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Retrofit work on Lafayette Reservoir tower. Photo Sora O'Doherty

Lafayette Reservoir tower lowered as part of earthquake retrofit work

By Sora O'Doherty

After years of planning and objections from Lafayette residents at public meetings, the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) has begun the retrofitting of the tower in the Lafayette Reservoir. The iconic 100-year-old tower, has served as the symbol of the city, which was incorporated in 1968. The roof and the operations house have been removed, and the tower, which serves as a spillway

for overflow water, will be 40 feet shorter when the project is completed and the operations house and roof are replaced. Residents had suggested some alternative designs to effect the earthquake retrofit, but none were found acceptable by EBMUD. Utilizing cranes and a barge, EBMUD and its contractors have removed the tower roof and operating house before starting to saw-cut about a dozen

concrete rings, each approximately 3 feet tall, off the height. This phase of the work will last about 10 weeks. Construction of a new metal operating house and improvements to the underwater conduit will follow in the fall.

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LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Saint Mary's College placed on accreditation warning

By Vera Kochan



Saint Mary's College welcomes students back for its fall semester. Photo Vera Kochan

The WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) sent a letter on July 9 to Saint Mary's College President Roger Thompson, issuing a warning that the school's accreditation may be in jeopardy. The college has been accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) since 1948. When a college or university achieves and maintains accreditation status it assures the public that the institution has been rigorously evaluated and has met the highest of standards. There are also many benefits, such as providing students with access to federal loans, grants, and work-study programs. WSCUC's letter to Thompson served as a formal notification and official record of action that the Commission placed SMC "on Warning." A review team conducted a special visit at the college between March 4-6 using the 2023 Standards of Accreditation. On June 26, the Commission voted to issue a

warning which, according to the letter, "reflects the Commission's finding that an institution fails to meet one or more of the WSCUC Standards of Accreditation. The Commission has determined that Saint Mary's College of California is not compliant with WSCUC Standard 3." Under WSCUC, Standard 3 refers to developing and applying resources and organizational structures to ensure quality and sustainability. The Commission noted that SMC "has experienced multiple years of declining enrollment and deteriorating finances resulting in ongoing operating deficits that endanger the financial sustainability of the institution. The institution must show progress in implementing a comprehensive and evidence-based strategic enrollment and financial sustainability plan."

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Officer Chanel Taliaferro fills new role for Orinda Police Dept. – Page A7

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City of Lafayette:
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Chamber of Commerce:
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Lafayette Public Meetings
City Council: Regular Meeting: Monday, Sept. 14, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Planning Commission: Monday, Aug. 17, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall
Design Review: Monday, Aug. 24, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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Terraces tensions resurface during City Council parcel consolidation hearing

By Sharon K. Sobotta



Image courtesy City of Lafayette

At a public hearing during the June 22 Lafayette City Council meeting, city planners and the attorney for O'Brien Land Company stated their case for the consolidation of 10 parcels into one parcel to allow the construction of the Terraces of Lafayette project – a 315-unit moderate-income level apartment project at 3233 Deer Hill Road, which was originally applied for in 2011.

According to a staff report presented by Contract Planner Jean Eisberg, the hearing was scheduled following an April 30 email by City Council Member Susan

add more affordable housing to the area.

Save Lafayette founder Michael Griffiths voiced concerns for residents of Lafayette in what will become an even more densely populated area with 315 additional dwellings, who may not be able to evacuate quickly enough in the event of a fire. Griffiths brought up the Paradise fire, which he said led to 84 deaths and PG&E's declaration of bankruptcy, and the Lafayette Tennis Club fire from a few years ago that caused a significant backup of traffic.

"When there's a lot that's less than a mile long, it doesn't take long for a wildfire to sweep across the land," Griffiths said. He added that software calculations indicated that if evacuating cars took 10 seconds each, it would take some 40 minutes for cars to evacuate.

Supporters of the project, like Jeremy Levine from Inclusive Lafayette, pushed to get the approval done so the project can move forward. "I really look forward to seeing 315 families, or old people downsizing, or young people looking for a job moving into that project when it's built," Levine said. "I think it's going to be a really amazing thing for our community."

Collin Regal questioned the legality of the project and pushed for the council to continue the hearing, as there was debate over whether or

not the original permits were still intact and valid.

Eisberg stated that there are several permits that are approved but not issued including the mass grading permit, the retaining walls and the vertical building permit that allows for the construction of the 14 residential buildings, a club house and more.

Council Member Candell asked for specificity on the terms and conditions of approvals, permits and deliverables that demonstrate the work in progress.

"What can we point to that helps us define what the line (that indicates that a permit is still valid because there is work in progress) is for us? ... What is there that satisfies that for us legally?" Candell asked.

Brian Winters, legal counsel for the applicant, argued that it was not the time to relitigate the validity or risks of the project. "This project remains protected by the Housing Accountability Act in the same way that it was in 2020 under which the project can only be disapproved if the city can make specific adverse impact public health and safety findings supported by a preponderance of the evidence in the record," Winters said.

The appeal ultimately passed with 3 council members voting in favor, Candell voting against and Council Member Stella Wotherpoon not present.

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Stanley Middle School welcomes Ann Kim back as principal

By Sharon K. Sobotta



Ann Kim first joined Stanley Middle School in 2006 as a special education teacher. She spent three years in that role, before becoming an elementary school reading specialist, a principal at Lafayette Elementary School and an administrator. Two decades later Kim is coming full circle, beginning a new chapter as the principal of Stanley Middle School.

Kim says that spending the past three years in district level positions, affirmed her choice to rejoin Stanley. "My heart belongs on a school site interacting with kids every day," Kim said.

Between Kim's roles in the classroom and in administrative roles, she brings more than three decades of experience to Stanley and she's excited to join Rachel Decker and Cristina So as administrators at the middle school. In terms of what Stanley students can look forward to this year, Kim says there's a newly adopted math program, an effort to strengthen multi-tiered systems of support with counselors, school psychologists and the administrative team.

"The entire staff will be working together to reinforce The Stanley Way – our Stanley School norms," Kim says. "Spending time at the beginning of the year setting high expectations for our students is of utmost importance as we kick off the school year."

Kim encourages Stanley students to take advantage of opportunities to get involved while forging their paths as middle schoolers. "There are so many clubs and activities for students to participate in that each student will be able to find a home," Kim says.

Farida Mishak is a rising seventh grader at Stanley Middle School. She remembers having Ms. Kim as her principal until she was in third grade at Lafayette Elementary School. "It will be fun to have Ms. Kim again," Mishak says. "I remember her being really nice and it'll be really cool to have her at my school again."

Kim is replacing

Ann Kim
Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

Brian Mangold, who joined Stanley Middle School in 2005 as a special education teacher, before becoming the assistant principal in 2023 and the principal for the last three years.

In summer, the Stanley Parent Teacher Association presented Mangold with a friendship bench in honor of his more than two decades of service at Stanley.

"It has been an honor to be a part of the Stanley Middle School community," Mangold said, prior to his departure. "I wish everyone the best of luck as they continue their journeys. I have faith that students will continue to be in good hands here at Stanley."

Last ride for Hank & Frank Bicycles after more than a century

By David Scholz



Frank Dryer, longtime owner of Hank & Frank Bicycles located on Mt. Diablo Boulevard in Lafayette.

Photo David Scholz

More than 100 years after Hank & Frank Bicycles first rolled onto the scene along East 14th Street in Oakland, its legacy of serving the East Bay riding community in downtown Lafayette is coming to an end.

The business has been about more than just bikes; it's been about forging relationships with generations of riders over the century. "Generations of riders have trusted the shop for everything from first bikes to race-ready builds, from quick fixes to long conversations about the joy of riding," said owner Frank Dryer.

The business' last torchbearer, who his father, Dale, started training and mentoring at age 9 to one day carry the business forward, is retiring. Frank Dryer, 61, still hopes to be able to pass on the bicycling institution to a new worthy operator, but the building at 3377 Mt. Diablo Boulevard has been sold

and Dryer will douse the lights and lock the door for the last time on Aug. 31.

"I will cry when I have to leave," said Dryer. "It's something I got to do, not had to do."

Hank Stahl was the original owner with his partner Frank in 1925. After Stahl passed away, his widow sold the business to Dale Dryer. It has always been a family story, built on hard work, trust, and a deep love for serving the community.

Hank & Frank Bicycles has called Lafayette home for 52 years. When Dale Dryer took over the business from Hank 57 years ago, he continued a tradition rooted in craftsmanship, honesty, and neighborly service.

"We've watched kids grow up on our bikes, and now their children are riding our bikes," said Frank Dryer, who followed in his father's footsteps when he transitioned to the helm of

the business, first as full-time employee in 1985 and then formally buying it in 1991. Even then, Dale still worked for the business until his passing. "Serving this community has been the honor of a lifetime."

The shop's customers, ranging from families, lifelong cyclists, first-time riders, and everyone in between, have always been committed, loyal, friendly, and wonderfully diverse, said Dryer.

"What has made that relationship special is that we have never viewed our role as simply selling whatever is in stock," he continued. "Our goal has always been to listen, educate, and help each customer make an informed decision based on their needs. We wanted every visit to feel valuable, personal, and trustworthy."

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Reservoir tower

..continued from Page A1

The retrofit is part of a number of projects currently being carried out at the reservoir. In addition to the tower work, EBMUD is performing improvements to the Lafayette Water Treatment Plant Maintenance and Reliability, and the Reservoir Recreation Area Wastewater System. According to Joe Voelker, EBMUD Community Affairs Representative, the improvements represent a multimillion-dollar investment in protecting public safety and ensuring high-quality water for Lafayette and the region. The work on the tower, some tree removal and widening of the access road is estimated to cost \$14 million.

Work is limited to weekdays, so little disruption to weekend activities at the reservoir will occur. Currently, the reservoir serves over a million visitors annually. Part of the work included widening the reservoir egress road, which will be used for the entry of heavy machinery. Traffic related to the project will only use that portion of Mt. Diablo Boulevard going to and from the Acalanes Road exit from Highway 24. No trucks will pass through downtown Lafayette.

At a public meeting on the project last February some questioners raised concerns about wildlife being affected by the work. EBMUD explained that it is coordi-

nating with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and EBMUD's Fisheries and Wildlife Department, including EBMUD's biologists.

Tracie Morales, EBMUD Public Information Representative, responded to questions from Lamorinda Weekly regarding the work of the biologists at the reservoir. Because construction is occurring near a waterway and riparian habitat, Morales explained that EBMUD obtained the required permit from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

A biological monitor is onsite each workday from May through October to survey for sensitive plants and wildlife. They also train crews and ensure that all required protection protocols are followed.

Monitoring includes nesting birds, bats, bumblebees and species such as the California red-legged frog, Alameda whipsnake, California tiger salamander, western pond turtle and San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat.

Examples of environmental protection strategies EBMUD has taken during this construction project include the installation of netting on the tower to prevent nesting and working with the biologist to develop a plan to relocate woodrat shelters, called middens, found in the work area.

EBMUD is committed

to protecting the plants and wildlife that call Lafayette Reservoir home.

Some questioners had concerns about the swallows that have returned to the reservoir tower year after year. At the public meeting in February EBMUD explained that the swallows will be able to return to the tower when the work is done.

The reason for the shortening of the tower relates to a much earlier incident that occurred during the construction of the dam that forms the reservoir. Owing to some earth shifting during the construction of the dam, the height of the dam was lowered.

The tower had already been built in 1929 to accommodate the higher dam, leaving the tower very high in contrast. The DSOD has determined that it represents a danger in the event of an earthquake, and should be lowered by 40 feet for safety reasons. Seismic upgrades will also be made to the spillway and outlet conduit pipelines that run under the dam.

The new operating house and shortened tower are anticipated to be completed by winter 2026. The entire reservoir project is projected to be completed in fall of next year. More information is available at <https://www.ebmud.com/about-us/construction-and-maintenance/construction-my-neighborhood/lafayettetower>.



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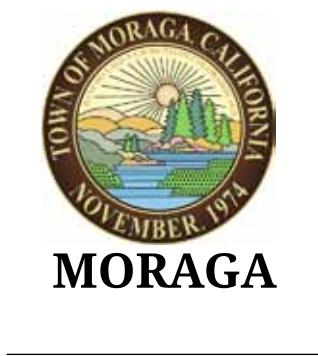
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Town Council Meeting,
Wednesday, Aug. 12/26, cancelled

Park & Rec Commission
Monday, Aug. 17, 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission Meeting,
Tuesday, Aug. 18, 6:30 p.m.

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Hacienda's La Sala building headed for demolition

By Vera Kochan

Moraga's Hacienda de las Flores, which can be seen through a grove of trees from Moraga Road, was built in 1916. The La Sala building, a later addition to the property, was added in 1977. While the main building has stood the test of time with occasional repairs, La Sala has not. As such, Moraga Town Council members were called upon to make the tough decision of beginning a demolition process of the badly deteriorating building.

Throughout its existence, the La Sala building has served as a meeting place, storage unit, and recreation facility. According to a July 8 staff report by Public Works Director/Town Engineer Nate Levine

and Parks and Recreation Director Mackenzie Brady, "Over time, La Sala has become a building without a clear long-term purpose, a funded repair plan, or an active capital investment strategy. The building has been discussed in prior Hacienda planning and asset-management efforts, but the Town Council has not made a specific decision regarding its future use, repair, replacement, or removal." The report added that a 2016 feasibility study by an outside contractor suggested that the building be removed and the area expanded into a drop-off courtyard and patio.

An April 2026 preliminary assessment of La Sala's condition uncovered water damage and related environmental conditions. This was determined through visual observations, moisture measurements, and air and surface sampling. Due to these unsafe conditions the building has remained closed.

The staff report noted that returning La Sala to a functioning facility "would require removing affected materials, completing remediation, repairing and restoring the removed materials, addressing roof and leak-related conditions to prevent recurrence, and completing any additional work identified once materials are opened up. It would also not address longer-term structural and site concerns unless the Town invested in a larger repair and stabilization project."

Levine presented council with various scenarios with regards to La Sala's future or fate. A limited repair/reopening approach would cost approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000 and would address only the most immediate water damage and remediation needs.



La Sala building at Hacienda de las Flores

Photo Vera Kochan

A basic repair and stabilization approach would include remediation, roof repair or replacement, basic foundation stabilization, and related work at a cost of \$350,000 to \$400,000. An enhanced repair and stabilization approach would involve more substantial foundation work, roof repair, remediation, repair of secondary building damage, utility-related repairs, and related improvements all costing between \$750,000 to \$800,000. Lastly, a full repair/improvement approach, besides including all of the above, would need to consider the building's close proximity to a creek-bank that could continue to slide over time. This all-encompassing approach could surpass \$1 million.

A complete demolition of La Sala would entail removing the building, handling hazardous materials, handling environmental requirements, utility disconnection and capping, site stabilization, contingency, and any unknown field conditions. The preliminary engineer's estimate for the demolition is \$150,000 to

\$250,000.

While the recent closure of La Sala has had some impacts on the Parks and Recreation Department's use of the building, Recreation Supervisor Jasmine Bateson informed the council members that staff has already shifted any La Sala use to the Casita (another small building on the property) and the Moraga Library Community Room. Additionally, Parks and Rec staff has created an outdoor classroom in the south/east corner of the Hacienda property by using the picnic tables under the trees.

The kitchen in La Sala was used for culinary classes which Bateson stated have not been moved to the Hacienda's kitchen due to it being a catering kitchen, "but it's something that could be looked into."

Council Members Lisa Maglio, Graham Thiel, and Vice Mayor Brian Dolan approved the La Sala demolition. Council Member Steve Woehleke voted against it, and Mayor Kerry Hillis recused himself due to his resident's proximity to the Hacienda.

Staff will begin to

prepare demolition plans, specifications, and bid documents.

Levine assured council that staff will evaluate opportunities for salvage, reuse, or recycling of building materials where feasible (especially roofing tiles). Staff intends to coordinate with Wedgewood Weddings in regards to potential post-demolition site considerations. "The current near-term thought is for some sort of outdoor/landscaping improvement (decorative in nature)," stated Levine. "This will be somewhat dependent on Wedgewood. Longer-term, there is greater opportunity, and this will be considered in the Parks and Rec's Master Plan Update that is currently in process."

Levine added, "Assuming things move forward, the goal is to demo the building before the rainy season, but there is coordination with Wedgewood and others, so I cannot say definitively that it will happen. We do not anticipate a significant impact to parking when work does occur, meaning parking will still be available for events."

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SMC accreditation

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According to the WSCUC's letter, SMC has two years to rectify the situation. "It is the responsibility of the Commission to determine, at the end of the sanction period, whether the institution has made the necessary corrections and has come into compliance with Commission Standards," the letter stated. "The accredited status of Saint Mary's College of California continues during the Warning period and students' status within the college is not affected by this sanction."

In a July 13 message to the SMC community Thompson wrote, "We take the Commission's findings seriously and

are fully committed to addressing the priorities outlined in its recent Action Letter.

"Saint Mary's remains fully accredited, and our focus is clear: to build a stronger, more sustainable future while continuing to provide the exceptional educational experience that has defined this institution for generations. We value WSCUC's partnership in that work and will continue to engage openly with the Commission as we implement our plan and demonstrate continued progress.

"The challenges outlined by WSCUC – particularly those related to enrollment, financial sustainability, and institutional planning – are

ones we have been actively addressing since I joined Saint Mary's."

Thompson also noted that since he took over the reins in July 2024, his focus has been on long-term financial health, and he acknowledged that "difficult decisions and meaningful sacrifice" played a role. His commitment to transparency and open communication will help to build trust, and he appreciates the commitment of faculty, staff, and students during this period.

Thompson's letter concluded, "The work ahead will require continued discipline, collaboration, and a shared commitment to our future. I am confident that, together, we will

successfully meet this challenge, strengthen Saint Mary's, and ensure that future generations of students continue to benefit from the distinctive Lasallian Catholic education that has defined this College for more than 160 years."

Upcoming milestones include: Nov. 1, 2026 (Progress Report due); Fall 2027 (WSCUC Special Visit); Spring 2029 (Reaffirmation Off-site Review); and Fall 2029 (Comprehensive Accreditation Visit).

Historical interpretive banners liven up the bandshell in Moraga Commons Park

By Vera Kochan

A new decorative feature to Moraga Commons Park is an installation of five historical interpretative banners hanging against some prominent columns of the bandshell. The display was made public just in time for the Fourth of July party in the park.

The Town Council approved the placement for a period of up to three years, and according to a May 13 staff report by Parks and Recreation Director Mackenzie Brady, “Through collaboration between the Rotary Club of Moraga, the Art in Public Spaces Committee (APSC), the Moraga Historical Society (MHS), and staff, the concept evolved from a single mural into a series of five historical banners. The Moraga Historical Society played a key role in identifying and sourcing appropriate archival images for the project.”

The installation includes four “then and now” banners that feature archival photos (some dating back nearly 100 years), along with contemporary images of the same locations. Included in the installation are a 1929 photo of Moraga Way (looking toward Orinda), a 1956 walnut orchard photo (now Campolindo High School), a 1935 photo of Saint Mary’s College (with its train station), and a 1935 photo of the Camino Ricardo/Moraga Way intersection (looking toward Moraga Country Club). The last banner is a colorful image of an 1855 painting from a Fandango held at the Joaquin Moraga Adobe.

Brady’s report noted that the complete project cost of \$766 was funded by the Moraga Rotary Club.

The idea first began with last year’s Rotary Club President John Panetta. “I have walked my dog around the bandshell for years. It occurred to me last year that there was a large swath of flat brown space that could be livened up a bit. I first thought of a mural of the



Historical interpretive banners decorate Commons Park bandshell. Photo Vera Kochan

Moraga family. Then I began looking through a book on the story of Moraga with photos, so I then began to think about displaying the photos somehow. I met with Teresa Onoda, Holly Hartz, Susan Sperry, and Mackenzie Brady about the project.”

Panetta added, “From that meeting, the thought moved from mural to banners with photos. I brought up the concept of a ‘past and present’ banner which was agreed to by all.” MHS Digital Assets Coordinator John Kaiser and photographer Wilfred Galila also got involved.

APSC member Teresa Onoda said, “Art in Public Spaces served as the liaison, helping guide the project through each step and turning John’s idea into a reality. What I have come to appreciate is that in Moraga, many of our best ideas begin with one person. They then grow into community efforts, embraced by neighbors who roll up their sleeves, contribute their talents, and work together to bring a shared vision to life.”

APSC Chair Holly Hartz worked with Onoda and Brady to design the banners using the old and new photos provided by the Historical Society and Galila, and MHS President Susan Sperry orchestrated the acquisition of the historic photos and got Kaiser on board, who is in the process of digitizing the MHS physical archives and making them available online through their website.

When Panetta and

Onoda showed up at the History Center with Sperry, Kaiser used his laptop to connect to moragahistory.org in order to view photo possibilities. “We eventually settled on a dozen photos that they really liked. I suggested that they approach Wilfred about figuring out and taking the ‘after’ photos. What was special about this project was how everybody collaborated to come up with something that is accurate and good.”

MHS member Galila recalled some difficulties with getting the perfect “after” photos. “The oldest photograph for the banner project was made in 1929. A lot has changed in Moraga since then. The terrain of the town has significantly evolved, apart from the surrounding hills and Saint Mary’s College that served as my guideposts as to where the historical photographs were taken. For instance, the historical photo of a muddy dirt road that was thought to be of Moraga Road facing towards Lafayette, was actually that of Moraga Way facing towards Orinda.”

Galila added, “I had the pleasure of photographing the current versions of the historical photos for the banners while learning more about Moraga’s rich history and gaining a deeper appreciation and sense of pride for the town where I live.”

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Town Council approves Technical Disruption Policy

By Vera Kochan

The State of California’s Senate Bill 707 required that “all legislative bodies” offer remote public access for Town Council meetings effective on or before July 1, 2026. The options were either to provide a two-way telephonic service or a two-way audiovisual platform. The new Technical Disruption Policy addresses telephonic or internet service disruptions that would prevent the public from observing open Town Council meetings.

During an April 8 meeting the Council unanimously approved a mandatory equipment upgrade in order to conform to SB 707. On the agenda for June 10 was the adoption of the Technical Disruption Policy, also unanimously approved.

The policy contains several components, such as response to disruption of remote access services, efforts to restore remote access services, timing, inability to

restore remote access services, record keeping, and review and updates.

A staff report by Assistant Town Attorney Denise Bazzano stated, “If remote access services are disrupted due to technical issues such as loss of internet connectivity or power failure during public open meetings of Town Council then the following steps must take place: Town Council shall immediately announce the disruption to the public; Town Council must either adjourn the open session or recess from open session for at least one hour to make a good faith effort to restore the remote access services; during recess, Town Council may meet in closed session as permitted by Government Code section 54953.4; and if following recess of the meeting, remote access services have not been restored within one hour, then Town Council may reconvene the meeting if it adopts, by

roll call vote, a finding that it made good faith efforts to restore the remote access services and that the public interest in continuing the meeting outweighs the public interest in remote public access.”

Bazzano’s report identifies the efforts to restore the remote access services as: troubleshooting platform or teleconferencing software; resetting or replacing audiovisual equipment; attempting alternative connection methods; contacting necessary support staff or service providers, or switching to back-up equipment or platforms, if available.

With regards to timing, the open session may reconvene once services have been restored or if after one hour has elapsed since the initial disruption.

...continued on Page A8

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The Orinda Association:
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City Council Reg. Meeting:
Tuesday, Aug. 18, 7 p.m.
Orinda Library Auditorium
Planning Commission Regular Meeting:
Tuesday, Aug 25, 7 p.m.
Orinda Library Auditorium
Affordable Housing Council Subcommittee
Thursday, Aug. 20, 4:30 p.m.
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COMPASS

Orinda enjoys a grand National Night Out in the park

By Sora O’Doherty



Orinda Police officers participate in a friendly competition with members of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District.

Photo Sora O’Doherty

Orinda kicked National Night Out up a notch this year. In the week preceding the annual event, the Orinda Police Department decided to build some interest in the competition with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. On a sneak visit to Station 45, OPD fired water balloons at MOFD, who responded in kind with three-inch fire hoses. But it was all in good fun, as was the competition on the evening of Aug. 4, when the two groups of first responders engaged in a friendly competition on the lawn of Orinda Community Park.

From 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. OPD served up free hotdogs with chips and drinks, while visitors

could explore informational booths from service organizations like CERT and Firewise, or explore police and fire vehicles, including the Contra Costa Sheriff’s Bear Cat, an armored rescue vehicle. Contra Costa Farmers Markets offered information as well as delicious strawberries and photo opportunities to pose as a fruit or vegetable.

Orinda’s Parks & Rec department was soliciting information on the design of the Community Park Play Area Replacement. For those who wish to see the options and weigh in on their preferences, there is a survey available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2BW5WS6>.

There was an informal relay race on the lawn, with competitors bursting through a breach door training tool and facing an obstacle course to display their power and flexibility. The tiny step section tripped up some contestants, but they were up and running again in seconds. They wove through course obstacles, and finished with an extended version of a three-legged race where the whole team was connected at the ankles for the final leg back to the starting point.

As in past years, children had the opportunity to dunk the chief. Throwing a ball, if they hit the release button

Chief Anthony Rossi was dropped into a dunk tank. This year it seemed like a record number of strong-armed children hit the spot, and Rossi went down numerous times. At least it was a warm, sunny evening. The chief came up smiling though, encouraging the children to do their worst.

OPD deemed the evening a great success and said they are looking forward to doing it again next year. National Night Out is over 40 years old and is celebrated in all 50 states across the country as well as U.S. territories, Canadian cities, and military bases worldwide.

OIS student Aiden Meng recognized for spelling bee performance

By Sora O’Doherty

Aiden Meng, a seventh-grade student at Orinda Intermediate School, was celebrated at the Orinda City Council meeting on July 21 for his accomplishment of tying for sixth place at the 98th Scripps National Spelling Bee final competition.

Donna Brown from the Office of Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan said she was proud to represent the assembly member as well as State Sen. Tim Grayson to honor Meng. “We are honored to celebrate Aiden Meng ... who has distinguished himself on the regional, state, and national stage through his exceptional performance at each level of competition,” Brown said.

“Aiden’s success at the state level earned him the opportunity to represent the San Francisco Bay Area at the 2026 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C., where he competed among the nation’s most accomplished young scholars, advanced through 12 rounds of competition,

and ultimately tied for sixth place – an extraordinary accomplishment in one of the country’s most rigorous academic contests,” Brown added.

The City of Orinda also recognized Meng’s achievement with a proclamation recognizing him for his outstanding academic achievement. Mayor Brandyn Iverson read out the proclamation, which applauded Meng for demonstrating the accomplishments of young people whose dedication, perseverance, and pursuit of excellence inspire our community and serve as an example for others.

“Aiden displayed extraordinary determination, intellectual curiosity, discipline, and poise under pressure, bringing great pride to his family, his school, and the entire Orinda community,” the proclamation stated.

The young scholar thanked the council and state representatives, commenting, “This is cool.” At the podium, he thanked his family and expressed appreciation



Aiden Meng with Orinda Mayor Brandyn Iverson

Photo courtesy City of Orinda

for all his friends “that came perhaps against their will, but I appreciate you.”

“It’s been a cool year of spelling,” Meng said. “I’ve worked pretty hard. I’m glad that all of this hard work has paid off. I got sixth and that was amazing.” He promised to come back next year and hopes to win.

Mayor Iverson concluded with congratulating Meng, adding, “This was a lot of fun for us to get to recognize you and we’re very proud. I hope next year we get to do it again.” Vice Mayor Darlene Gee, added her congratulations, saying, “It’s so nice to have you in Orinda.”

OPD officer steps into newly created position for community benefit

By Sora O'Doherty

The position of “Day Officer” has been filled by Chanel Taliaferro, who started working for the Orinda Police Department two years ago. The new position was created by Orinda in 2024, but recent changes to the requirements led to it being filled.

Orinda Police Chief Anthony Rossi introduced Taliaferro to the City Council at its July 21 meeting. “Tonight, I am pleased to introduce a new police officer position that represents an important investment in the safety and quality of life of our city,” Rossi told the council. “The position is dedicated to three priorities: supporting our schools, strengthening emergency preparedness, and enhancing partnerships with our business community.”

Rossi explained that the officer will serve as a consistent presence at our elementary schools, building positive relationships with students, parents, and local staff while helping to address safety concerns before they become problems. They will also play a leading role in coordinating emergency preparedness efforts by working closely with the city departments, first responders, schools, and community organizations to improve planning, training, and readiness.

In addition, this officer will work directly with our local businesses to address crime prevention, improve communication, and foster strong partnerships that help keep our commercial district safe and welcoming. Rossi concluded that “the position reflects our commitment to proactive policing, community engagement, and preparedness. By investing in prevention and collaboration today, we are helping ensure a safer, more resilient community for tomorrow.”

Having been welcomed by the city council, Taliaferro said, “I’m excited to be a part of the beginning of this



Orinda Police Officer Chanel Taliaferro

Photo Sora O'Doherty

new position that the city has granted us and I’m ready to take on this path wherever it may lead.”

Taliaferro was appointed a month ago and is still getting her footing but things are going well, she told The Lamorinda Weekly in an interview during the Aug. 4 National Night Out. “I’ve already attended a few schools that pertain to this position,” she added.

The new Day Officer started with Orinda PD in July of 2024. She worked six months on the day shift, and then 18 months on night shift. “I’ve seen both sides of what comes through Orinda, what type of crime we have in the city, what kind of issues go on with residential areas, business areas, schools and so forth,” she noted, adding, “We’re pretty calm.”

Taliaferro describes the position as “a lot of community engagement, and it’s very important in a small town like Orinda to know your police officers and know your community; knowing who’s showing up in case you have an emergency, which is why we put on events like this [National Night Out], which has been implemented for years and years throughout the whole country. It’s a good way

of getting out and getting to know us when we’re not going call to call.”

The Day Officer’s schedule will be flexible. Her hours are 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. four days a week, but her availability is whatever the position requires. She’ll be going to Miramonte football games, making sure everything is safe and secure there.

She’ll also be available for public speaking engagements with local organizations, such as the Rotary Club meeting, even if the meetings are in the evening. “I can do that, or, let’s say, extra coverage is needed at nighttime for whatever reason, I can flex my schedule and be a resource,” she explained.

Before coming to Orinda, Taliaferro worked on county patrol. She worked the Contra Costa Sheriff’s Valley Station, that covers unincorporated areas in Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, Concord and Clayton. “We have over 1.2 million people in our county,” Taliaferro said, “and if I’m correct, we’re just over 700 square miles of county.”

Taliaferro’s commute is now just 15 minutes. but at the end of the day, it’s about 35 or 40 minutes to return home.

Hank & Frank Bicycles

..continued from Page A3

Dryer has seen tremendous changes in the bicycle industry over the years, with a notable shift going from in-store experiences to online convenience. This accompanied the evolution from BMX to mountain bikes, hybrids, children’s bikes, and now electric bikes. He noted bikes today are lighter, more efficient, more accessible, and far more specialized than they were decades ago. Components, frame geometry, shifting systems, and electronics have all improved, allowing riders to find equipment that fits their specific goals and abilities.

“Even with all that change, one thing has remained true: cycling is still one of the most enjoyable, affordable, and low-impact ways for people of all ages to stay active,” he said.

But, of all the changes he has observed through the years, how customers gather information and make purchasing decisions stands

out. Dryer noted how years ago people came into the shop to learn, compare, ask questions, and enjoy the experience.

“Today, many people begin that process online. While that convenience is helpful, it also makes the knowledge and service of a local bike shop more important than ever,” said Dryer said. “A bicycle is personal, and having the right guidance can make all the difference in safety, comfort, and long-term enjoyment.”

Liz Voelker, whose family lives in the Happy Valley area of Lafayette, expressed shock with hearing the longtime Mt. Diablo Boulevard retail fixture was shuttering.

“It is always sad when a small business closes in a small-town community like Lafayette,” she said. Equally so, as a parent of kids 8, 10 and 12, this place holds notable family memories. “It is a rite of passage coming to the bike store and picking out your bike and growing into a new one,” she said.

Looking forward, Dryer sees the bicycle industry as still having a bright future.

“There will always be bike shops selling quality bicycles,” he said. “People who are buying bikes online will need to have them assembled properly and they will need to be serviced eventually.” So, there is a real opportunity for the next generation to step in.

“This is not a lost industry,” Dryer said. “In many ways, now is the perfect time for someone with energy, curiosity, and vision to help take it to the next level.”

To that end Dryer also encouraged the community to stay connected with their local bike shops, whether someone is learning to balance and pedal for the first time or being professionally fit for long-distance rides, “(the folks behind the counter) truly care about keeping riders safe, confident, and excited to ride.”

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Lamorinda councils hear about transportation projects, local legislation during annual tri-city meeting

By Jennifer Wake



An Illustration of how the Smart Signals Project will work. Image courtesy CCTA

Members of the Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda city and town councils heard updates on current and pending legislation, as well as on proposed transportation projects and funding issues from representatives of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), and Townsend Public Affairs during a July 16 joint meeting at Saint Mary’s College.

Townsend Public Affairs Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer Casey Elliott updated the council members on the California State Budget, as well as local legislative efforts including Wildfire Preparedness Bills AB 2513, which would allow Lamorinda agencies to apply for regional fire mitigation landscape grants, and

AB 2517, which would establish a process to review fire hazard severity zone designations every five years.

Elliott also discussed e-bike legislation (AB 1569 and AB 2346) which would focus on increasing e-bike safety through standardized training programs and local control over speed restrictions.

“The state of California really, really messed up when they set a maximum speed for e-bikes at 28 miles per hour, without any licensing, education or insurance requirements, as opposed to Europe that sets it at 15 miles an hour,” he said. “And now we have a real mess on our hands, and I hope we can progress where we need to progress.”

BART Chief Financial Officer Joe Beach gave

an update on expenditures, which have been flat since 2019, according to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Customer satisfaction numbers have gone from 70% in 2019 to 90% today, and fare revenue that previously supported two-thirds of BART’s operating costs is more than \$400 million lower than projected back in FY19. New fare gates have been helping increase revenue, and ridership has tripled since fiscal year 2021, but emergency funding that sustained and improved service is nearly depleted, he said.

While Beach said BART has made efforts to close the gap through hiring freezes, targeted operating cuts, running shorter trains, and more, operating expenses remain high and BART is

hoping Senate Bill 63 passes in November. SB 63 is a multi-county sales tax measure that would raise roughly \$980 million annually for public transit operations, including BART.

“If the measure passes,” Beach said, “then there’s a phase two accountability that would require BART and the other operators to identify additional long-term structural cost-saving measures and develop a regional strategy to maximize real property assets.”

If the measure does not pass, Beach said BART will need to cut service times, cut jobs, increase fares by 30%, and close some stations, starting as early as January 2027.

When asked why closing stations were being considered, when net savings for closing a station is limited, Beach said that BART needs to focus on actions within its control.

One council member noted that residents within Lamorinda “rely

pretty heavily on both Lafayette and Orinda BART stations, and we want both of those stations to remain active and open.”

Following Beach’s presentation, CCTA Executive Director Tim Haile discussed a County-wide Emergency Evacuation Study and a roughly \$5 million Smart Traffic Signals project.

According to Haile, CCTA is upgrading 365 traffic signals in Contra Costa County, including 56 signalized intersections in Lamorinda. “We want Lamorinda to be a model for what this connected system can look like,” Haile said.

“The system is now evolving with technology, so now what we have is a lot of different systems – a highway system, a street system a signal system, emergency response systems, electric vehicle systems, bike share systems – and it will be important to manage all these different systems,” Haile said. “The County-wide Smart Signals system is laying

the foundation for that.” The project should start construction in spring of next year, be completed in summer of next year and operational by the fall.

The final presentation made to council members involved both the Moraga Public Works Director/City Engineer Nate Levine and Orinda City Engineer Siva Natarajan. The project’s starting step began after receiving a \$508,000 SS4A grant procured by Moraga’s former Public Works Director/City Engineer Shawn Knapp, with the goal to add a 10- to 12-foot-wide trail that can be converted to emergency vehicle access during an evacuation. The grant was awarded in December 2025, and the grant agreement is expected by the end of the year, with a draft and final report delivered in late 2027 or early 2028.

To view the entire meeting, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxOspGYxx2g>

Moraga acquires two more pieces of art located off of St. Mary’s Road

By Vera Kochan



Cement lions stand guard at Moraga Library Photo Vera Kochan

The Town of Moraga is fast becoming an outdoor art gallery thanks to the efforts of the Art in Public Spaces Committee (APSC). Two new installations are gracing the town along St. Mary’s Road – a pair of cement lions standing guard at the steps to the Moraga Library, and just across the street “Mirror Ball” can be seen along the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail. The Town Council approved the installations during its Jan.14 meeting.

In April 2025, APSC was approached by Janice Lum Ennik with regards to the two lion sculptures weighing about 200 pounds each with approximate dimensions of 28 inches long and 11 inches wide.

“The two cement lions gracing the top of the steps at the Moraga Library were graciously donated by the estate of Anna and William Lum,” explained APSC Chair Holly Hartz. “The lions lived at the Lum’s house in Moraga for over 50 years. The artist is unknown. Our Moraga Library lions are in good company. There is a great tradition of lions presiding over the entrances to other libraries,” adding that two famous lions grace the

entrance of the New York City Public Library.

“Patience and Fortitude, the world-renowned pair of marble lions that stand proudly before the majestic Beaux-Arts building at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street in Manhattan, have captured the imagination and affection of New Yorkers and visitors from all over the world since they were placed on their pedestals days before the building was dedicated on May 23, 1911.” Hartz also noted that a pair of lions guard the entrances to both the Art Institute of Chicago and Boston Public Library.

The second sculpture, “Mirror Ball,” came to APSC attention via a November 2025 Public Art Application from the artist, Douglas Heine. The large-scale steel sculpture is painted red. Within it is a black curved structural arc with circular forms that contain a mirror ball. Standing approximately 9 feet tall and 5 feet wide, the piece weighs about 500 pounds and took two months to create. Another Heine sculpture entitled “Ribbons” was placed in West Commons Park last year.

According to Heine’s application to the Town,

“I learned most of my metal working skills early on by working on reactor plants in nuclear submarines. I increased that knowledge working in astrophysics at UC Berkeley by making experimental apparatus for the study of cosmic particles. I brought these skills to the art department at Cal where I was in charge of the art bronze foundry with Peter Voulkos.”

Heine continued, “I later did a stint of teaching art students how to weld and make sculpture while in charge of the sculpture shop. When I turned 42, I took on making my own sculpture like a religion. I have expanded on to painting in addition to sculpture.” Heine is now 90 years old.

Hartz stated, “Heine said when he had gathered the various components for “Mirror Ball,” he began to envision how the pieces might fit together, much like one fits a puzzle together.

“The shape does not represent anything except to place the pieces together in a pleasing composition,” Heine said. “The ball is simply a strong juxtaposition with the black circles.”

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Technical Disruption Policy

..continued from Page A5

During any disruption, the town clerk will keep a record and include into the meeting minutes: the nature and time of the disruption; whether open session was adjourned or Town Council complied with the procedures pursuant to the details in the section entitled Response to

Disruption of Remote Access Services; the type of restoration efforts undertaken; the time the meeting was reconvened (if applicable); and finding that remote access was unable to be restored pursuant to the section entitled Inability to Restore Remote Access Services.

Any reviews and updates to the Technical

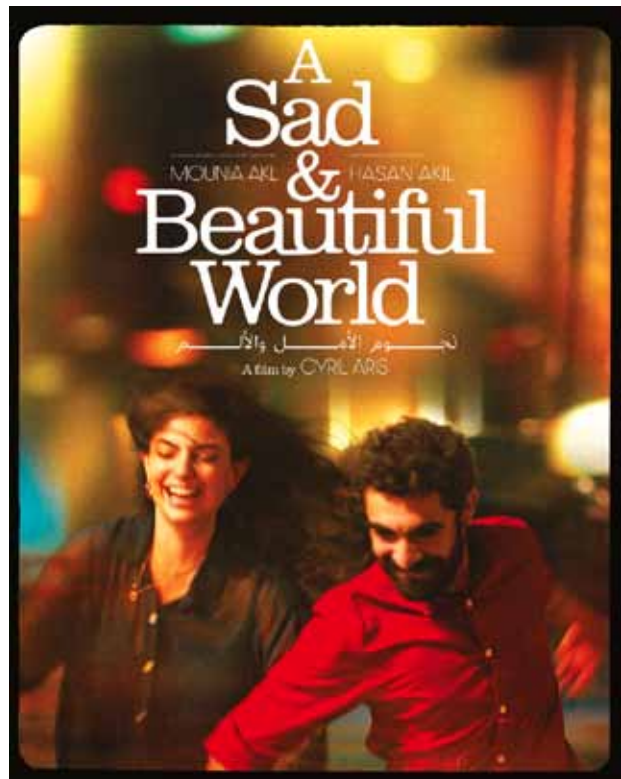
Disruption Policy can be amended by the Town Council.

Bazzano confirmed that other jurisdictions have adopted a similar policy, and that the Policy is limited only to Town Council meetings and does not apply to commission meetings, etc.

~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

‘A Sad and Beautiful World’ – a wonderful film opening at the Orinda Theatre

By Sophie Braccini



The title of this movie is so well chosen: “A Sad and Beautiful World.” It tells a love story be-

tween Yasmina and Nino and is a metaphor for the country of Lebanon, where it takes place. The plot is peppered with humor, laughter, and poetry, but it also lets us feel the chaos that the Lebanese people have endured for years. The movie opens a little like a fairy tale. The two are born a minute apart in a hospital under attack; they find themselves in the same elementary school, where their love starts blossoming; then, after losing each other, they are reunited by accident years later, as if destiny was taking a hand by drawing them irresistibly toward each other. As their paths cross, existential choices have to be made in an environment where, in spite of war and destruction, love becomes

an act of faith for those who remain unfailingly attached to their country. Cyril Aris’ movie, which he co-wrote and directed, mixes the fantasies that make life easier for children during war, the irresistible romantic attraction between the two, and the harsh reality of Lebanon today. Yes, these two love each other, but they envision the future differently. Nino is an optimist who lives in the present and does what has to be done to make sure his little restaurant thrives; Yasmina is sarcastic – or realistic, in her own words – and wants to leave the country. She loves Nino, but she does not believe in the future of Lebanon and does not want to build a family. Actress Mounia Akil gives Yasmina her

strength and determination. Nino, played by Hassan Akil, embodies the humor, lightness, and happiness of the Lebanese people. As Aris put it in an interview with a Lebanese online media outlet, “Yes, it’s a country that has endured crises, hardships, and tragedies, but it’s also a country where you can always find laughter, humor, and the zest for life that is so characteristic of the Lebanese people.” When they are children, Nino and Yasmina talk about “the island,” the place of joy where Nino’s parents live, where there is no war, just beauty and happiness. As they grow older, they still look for an island for themselves: this mythical place that once was, and could one day again be, Beirut.

Today, there are more Lebanese people living outside Lebanon than in the country. Approximately 5 million citizens live in Lebanon, while there are an estimated 8 to 18 million people of Lebanese descent who live outside the country. This beautiful and important movie will be shown in Orinda beginning Aug. 21 for at least one week. The International Film Showcase, a local nonprofit, brings acclaimed international film to the Bay Area. More about their future films at international-showcase.org. Tickets and showtime for “A Sad and Beautiful World” can be found at <https://www.orindamovies.com/movies/>

AAUW Tech Trek Camp a huge success

Submitted by Liddy Clark



AAUW OML members and Lamorinda support staff, from left: Jan Cushman, Marcy Place, Gail Chesler, Christophe Davis, Toni Fanin, Molly Mudgett, Karen Feeney, and Claire Casado.

Tech Trek Summer Camps were first established in 1978 by an American Association of University Women (AAUW) member, Marie Wolbach, who recognized that girls tend to give up on math and science in middle school. The week-long

camp was designed to give rising eighth-grade girls the opportunity to thrive in an environment of hands-on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) workshops with other girls. The seven enthusiastic rising eighth-grade

girls – Riley Chong and Sophie Humphrey from Orinda, Maria Rudyak and Erin Yin from Moraga and Louise Marty, Emma Rosenblat, Sophia Sturtz from Lafayette – were selected this past spring by the Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (OML) Branch of AAUW and at-

tended Tech Trek camp at Santa Clara University in July. During the week, morning core classes on forensics, engineering, oceans and botany were packed with hands-on activities. Some of the activities included evaluating finger prints and using logic to follow the clues to solve a “murder,” making roller coasters, mousetrap cars and stomp rockets. The girls also learned about marine biology, information about plastics in the ocean and how melting glaciers affect the ocean. They dissected flowers and learned about insect pollinators and the chemistry of photosynthesis in botany. Afternoon and evening activities included building and programming robots, soldering to make a flashlight, measuring vitamin C in a college chemistry lab and talking with astronomers about their telescopes,

and more. Members of the OML branch enjoyed being volunteer camp staff. The Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch of AAUW meets at the

Orinda Community Church. All are welcome to join at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 15 to learn about the many member activities.

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Lamorinda Weekly sports reporter awarded 2nd place

The California News Publishers Association announced the winners of the 2025 California Journalism Awards, with Lamorinda Weekly’s phenomenal sports reporter Jon Kingdon taking second place in the Sports Feature Story category for his July 30, 2025 story, “From England, to Lafayette, to Boise State – an unlikely football journey,” which chronicles the unbelievable journey of Bethel Imasuen’s football career. Congratulations, Jon!

– J. Wake



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Letters to the Editor

Mario DiPrisco for Lafayette City Council

I am voting for Mario DiPrisco for a position on the Lafayette City Council. Although Mario has been in the city since 2008, I have gotten to know him over the last several years as he has served in our Lafayette Rotary Club. Shortly after he joined, he jumped right in to help the club in our service projects and attracting new members. He is now on our Board of Directors and will serve as President of the club later this year. He has led our club to help revive Lafayette's Community Day. He has reached out to other community organizations to help plan and put on this great community event. I have been impressed how he works across a diverse set of organizations to get everyone working toward a common goal.

I have also observed how Mario has joined a number of other civic and city government organizations and has developed a broad perspective of the needs and concerns of our residents and businesses in town.

Matthew M. Pease
Lafayette

No Parking

I am Resident at Monteverde senior housing, corner of Orinda way and Irwin Way.

For the last three years I have parked my car in the vacant lot in this corner; this lot is owned by the city but recently the city gave the lot to Orinda Community Church. This lot was built to provide community parking, not for the church only, this was built as a condition of approval of Monteverde. Starting July 15 The Orinda Community Church claims they are now the owner of the parking lot and NO one is allowed to park here anymore, and reserved for TOPS employees who are refusing to park in this lot. Others and I are now trying to find parking spaces which are not to be found anywhere; street parking is only good for 2 to 4 hours . Orinda Community Church and the Orinda Senior Village are not allowing any one to park in their lots (up the hill) at the end of Irwin way. The Lot has been vacant since July 15, and since that time the church is placing “NO parking” stickers on all cars, even the one on Irwin way (public street).

Mr. Bond
Orinda

Endorsement of Mario DiPrisco for Lafayette City Council

I am writing to urge Lafayette citizens to vote for Mario DiPrisco for the two-year term on the Lafayette City Council. Mario has the experience, the

enthusiasm, and the time now to serve us well.

He worked 26 years for Dodge & Cox, analyzing budgets and financial statements. Before moving to Lafayette, he served two years on the Albany City Council. He, his wife and three children moved to Lafayette in 2008. He is currently on Lafayette's Transportation and Circulation Commission and is a trustee of the Contra Costa County Employees' Retirement Association (formerly ConFire Advisory Commission.) He has served on LPIE's board, is a member of Lafayette Rotary, on the board of the Community Foundation of Lafayette, and is a CASA volunteer and high school baseball coach.

Mario is running on a campaign to keep the city safe and vibrant. He supports efforts to reduce our risk of wildfires, to bury PG&E lines, to promote safer streets, and protect seniors from scams. He believes we should consider utilizing some of the BART parking lot for housing to meet our housing requirements.

I serve with Mario on the board of the Community Foundation and hope you will join me in voting for Mario.

Carol Federighi, Past Mayor, Lafayette

In Support of Mario DiPrisco for Lafayette City Council

I am pleased to endorse Mario DiPrisco for Lafayette City Council. Having known and worked closely with Mario for nearly 25 years, I can attest to his intelligence, integrity, work ethic, and commitment to serving others.

Throughout his career, Mario demonstrated an exceptional ability to analyze complex issues, weigh competing perspectives, and make thoughtful, well-reasoned decisions. He combines rigorous problem-solving with strong communication skills, humility, and a collaborative approach, qualities that are essential for effective public service.

As a member of an investment committee, Mario consistently looked beyond his own areas of expertise to understand broader issues and their interconnections. He listened carefully, challenged assumptions, and adapted his views when warranted by the facts. These same qualities will serve Lafayette well as the city addresses its future opportunities and challenges. Just as important, Mario has a long record of community involvement through organizations including Rotary, LPIE, ConFire, the Lafayette Community Foundation, CCERA, and the Transportation & Circulation Commission.

Mario is thoughtful, independent, and deeply committed to Lafayette. I

wholeheartedly support his candidacy and am confident he will be an outstanding member of the City Council.

Tony Brekke
Lafayette

Our high schools need local funding – now more than ever

As former Acalanes High School Parents Club presidents, we have seen firsthand what makes our schools exceptional – dedicated teachers, engaged students, supportive parents, and a community that shows up for public education. We are writing today because excellence is under real threat, and we believe the Acalanes Union High School District must act.

The failure of the 2025 Measure T parcel tax has had a real impact on our students. The cuts have been painful. Elective offerings have been reduced, leaving students with fewer opportunities to discover passions beyond the core curriculum. Academic counselor positions have been cut, leaving students with less support as they navigate their high school careers and prepare for college. Librarians – the backbone of academic research and a resource students depend on daily – have seen their roles diminished. There is now only one librarian serving all four high schools and over 5,000 students. These are not abstract line items; they are the programs and people that define a Lamorinda high school education. Without a renewed local funding source, the cuts will continue to compound.

We understand that putting another measure on the ballot requires the determination of many, but we believe it's worth the effort. Parents, teachers, students, and neighbors across Lamorinda understand what is at stake, especially after our communities demonstrated such strong support for our elementary schools with Measure H and Measure I.

Our high schools have given so much to so many families and have enriched our Lamorinda community. However, the reality is, for future students to have the same top-rated educational experience that so many of us already benefited from, our community needs to come together and act. We believe it's time to restore critical funding to our local high schools.

Dawn Brightbill and Meg Fellner
Former Acalanes Parents Club Presidents and Residents of Lafayette for over 25 years

Our High Schools Deserve the Same Support We've Given Younger Grades

As a parent, volunteer, and now Co-Executive Director of the Moraga Education Foundation, I have a deep understanding of the funding issues facing our schools. That's why I'm writing in support of a parcel tax to benefit our Lamorinda high schools and to explain why our high schools, specifically, need help right now.

For decades, this community has shown up for its schools. Through donations to education foundations, volunteer hours, and parcel taxes, Lamorinda families have built something special: excellent public schools that are the biggest reason most of us moved here.

But since California adopted the Local Control Funding Formula in 2013, local support is no longer just for "extras"; it funds core programs. Our schools are now among the lowest-funded in the state, and the gap between what we receive and what the average school receives continues to widen. Local support has failed to close that gap for years.

Lafayette voters just passed Measure H, and Moraga passed Measure I — wonderful news for our elementary and middle schools. But not a dollar goes to our high schools. Acalanes Union High School District hasn't seen a new parcel tax in 16 years. In the past two years, the district has cut \$4.2 million, including a 19% reduction in central administration. This is already a lean district with no more room to trim.

Our high schools deliver extraordinary results with what little they have: a 98% graduation rate and an AP program ranked in the top 4% nationwide, preparing students to succeed in an increasingly demanding world. This is what our community's investment has built, and it's what's at risk if our high schools do not receive additional support.

We all benefit from excellent schools, whether or not we have kids enrolled. Our schools are why families move here, why property values hold strong, and why this feels like a community worth putting down roots in. It's time we extended the same commitment to our high schools that we've shown our younger grades.

Ana Moon, 20-year Lamorinda resident

Election Season SPECIAL POLICY: Letters related to a candidate running for office should be a maximum of 200 words so we can publish as many as possible. Letters regarding ballot measures remain up to 350 words. Deadline is NOON on Thursday prior to the issue date. Full policy at www.lamorindaweekly.com under the Submit button.

Fresh and tangy Shrimp Ceviche, the perfect dish for summer

By Susie Iventosch



Photo Susie Iventosch

This zesty Shrimp Ceviche is exactly the kind of dish that belongs in summer. It is light enough for a hot afternoon but flavorful enough for a summer evening meal and it is cool, bright, colorful, and full of fresh flavor.

We got the original recipe from a friend while we were on vacation in Baja, but my son Joel has added his own touches including diced tomatillos and taco seasoning. You can make it with shrimp, red snapper, yellowfin tuna, mahi mahi, or any combination of these sea critters. You could even use lobster if you are so inclined!

This version gets its

sweetness from fresh cherry tomatoes and its tangy bite from diced tomatillos. The tomatillos are a fantastic addition because they add a clean, citrusy flavor that works naturally with the lime. Jalapeños bring just enough heat, while the tops of green onions add a mild sharpness without overpowering the shrimp.

We cover the onions in lime juice and taco seasoning and then chill them in the freezer for about 10 minutes to soften the raw onion taste. This works well if you don't love raw onion, but if you do, you can certainly drop this step.

The lime juice does more than dress the dish;

it pulls all the ingredients together and gives the shrimp, tomatoes, tomatillos, onions, and peppers time to mingle. Fresh cilantro ties everything together. It gives the ceviche that unmistakable fresh, green flavor that makes each bite taste lively.

I like using frozen raw shrimp that has been peeled and deveined. This keeps the dish easy and reliable while still giving you that classic chilled ceviche flavor. Once the shrimp mixed with the lime juice and vegetables, it just needs a little time in the refrigerator before serving. Of course, if you are in a part of the world where you can get fresh shrimp right out of the ocean, that can't be beat and it's worth the effort to peel and devein the shrimp yourself.

Make this dish an hour or two before serving, so it has plenty of time to chill. Serve it with tortilla chips, and a lime wedge, avocado slices, and a sprig of cilantro as garnishes. You can serve a bigger bowl as a first course or spoon it into small glasses for an appetizer.

Shrimp Ceviche

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 8 large raw shrimp, tails and shells removed, deveined, and cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 tbsp. of the white tops of green onions, finely minced
- 1 cup fresh-squeezed lime juice
- 1 tsp. of your favorite taco seasoning
- 2 tbsp. jalapeño, seeded and finely diced
- 3/4 cup cherry tomatoes, cut into eights, or small pieces
- 1 tomatillo, outside husk removed, and cut into small dice
- 2 tbsp. minced cilantro leaves (plus 4 sprigs for garnish)
- 1 avocado, cut into wedges or chunks for garnish
- 1 lime, quartered for garnish
- 1 package tortilla chips

DIRECTIONS

Place minced onion, 1/2 tsp. taco seasoning and 1/2 cup of lime juice in a bowl. Mix with a fork or spoon. Place in the freezer for 10 minutes.

Remove onion mixture from freezer and add shrimp and remaining lime juice and place in the freezer for another 10 minutes.

Remove from freezer and add the jalapeño, tomatillo, tomatoes, and remaining 1/2 tsp. of taco seasoning to the bowl. Stir and place in the refrigerator for up to an hour before serving. Add minced cilantro just before serving.

Garnish with a fresh cilantro sprig, a lime wedge and a wedge or couple of chunks of avocado. Serve with your favorite tortilla chips.



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>

Local students hold Urban Design camp for children of migrant farmworkers

Submitted by Nika Voronova



Camp participants draw their “dream cities” – this one with underwater neighborhoods.

Photo provided

Earlier this year, Moraga resident Adam Fibrich spent two days with a small group of kids who had never heard the words “urban design” before. Adam, a student at The College Preparatory School in Oakland, helped lead an “Urban Design for Kids” camp for children of migrant farmworkers at Hijas del Campo in Brentwood, Calif.

The program was organized by Adam and his friend Qadir in partnership with Growth Notes, a youth-led education nonprofit founded by Orinda native Claire O’Connor, now at UCLA, and hosted at Hijas del Campo, a grassroots group that supports farmworker families.

The camp drew about eight children, from early elementary through middle school.

Many walked in quietly, sitting close to siblings or hanging back from the tables. By the end of the first morning, they were leaning over big sheets of paper, arguing (politely) about where to put parks, schools, and soccer fields in their “dream cities.”

One group imagined underwater neighborhoods protected by giant bubbles; another created a long, skinny town trac-

ing the route they take to work in the fields.

On the second day, the group shifted from drawing to building. Students learned how architects think about structure, function, and beauty, then used simple materials to build models and connect them into one shared city, complete with roads and gathering spaces. Kids who had barely spoken on day one, were stand-

ing up to explain their designs to the group.

For these students, many of whom rarely see their own communities reflected in planning and design, the camp offered something small but memorable: the chance to redesign the world around them, and be heard while doing it.

For more information about Growth Notes, visit www.growthnotes.org.

Lawrence Owen Monin

August 8, 1942 - June 26, 2026



Lawrence (Larry) Owen Monin, 83, will be remembered as a devoted and loving husband and father. He was affectionately known as “BaBa” to his 7 grandchildren whom he joyfully watched grow.

Larry died peacefully in his Moraga, California home of 43 years surrounded by family after a 3-year struggle with metastatic esophageal cancer. He was born on Aug. 8, 1942 at 7:52 p.m. (eight minutes to eight on the eighth day of the eighth month). No surprise, his favorite number was 8. He was the eldest child of Lawrence George Monin and Catharine Ann (O’Connor). His first bed was a dresser drawer in their small apartment in Niagara Falls, New York.

Larry graduated from the State University of New York at Buffalo, where he was a track athlete and ran the 100-yard dash in 10.0 seconds flat. He went on to get a law degree at Harvard University during which he was a member of the Law Review. He then received a master’s degree at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He began his law career as an Assistant Counsel for Governor Nelson Rockefeller at the New York State Capital in Albany. Following this, he became a Deputy Superintendent in the New York State Insurance Department where his office was on the 82nd floor of the South Tower of the World Trade Center. After leaving government work, he had a successful career working in the insurance industry – first with Chubb and Sons, for which he managed their West Coast operations from Los Angeles, and later with Industrial Indemnity in San Francisco. He ended his career as a respected and sought after mediator/arbitrator.

With his wife of 58 years, Laura Ann DiMuro, he shared a love of travel (taking over 100 trips to countries around the world, including over 12 to Italy), sports (traveling as a child to watch the NY Giants baseball team with his father, who was a part-time umpire for Negro League games), and the performing arts (with 40-year subscriptions to the Berkeley Rep Theater and San Francisco Symphony). Into his late 70’s, he was still jogging the Lafayette-Moraga trail several times a week. Later, he greatly enjoyed his local bi-weekly walking group and coffee klatches.

He was an avid follower of global and political news. As a progressive Vatican II/Popes Francis and Leo Catholic, he advocated for social justice and human rights.

In addition to his wife, Laura, Larry is survived by their daughter Jennifer (partner Mark Jensen), son Daniel, daughter Juliana (husband Joseph Petta), and grandchildren Mag, Gianni, Nico, Leif, Juno, Evelina, and Zeca. He is also survived by his siblings William (partner Bob Williams), Frank (wife Margaret), Kathleen, and his 12 nieces and nephews.

A memorial mass will be held at Saint Mary’s College Chapel at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 16, followed by a reception to which all are invited. Donations can be made to niagararivergreenway.com.

Renato Tavecchio

May 22, 1960 - June 4, 2026

Renato Tavecchio, 66, of Moraga, California, passed away in Italy on June 4, 2026 following a long illness.

Born in Erba, Italy, Renato spent his youth in Saronno. Following the death of his father, Renato assumed responsibility of his father’s antique restoration business and was later joined by his younger brother, Mario. While living in Milan, he met his wife, Gabriella (Gabby) Zacco, when he was hired to restore furniture that was damaged in her move from New York. They soon married and they welcomed their boys, Giorgio and Marco, into the world. Due to Gabby’s career, Renato moved to the United States sight unseen to create new adventures in Shelton, Conn., Rome, Italy, Moraga, Calif., and Falls Church, Vir., before returning to Moraga.

Renato made his mark everywhere he went. An incredibly skilled craftsman and artisan, he worked throughout the United States with John Canning & Co. on projects big and small, restoring rooms at state capitol buildings, renowned colleges and universities and numerous historical landmarks. Beyond his occupational talents, Renato was famous for hosting impromptu block parties in the neighborhood and proudly cheering on the sidelines of Giorgio’s and Marco’s sporting events, often creating “game day menus” for each event. Renato will be dearly missed and always remembered. His passion for things he loved – his family and friends, his craft, his favorite sports teams and a good meal – was evident in all he did and his boundless energy was infectious.

Renato was predeceased by his parents, Ottorina Paredi and Giuseppe Tavecchio, wife, Gabriella Zacco, and in-laws, Renata and Pietro Zacco. He is survived by his sons, Giorgio and Marco Tavecchio, brother, Mario Tavecchio, sisters-in-law, Paola Antonelli and Paola Barry, brother-in-law, David Barry, his niece, Marisa Barry, and nephew, Matthew Barry.

Services were held privately in Italy. Renato truly valued sitting around the table and enjoying a quality meal with those he loved. We encourage you to do the same with your loved ones and toast to Renato’s memory.

Laurence Robert Evans

February 7, 1943 – July 10, 2026

Laurence Robert "Larry" Evans, beloved husband, father, grandfather, Marine aviator, businessman, art dealer, storyteller, author, and lifelong seeker of knowledge, passed away peacefully at home in Moraga, California, on July 10, 2026.

Larry was born on Feb. 7, 1943, in Kansas City, Missouri, and spent his early childhood on a farm near the McKenzie River in Oregon with his parents, Virginia and Jim Evans, his older brother Jim, and younger sister Jeanine. When he was 8 years old, the family moved to Portland, where he spent the remainder of his childhood.

After attending Whitman College and later transferring to the University of Oregon, Larry set off on an adventure that would become one of the defining stories of his life. Leaving school between his junior and senior years, he traveled throughout Asia, India, Nepal, and Australia in search of what he often described as "the meaning of life." While traveling in Australia, he became the subject of a nationwide search after a draft notice issued in Portland could not reach him. Following extensive correspondence and international publicity, he returned home, re-enrolled at the University of Oregon, and completed his degree in Economics.

Upon graduation, Larry was accepted into the United States Marine Corps as an aviation candidate. After completing Officer Candidate School in Quantico, Virginia, he earned his Wings of Gold in 1967 and began flying the F-4 Phantom II with VMFA 115 out of Chu Lai. During a 13-month tour in Vietnam, he flew 144 combat missions. He was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps with the rank of Captain.

While on leave during flight training, Larry met a young stewardess named Joan on a flight from Portland to Chicago. After a couple months of exchanging letters and only a handful of dates, the two were married and began a partnership that would span decades. Larry often joked, “Joan was a stewardess and I was a complaining passenger – and not a lot has changed.”

Larry later chronicled his experiences as a Marine aviator in Vietnam in his memoir, “Stand By,” preserving not only the story of his military service but also his reflections on a remarkable life.

Following his military service, Larry entered the office furnishings industry, eventually serving as President and CEO of Rucker Fuller and helping lead the company to become one of the largest office furniture dealerships in the United States. Yet despite his success in business, his greatest professional passion was contemporary art. Inspired by Joseph Campbell's advice to "Follow Your Bliss," Larry left the corporate world in 1989 to pursue life as an art dealer, opening Larry Evans Fine Art in San Francisco and building a respected career around his love of artists, ideas, and creativity.

Larry was a man of deep curiosity and strong opinions. He loved spirited debate, thoughtful conversation, and asking questions that challenged others to think more deeply. Family dinners rarely ended when the meal was over; they often stretched for hours as Larry explored topics ranging from religion and philosophy to politics and current events. A good bottle of wine, a lively discussion, and people he loved were among life's greatest pleasures. He was also known for his humor, his storytelling, and his unforgettable jokes.

Larry's passions included tennis, both as a player and devoted spectator. He loved the game throughout his life and remained an enthusiastic follower of the sport. Among his treasured memories was winning a tennis championship alongside his partner – and one of his flight instructors – the late Senator John McCain.

Larry is survived by his beloved wife, Joan McNulty Evans; daughters Laura (Mike Manatos) and Angie (Paul Traxinger) and his five grandchildren, Josh, Sienna, Andrea, Lucas, and Ryan.

Larry spent much of his life searching for meaning – through travel, military service, business, art, books, friendships, and family. In the end, those who knew and loved him would say he found it in the life he built, the people he cherished, and the countless stories he left behind.

A memorial service celebrating Larry's life will be held on Saturday, Aug. 15, 2026, at 2 p.m. at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church in Lafayette, California.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to swords-to-plowshares.org or hospiceeastbay.org.



Community event submissions
can be sent to:
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Art

The Orinda Library Art Gallery featured artists for August,: Denise Nomura, Abstract Paintings; Daniel Wallace Hunter, Photography; Yingling Lin, Ceramics; and Tony De-Martile, Collage. 26 Orinda Way, Orinda. www.lamorindaarts.org

The Moraga Art Gallery, located at 432 Center Street in the Moraga Shopping Center, announces the Aug. 19 opening of a new exhibit entitled "Cadence," Free public reception on Saturday, Sept. 26 from 5 to 7 p.m., with live music. www.moragaartgallery.com, 925-376-5407.

Studio 55 Martinez is excited to invite you to submit to exhibit your works at the gallery. "Summertime" is an opportunity for you to display your interpretation of art that depicts the summer season. This exhibition is open to all emerging and established artists of the Bay Area. Submission details at studio55martinez.com.

Theater

The Orinda Starlight Village Players presents "Present Laughter," July 24 to Aug. 15 in the Orinda Community Center Park Amphitheater. Set in 1941, the play revolves around a famous theatre actor Garry Es-sendine as he prepares to go to Africa on a theatre tour. Tickets available at www.orsvp.org/present-laughter

Literature

Art Embraces Words Sept. 13, 2 to 4 p.m. at the main Stage at the Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School St. in Lafayette.

Original Art features juried artwork from local artists which was forwarded to local poets. Each poet then chooses and interprets one 2D artwork and speaks about it through poetic language. Questions? Contact elanao@mac.com, visit <https://LamorindaArts.org/art-embraces-poetry> or call 925-359-9940.

Sweet Thursday Author Series will discuss Leigh Steinberg's new book, "The Comeback: A Playbook for Turning Life's Setbacks into Victories," on Thursday, Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. at the Lafayette Library. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. for guests to enjoy coffee and sweets. Books will be available for purchase. Free, but registration is required by logging into www.tinyurl.com/sweet-Sept2026.

Music

Free Summer Concerts Thursdays 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the Moraga Commons Band Shell. Loard's ice cream will serve from the lawn at every concert; while the Moraga Lion's and Moraga Kiwanis clubs will serve beer and wine from the bandshell. Taste of the World Market and Ofie's Kitchen food trucks will be on hand to provide food options too. Upcoming concerts: Aug. 13 Dream Like Taylor/Cassie B, a special event of Taylor Swift Tribute plus Top 40 hits and Aug. 20 Fleetwood Mask, a Fleetwood Mac Tribute band. For the full schedule see <https://moraga.parks.org/summer-concert-series/>

The Lamorinda Arts Council invites you to attend the Lamorinda Idol Finals at the Orinda Theatre on Sunday, Aug.

Not to be missed

16. More than 50 soloists and groups will compete throughout the day across several divisions: K-5 soloists (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.), groups (1:30 to 3 p.m.), middle school soloists (3:45 to 5:30 p.m.), and high school soloists (6 to 8 p.m.) Free.

Free concert with Random Nature, a local band composed of six Lafayette dads who love classic rock. They will play favorite one-hit wonders and rock-n-roll hits of the 1960's to the early 2010's. Come to the concert on Saturday, Aug. 16, 5 to 6:30 p.m. in the Grove behind "The Church on the Trail" Lafayette Christian Church, 584 Glenside Drive. Bring your chairs, blankets, and picnics. Lots of parking.

Summer in the Grove Concert featuring KAHF Band, a power duo of Kyle Athayde and Heny Plumb seamlessly blending jazz, funk, soul R&B, and pop on Aug. 29 at Lafayette Christian Church in Founders Grove. Music begins at 6 p.m. Bring chairs, blankets, and a picnic. Free admission.

St. Paul's Concert Series presents award-winning pianist Mira Armij Gill, with renowned violinist Francisco Salazar in a spectacular Piano and Violin Duo performance, Saturday, Aug. 29, at 7 p.m. at 1924 Trinity Avenue, Walnut Creek. No tickets necessary. Donations accepted. Info at stpaulswc.org/concert-series/

An East Bay Community Extravaganza presented by Bang the Bay, Feel the Sounds brings a massive lineup of surf, punk, and garage rock to Siesta Valley Bowl in Orinda for an all-ages

day of music celebrating the East Bay community on Saturday, Aug. 22 at noon. Tickets: www.siestavalley-bowl.com

Other

Fabulous Courses for Curious Minds. OLLI offers lectures, short courses, and field experiences covering topics in the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, history, literature, and current events taught by distinguished educators. OLLI courses are designed purely for the enjoyment of learning. An annual membership costs \$60 and includes one free lecture each month. Classes are held at the Cal State East Bay Concord Center on Ygnacio Valley Road, with many additional courses available via Zoom. Visit www.campusce.net/csueastbay, email olli@csueastbay.edu, or call 925-602-6776.

The Contra Costa Athletic Assingnors are looking for referees for boys and girls flag football. CCAA is also looking for officials in basketball, baseball and soccer. If you're interested in contributing to the youth of America, getting some exercise, performing in front of large crowds – and earning a fair amount of money – then contact Dave Cutaia (ccaa.officials@gmail.com).

AARP Tax-Aide is looking for volunteers to become members of a team providing free tax preparation service in Contra Costa County. While prior tax preparation experience is beneficial, it is not a requirement. To learn more and apply online, visit www.aarpfoundation.org/taxaidevolun

Not to be missed

teer or call (925) 726-3199 for additional information.

Come join a group of knitters who have participated in community service projects in past years and are doing so again this year. Knitting and crocheting hats and scarves for children and adults in need that will be distributed in November by a nonprofit serving those in need in local communities. You may drop off completed new hand knit and crocheted items in a member's house in Orinda, Moraga or Rossmoor by the end of October. Please email kathy-down@comcast.net or call or text her at (925) 997-0734 for addresses and details.

Moraga Historical Society in partnership with Michaan's Auctions presents an appraisal fundraiser event to benefit MHS. You will receive a verbal, fair market appraisal for up to 3 items of your paintings, sculpture, stamps, coins, jewelry, watches, furniture, Asian art, sports memorabilia, and more. There is a \$20 donation for MHS members and \$25 for guests. Here's a chance for you to find out if a family heirloom has monetary value in addition to sentimental value. Sunday, Aug. 30 (timed entry between 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.). Casita at Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Dr., Moraga. RSVP: ranch-susan@aol.com for further instructions.

2026 Fire Safe Virtual Expo series begins Wednesday, Sept. 2. A free series of "lunch and learn" webinars features reviewed businesses in the Fire Safe Business Directory and their wildfire safety products and services. Each expo will be from noon to 1 p.m. and feature a unique slate of businesses. Free. Sign up for one or all four sessions of the Fire Safe Virtual Expo series today at <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/fire-safe-virtual-expos>.

Lamorinda Arts Council announces a "Call for Writers" to present spoken word readings and a "Call for Artists" to display original artwork, all with a Halloween Theme. Held in the Arts & Science Room of the Lafayette Library, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., the free program runs from 2 to 3:30 p.m. on Oct. 31. We ask all presenters and guests to appear as their most inspired literary or artistic character for our Cosplay Contest. Contact elanao@mac.com, visit <https://LamorindaArts.org/art-embraces-words> or call 925-359-9940. Deadline Oct. 19.

Garden

The Montelindo Garden Club will meet on Friday, Sept. 18, at the Lafayette Library Auditorium, 3491 Mt Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Free. Social time: 9 to 9:30 a.m., Business meeting: 9:30 to 10 a.m., Speaker 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. The speaker will be botanical illustrator and member Lee McCaffree, describing her time as Botanical Artist in Residence at the famous Oak Spring Garden, See www.montelindogarden.com/2026-meetings.html

Community Events

Thursday Nights in Orinda. Turn your summer into a weekly celebration on Thursday nights through September at the Orinda Community Center Park located at 28 Orinda Way. Go to www.cityoforinda.gov/778/Thursday-Nights-in-Orinda for the full schedule.

Moraga Rib Throw-down, a community cookoff and fundraiser benefiting the Moraga Education Foundation (MEF) and the town's five public schools at Canyon Club Brewery in Moraga on Saturday, Aug. 29 from 4 to 8 p.m. Sharing plates is encouraged, and the event is free and open to everyone; a ticket is not required to attend. Tasting and judging tickets are available in advance at ribthrowdown.com.

The Kapnek Trust USA Family Fun 5K Run, 1K Run/Walk AND Carnival will be held on Sunday, Aug. 30 at 9 a.m. at Moraga Commons Park. Participants will enjoy a commemorative T-shirt, brunch, live music, arts/crafts, carnival games, and FUN! Strollers and dogs welcome! Go to: <https://2026kapnekfun.run.eventbrite.com>

The Lafayette Art & Wine Festival will be held Saturday, Sept. 19, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 20, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Downtown Lafayette. Featuring 4 stages with 20+ bands, 200+ artist / craft booths, 4 kid zones, wide selection of California varieties and craft beers, local dining and shopping. Free Admission. Free Festival parking is available in the BART Lafayette Station parking lots with an easy walk or free shuttle ride to the Festival. Complimentary bike valet is located at 81 Lafayette Circle. View music schedule and learn more at <https://lafayettefestival.com>

Lamorinda's Religious Services



10 Irwin Way, Orinda | 925.254.4906 | www.orindachurch.org
"No matter who you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"

Sunday Service 10 am or join us online.
Mondays 9:30 am Centering Prayer in the Chapel
Wednesday 10 am Contemplative Worship in the Chapel

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Informal Wednesday Meeting 7:30 – 8:30 pm

All are welcome

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We are a church that strives to love as Jesus loves. Our congregation welcomes, includes, and affirms everyone on their journey of faith regardless of race, ethnicity, age, economic status, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church
433 Moraga Way, Orinda, 254-3422
www.holyshepherd.org

ONLINE WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Facebook Premiere Community Worship every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. Go to facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/

WORSHIP SCHEDULE In person worship at 9:30 a.m. Live stream on facebook.com/HSLCOrinda/

Visit our website to access the current and recent sermons.

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Lamorinda Weekly

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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Campolindo Football Hall of Fame inductees celebrated

By Jon Kingdon

The Campolindo Football Hall of Fame celebrated four players – Tommy Stephens, Jack Cassidy, Max Flower, and John Torchio – whose success on the field was obvious and who also continued being standouts off the field professionally and personally. Head Coach Kevin Macy also chose Dave Pullman who, behind the scenes, was as responsible as the players in making each year’s event so memorable.

Tommy Stephens

For Tommy Stephens, this induction was a long time coming. Playing quarterback for the varsity from 2007-2009, Stephens joins his younger brothers, Brett and Jack, as the second group of three brothers, along with the Fadelli’s to enter the Hall of Fame.

It was predestined that the Stephens would all play football. “My brothers and I were the beneficiaries of growing up in a household where our father, Mark, had played left tackle at the University of California and signed as a free agent with the Steelers, but had a career-ending neck injury.”

Stephens received early quarterback training from Roger Theder, who had been a quarterback coach in the NFL and the head coach at Cal for four years and had recruited Mark to Cal. “Roger did a great job of teaching all of us how to break down coverages and how to throw certain routes, and just pure quarterback skills.”

When Campolindo’s 2007 starting quarterback, Scott Scharf went down with a season ending knee injury, Macy called Stephens up from the junior varsity. “It was my first opportunity to play under the lights but because the defenses played in certain coverages and I could see man and covers 2 and 3, I realized that this was what I had been learning and it all made sense.”

When Stephens was a junior, Campolindo finished with a 10-2 record, losing to Cardinal Newman who would go on to play in the state championship game. Stephens attributed the overall success of Campolindo football to Macy. “Being a part of the overall tradition, just in terms of what Coach Macy has accomplished at Campolindo, winning league championships, NCS championships and winning two state title games, teams which my younger brothers played on. He taught me a lot about life and I’m just honored to have been a part of it.”

Coach even said that when we were playing; “Some days you guys are going to look back and you’re going to think, ‘Oh my gosh, Crazy Coach Macy,’ and he was definitely right. The more that I go through life, and now that I have kids, it’s like, Coach really knew what he was talking about.”

Stephens brought his 2-year-old son George to the Campolindo-Acalanes game last year.

“Coach Macy stopped what he was doing and came over to say hi to me and George. Sixteen years after I played in the program and he still takes the time to come over and say hi to us before an undefeated showdown really shows how he cares for all of us, long after we’ve played in the program.”

After college, Stephens worked in Boston doing pulmonary arterial hypertension research, then worked in health care consulting in market access and reimbursement, then in a pharmacy benefits management startup, then five years at Abbott Laboratories in their diabetes care, and is now working for a BridgeBio, a rare disease biotech firm.

Jack Cassidy

With his mother, his uncles, cousin, and siblings preceding Jack Cassidy to Campolindo, it was predestined where he would be matriculating, that he would be playing football, and almost as certain that he would ultimately be inducted into the Campo Football Hall of Fame.

“It’s a pretty surreal experience to get inducted and relive the glory days. It’s an honor, and to be alongside Kevin Macy who has impacted so many people growing up makes it even more special,” he said.

Playing on the 2014 and 2015 teams that went 30-2, Campolindo won a state championship and lost in the state championship game to La Mirada, a Division 1 team. Cassidy looked back to when it all started for him. “I was in eighth grade when Campolindo defeated Marin Catholic, led by Jared Goff in the NCS championship game. Winning the state championship as a junior when I was 16 was amazing and then to follow it up, making it to the NCS championship game, what we did two years in a row was something that we were very proud of.”

The victory over El Capitan in the state championship exemplified the character of the team. “We fell behind 28-7 fairly quickly but our being so tight-knit, with that fire in our stomach, we knew that if we stuck to the game plan, we’d eventually win out.”

Cassidy was on the field when Adam Remotto returned the fumble for the winning touchdown. “Adam had just returned to the game and he asked to play on the left side, so I went to the right side. To this day, I’m very glad that he made that choice because he had the better breakaway speed.”

Cassidy also acknowledged Bob Wilson who had been a long-time athletic director, coach, and teacher at Campolindo who was near death in 2014 and how Coach Macy brought the team by to see him prior to the championship game. “We were the last freshmen football team that had Bob as a coach. His

battles with cancer definitely played a part in what happened with the state championship. He was just one of those amazing coaches that instilled what it was to be disciplined and be an adult and care about what you were doing.”

As a senior, Cassidy played fullback and linebacker and became the alpha on the defense. “You need that type of guy out there on defense, somebody who has to be your alpha, not only to play that way but have that persona,” Macy said. “Jack was the force of the defense.”

Cassidy went on to the University of Arizona and ultimately got his degree from the University of Southern California. “Being disciplined was the one thing that was instilled in me at Campolindo so that you can be passionate about something bigger than yourself. It instills that toughness in you to enjoy and learn that next chapter in life and to keep moving forward.”

Cassidy is now living in Portland, Oregon, working in private equity doing software investment and specifically investing in health care software.

Max Flower

Upon hearing that he was going to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, Max Flower reacted with great equanimity. “I was very humbled and excited to be recognized by Campo football. I have a lot of fond memories of competing with my teammates and for Coach Macy and just honored to be part of the Hall of Fame.”

In his two seasons playing varsity football for Campolindo, Flower was the dominant receiver for the team, catching a combined 115 passes with 27 of them for touchdowns. “The first year was a lot easier when I had one of my very good friends, Tyler Petite, on the other side of the field, taking a lot of the attention away. I was also blessed with two incredible quarterbacks, Jack Stephens my junior year and Jacob Westphal my senior year making it look easy.”

Flower had a long-term relationship with his teammate and fellow inductee, Jack Cassidy. “We were among a group of Stanley Middle School guys to go to Campo and we’ve always stuck together.”

In their senior year there was a running competition between Flower and Cassidy as to who would score the most touchdowns. “It was just a special experience to have with my best friend,” Flower said.

With a 30 and 2 record those two seasons, winning the state championship and making it to the state final as seniors, Flower shared what made those teams so successful: “It was mindset, battling for the guy next to you and knowing that we maybe weren’t the biggest or strongest team. We collectively came to understand that we were probably the best coached and most disci-



From left: Max Flower, John Torchio, Head Coach Kevin Macy, Jack Cassidy, Tommy Stephens, and Dave Pullman

Photo Jon Kingdon

plined team that had a unique ability to come together and get through any adversity. Coach Macy had an incredibly unique ability to find people’s motivations and use that to get the most out of them and really encouraged people to come together and fight for each other and have a common goal.”

Flower went on to play baseball at UC Berkeley, minored in Urban Planning, and got his master’s at San Jose State where he also played baseball. He lives in Lafayette and works for The Minkoff Group, doing development of office R and D and industrial on the Peninsula.

John Torchio

After a dominating football career, John Torchio was destined to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, but it still was a special moment when he heard the official announcement: “It was awesome and really cool. As a kid, going to all of those Hall of Fames and how the inductees would share with us how special the football program was and to appreciate it and it’s great to now be a part of that group.”

Torchio spoke directly to the current players on the Campolindo team: “It goes by in the blink of an eye, so just enjoy it and take it all in.”

As a freshman, Torchio was called up to the team for the state championship in 2014. “To have the comeback and be part of the first championship was pretty surreal,” he said.

Torchio became the starting quarterback and free safety his senior season. Knowing that he would be playing offense and defense, he accepted that it wasn’t going to be easy. “That summer I really trained hard and went to lifting and did all the conditioning but as for the mindset, I was ready to go.”

As a senior, Torchio’s stats were ungodly. As the quarterback, he was 226/353 for 3,314 yards with 37 touchdowns and 8 interceptions, rushed for 761 yards and scored 11 touchdowns and as a safety, he had 98 tackles, two sacks, seven interceptions, returned punts and punted and was named All-State. He was somewhat surprised at hearing these numbers.

“I hadn’t heard those stats in a while, but it was just fun to be out there playing and I enjoyed it.”

Playing football and graduating from the University of Wisconsin, Torchio learned what made the Campolindo football program so unique. “I shared with my friends the different traditions we had at Campo and would tell them about Coach Macy and no one ever said that their high school was similar in that sense. Talking about our traditions, they were all jealous that I got to do that. Kevin is one of a kind and he deserves every bit of flattery that he gets.”

As a free safety at Wisconsin, Torchio would play in four bowl games, winning three, but a loss in the Rose Bowl was the most memorable, in a positive and negative sense. “My mom was from Pasadena and she was obsessed with the Rose Bowl Parade growing up. We lost 28-27 to Oregon with Justin Herbert (L.A. Chargers) as their quarterback and it still stings to this day.”

Torchio is currently living in the East Village in New York City with two roommates from Campolindo, Lucas Allen and Shun Ashita, and is working full-time as a financial analyst with Investment Properties Institutional Group.

Dave Pullman

Kevin Macy has always taken the time to acknowledge the many people involved in the program from the assistant coaches to the team doctor to the mothers’ group, but in inducting Dave Pullman, the man who has been behind the video camera for the Campolindo games since 2000 and worked hand-in-hand with Macy in making the highlight films for every Hall of Fame, it was an honor that was very much merited.

It was at a playoff game in 1999 which Pullman was shooting when Macy and Doug Longero, Las Lomas’ head coach, both approached Pullman about becoming their video director and he shot for both teams until he announced his retirement this year. Pullman began creating the always heralded highlight films for the Hall of Fame in 2007.

“With the success of the team, the banquet kept getting pushed back. In fact, one year we had a banquet prior to the end of the season for part one and after the season, we had a part two,” he said.

Pullman appreciated Macy’s way of being more than just a football coach to the team. “Kevin is good at creating culture through tradition and this was one thing that could connect all players past and present from Campo football, honoring former players and showing the current team what it took for these players to get where they’re at.”

Pullman found true satisfaction in seeing the players’ and their families’ reactions to the films. “It’s priceless. I know where there is going to be parts of the videos that will grab at your heart strings maybe, and so in those moments, I will sometimes glance over at the table that the inductee’s family is sitting to try and see, from afar, their reaction as a certain part of the video was playing.”

Pullman learned in March that he was to be inducted himself. “When I heard that there was going to be a video about me, I just assumed it was going to be a short video that they would squeeze it in, which is something we’ve done in the past about some of the team moms and things of that nature.” Steven Fine did a great job on the editing. “I know,” Pullman said. “Believe me, I know.”

Pullman was born and raised in Oakland and went to San Leandro High School before graduating from the UC Berkeley as a social science major with emphases on mass communication and journalism.

In his senior year, Pullman interned at Channel 5 with Wayne Walker and Joe Fonzie, who got Pullman his first job in Chico, Calif., after he graduated from Cal. Pullman would go on to work in Redding, Calif., Ft. Myers, Fla., W. Palm Beach, and Miami. Pullman was like a Swiss army knife, working at various times as a cameraman, a sportswriter, editor, story ideas assignment editor and live TV reporter.

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