthia Brian*
Naturally Naked



Photo Cynthia Brian

Bright pink surprise lilies balance the gray licorice plant and burgundy cordyline.



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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Naturally Naked

... continued from Page OH8

Variety of Sizes and Forms: Crape myrtles come in various sizes and forms, from small shrubs to large trees. On one hillside, I grow purple shrubs which I shape to size. I also have multi-trunk specimens. The versatility of crape myrtle plants allows them to fit into various garden styles and spaces, from small urban gardens to expansive landscapes like mine.

Attractive Bark: One of the distinctive features of crape myrtles is their exfoliating bark. The peeling bark reveals shades of brown, gray, and cream, adding a textural and visual element to the tree's appearance in winter.

Low Maintenance: Once established, crape myrtles are relatively low maintenance. They are drought-tolerant and can thrive in a variety of soil types. They also resist many common pests and diseases, making them a

practical choice for many gardeners. They can be pruned after blooming to reduce size, or allowed to flourish naturally for a fuller, taller tree.

Versatility: They can be used in various landscape applications, including as standalone specimens, in hedgerows, or as part of mixed borders. Their adaptability to different growing conditions and their ability to be pruned into various shapes make them versatile garden plants.

Because of the combination of a long flowering period, beautiful foliage, gorgeous naked bark, and adaptable nature, the crape myrtle is my beloved tree.

Nature may like to hide but with the naturally naked *Amaryllis belladonnas* and *Lagerstroemias* in full bloom in my garden, the curtain has been pulled wide open and the spectacle is a showstopper.

Happy gardening. Happy growing.



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Photo Cynthia Brian

The naked legs grow above the "turtle tops" of the resurrection lilies.

Correction: The Fire Safety Story we ran on Aug. 14 regarding the opening of wire mesh vent covers stated an incorrect dimension for the optimal wire grid and should be changed to: "If the opening in the wire mesh is more than 1/8 inch square, it is recommended to cover the vent with a finer mesh."

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Cynthia Brian amongst white agapanthus with Naked ladies starting to shoot.

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3 which was just honored as the 2024 Nonprofit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, Books in the Barnyard: Oh Deer!, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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5 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 5576 Sqft | \$4,250,000

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188 Lombardy Lane, Orinda
5 Bd | 4 Ba | 3948 Sqft | \$3,495,000

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20 El Patio, Orinda
6 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 4552 Sqft | \$2,995,000

Totally renovated & updated in 2013, this light filled 6 bd/ 4.5 ba w/ bonus room & possible au-pair suite is a fabulous place to call home.



108 Oak Road, Orinda
4 Bd | 3 Ba | 3377 Sqft | \$2,995,000

Built in 2000 & nestled in one of Orinda's close to town neighborhoods, this bright spacious home has everything you are looking for!



43 Bear Rodge Road, Orinda
5 Bd | 3.5 Ba | 3571 Sqft | \$2,250,000

Nestled in the Sleepy Hollow neighborhood, this spectacular property includes a 4 bd/ 2.5 Ba main home + a 1 bd/ 1 ba cottage.



417 Moraga Way, Orinda
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152 Ravenhill Road, Orinda
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New Price!

53 Via Floreado, Orinda
5 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2851 Sqft | \$1,575,000

Bright 5 bd/2.5 ba home in Orinda w/ amazing views!



76 La Cuesta Road, Orinda
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1762 Sqft | \$1,495,000

Va-Va-Views! This stylishly updated Orinda home is immersed in nature & a peaceful escape, yet right in town.



New Listing!

3930 Quail Ridge Road, Lafayette
4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 3771 Sqft | \$3,085,000

Stylish retreat in Happy Valley hills w/ views from every room! 3771 sq ft, 4 bd + office, pool, wine room & greenhouse on 1+ acre!



1087 Rahara Drive, Lafayette
3 Bd | 3 Ba | 2685 Sqft | \$2,595,000

This expansive 3 bd/ 3 ba home spans 2,685 sf on a generous 0.56-acre lot in the coveted Happy Valley neighborhood.



3580 Boyer Circle, Lafayette
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 2158 Sqft | \$1,795,000

Fall in love with this beautifully updated, 4 bd/ 3 ba, single-level home with an ideal layout!



1031 Bollinger Canyon, Moraga
5 Bd | 3.5 Ba | 4571 Sqft | \$2,795,000

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1167 Kaski Lane, Concord
4 Bd | 3 Ba | 2237 Sqft | \$1,199,000

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