

# Lafayette continues efforts to acknowledge Native Americans

By Elaine Borden Chandler



Image courtesy City of Lafayette

**Corrina Gould (Lisjan Ohlone) gives a presentation on Sogorea Te' Land Trust to the Lafayette City Council.**

Lafayette recently celebrated Indigenous Peoples' Day, a three-day holiday that celebrates Native American peoples and their cultures.

Lafayette has taken steps over the years to try to collaborate with the Native American people of the East Bay and acknowledge their histories, most recently by arranging a presentation on the Sogorea Te'

Land Trust.

Since time immemorial, the Saklan tribe of the Bay Miwok community, as well as the Ohlone tribe, lived in what is today the city of Lafayette. Saklan territory covered not only most of Lafayette but also Moraga, Orinda, Walnut Creek, and Briones Regional Park. Starting with the first forced migration of the

Bay Miwok to Mission San Francisco in 1794, the Saklan people's land was taken from them.

However, the Saklan people resisted colonization then and now, and many live in the East Bay to this day. According to Louis Trevino (Rumsen Ohlone), today the Saklan are officially part of the Ohlone tribe and have been together with the Ohlone since before Mission times due to their extensive intermarriage and trade. Many are engaged in efforts such as Chochenyo language revitalization and the Land Back movement.

In 2020, the City of Lafayette stopped referring to the federal holiday in October as Columbus Day and started to officially call it Indigenous Peoples' Day. Three years later, the City Council accepted the recommendation of a specially formed task force that Lafayette adopt a land acknowledgement to the Bay Miwok developed in consultation with Marge Grow-

Eppard (Calaveras Miwok/Tuolumne Me-Wuk) and Corrina Gould (Lisjan Ohlone).

The Land Acknowledgement Task Force also recommended six additional actions, one of which was to invite someone to speak on Indigenous land management and history at a City Council meeting. Corrina Gould spoke in her capacity as Director of Sogorea Te' Land Trust and tribal spokesperson for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan at the Sept. 9 meeting.

The Sogorea Te' Land Trust is a nonprofit led by Indigenous women living in the Bay Area, particularly Ohlone women, that seeks to return stewardship, rights, or ownership of land to Indigenous people. "There was no place that we had, that we owned collectively or even singly," said Gould in her presentation. "We had become virtually homeless in our own homelands." She described to the

Council how other cities and organizations have collaborated with Sogorea Te'. The nonprofit Planting Justice donated a quarter acre of land in East Oakland, Oakland gave four acres of land in the Oakland Hills, Richmond created Ookwe Park where Indigenous people have exclusive rights to grow and gather plants, Berkeley altered its signs to include that it is Ohlone territory, and Alameda started to pay shuumi, a voluntary land tax.

After the presentation, the City Council Members thanked Gould for her presentation. None of the Council Members committed to any specific actions like those she described from other cities. However, Council Member Kwok and Mayor Dawson said they looked forward to future conversations and continuing to work together.

Maryjo Cass of the Creeks Committee also stood up for a comment and, while emphasizing that she was only speak-

ing for herself and not the Creeks Committee, stated, "I hope that we can collaborate with you more in the future."

Other potential future actions by the City of Lafayette include a historical marker about the battle between the Saklan and Spanish military in Lafayette in 1797, which has been proposed by Robert Fellows, as well as a public mural depicting Indigenous culture and educational signage on Bay Miwok, which proposed by the Land Acknowledgement Committee and accepted by the Council.

To learn more about the Muwekma Ohlone tribe, visit their website at <http://muwekma.org/index.html>. To see the Sogorea Te' Land Trust presentation by Corrina Gould to the Lafayette City Council, go to the "Lafayette City Council Meeting, September 9, 2024" video the City of Lafayette Youtube channel.

## Letters to the editor

### Lafayette City Council election

Lafayette Council members should represent the entire community, especially since viewpoints and ideologies run the gamut among their constituents. Neutrality is essential and underscored by these being non-partisan positions. While some prefer to see City Council issue resolutions that align with partisan politics, some prefer the exact opposite. A balanced budget and improved Lafayette living is not secular. Fiscal accountability, effective communication, managing infrastructure, advocating for realistic goals, supporting city commerce, and measuring accomplishments are what matter. Identity politics just sow division. Don't be distracted by the identity politics game under the guise of inclusion. The long-standing incumbents running for re-election have fallen short of their duties and now are asking for a bailout from the taxpayers. Leading the charge on this bailout effort is a former councilmember who quit and moved out of state and a school board member who is giving up her seat while another deficit looms. Yet, frivolous spending prevails with nearly \$10k of taxpayer money spent to campaign for Measure H. We need new leadership and fresh minds on the council. The long-standing members running for re-election do not represent Lafayette responsibly. Lauren Herpich most assuredly will. Visit [Laurenforlafayette.org](http://Laurenforlafayette.org); Vote Lauren for Lafayette. Sarah Lind Lafayette

### East Bay Regional Park Board election

Summer 2024 was Earth's hottest on record. It's October. Still hot. Heed Mark Gongloff's warning, "Global warming has arrived and we're not ready."

All around us, our East Bay Regional Parks are under threat from wildfires, disease, drought, sea level rise, recklessness, and growing pains. With more than 100,000 acres of public land to protect, we need Lynda Deschambault's depth of knowledge, tenacity and experience to respond to the climate urgency of now.

Lynda will provide solid direction on Day 1. Lynda is the ONLY candidate with a 37-year career as an environmental scientist, 19-years at the U.S.EPA, 5+ years as Parks Commissioner, experience managing multi-million dollar budgets and programs, and crafting sound environmental policy. We need a trusted resource, tireless advocate and respected partner among local climate leaders, park staff, tribes and underserved communities.

Elect Lynda Deschambault for East Bay Regional Park Board. Renee Zeimer Moraga

### Support for Jim Cervantes

I would like to voice my wholehearted support Jim Cervantes for Lafayette City Council and urge Lafayette residents to vote for him on Nov. 5. I first met Jim as a concerned resident worried about fire safety in my neighborhood when Lafayette suffered the Tennis Club fire in 2019. As I'm sure you're aware, fire safety is one of Lafayette's critical issues. Jim's vast experience and knowledge in this area were instrumental in looping my street and surrounding neighborhoods into his fire prevention efforts. Jim had already organized a Firewise community on his street in the Springhill Valley, which means neighbors voluntarily engage with Contra Costa Fire Protection District staff to improve fire safety around homes. Jim organized multiple visits by Con

Fire inspectors and a brush removal project. Jim has worked tirelessly to expand the original Firewise community as fire safety goes beyond an individual street. As a result, our Springhill Valley West Firewise neighborhood now includes 88 homes on multiple streets. Under his leadership, we developed a three-year action plan and are organizing additional visits by Con Fire inspectors to educate homeowners on how to better protect their homes in the event of a wildfire. He is organized, tenacious, and a joy to work with.

I believe it will be crucial to have someone on the City Council with hands-on experience with fire safety. Jim will bring that perspective and can help Lafayette increase its efforts in addressing our wildfire risks. He has a long history of volunteering in our community, and brings with him a vast knowledge of the needs of Lamorinda residents. Sincerely, Laura O. Bergman Lafayette

### Endorsement of Carl Anduri for Lafayette City Council

Fellow Lafayette Citizens, please join me in the re-election of Carl Anduri to the Lafayette City Council.

Carl has served the citizens of Lafayette for many years, be it on various City Task Forces, Planning Commission, Council Member, and Mayor. His thoughtful insights have helped lead Lafayette in preserving open space, a World-Class library, and maintaining a strong fiscal standing. His historical insight has helped guide Lafayette through the maze of both State and Federal mandates on housing, while balancing the wants and needs of both our residents and business communities. Carl's ability to intently listen to all concerned

parties and provide unbiased feedback in his decision-making process has been one of his best assets to the City of Lafayette. These skills in addition to his historical perspective of Lafayette and his ability to work with City Staff, have served our citizens well.

Now, more than ever, we need Carl's skill set to face the ever-changing landscape of land use, fire safety, and fiscal challenges which lay ahead.

Please vote Carl Anduri for Lafayette City Council. Larry Blodgett, lifelong business owner & resident of Lafayette


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# STACEY SCHWEPPE

FOR

## Acalanes Union High School District Board

- ★ Endorsed by former AUHSD Board members Kathy Coppersmith, Tom Mulvaney & Susan Epstein
- ★ Endorsed by Moraga Town Council members Renata Sos, Kerry Hillis & Steve Wohleke
- ★ Endorsed by former Orinda Mayors Amy Worth & Sue Severson



Paid for Stacey Schweppe Political Campaign Fund

# ★ PAUL ★

# CHOPRA

for

## Acalanes Union High School District Governing Board

- ✓ Fiscal Responsibility
- ✓ Academic Excellence
- ✓ Safe & Inclusive Schools



**PaulChopra.org**

PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT PAUL CHOPRA-AUHSD

**The Clear Choice for AUHSD Board**



## ★ VOTE FOR ★

# STEPHANIE DICKERSON

- Support comprehensive school safety measures
- Encourage strong, evidence-based curriculum
- Engage legislators regarding inadequate school funding
- Ensure Measure D resources are spent thoughtfully



- Doctorate in Physical Therapy, Duke University
- Adjunct Professor, Samuel Merritt University
- Served on MEF, LP PTA Boards, MSD Safety Committee
- Small business owner
- Children being served by the local schools

★ MORAGA SCHOOL BOARD ★

Paid for by the Campaign for Stephanie Dickerson

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