

THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis
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Delivered to 9,000 Households and Businesses in Orinda

12 Issues Annually
March 2009

Draft Planning Process Report Suggests Myriad of Changes

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

City Councilmember Tom McCormick presented the final draft report of the Planning Process Review Task Force at a joint city council and planning commission meeting on February 3. The report, undertaken to create a more streamlined, objective and user-friendly experience for residents and business owners, recommended 61 specific changes divided into three areas: process, residential and downtown.

Process and Residential

Task force members Steve Kubitschek and Peter Golze presented the residential development guide. Accord to Kubitschek, "the recommendations will make it easier to create good architecture." Major recommendations for both the planning process and residential development include:

- Changing application of the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) from an absolute limit on the size of residences to a trigger for design review;
- Establishing a neighbor consent process to allow zoning administrator design review instead of planning commission design review;
- Preparing a user-friendly guide to developing single-family homes;
- Modifying the tree replacement policy to reduce the number of replacement trees necessary and taking into consideration the use of solar energy and native shrubs;
- Refining of the geotechnical peer review for projects in geotechnical hazard areas;
- Revising the water channel setback standard from a formula based on the slope of the creek bank and depth of the creek to a fixed number.

Downtown

Developer and task force member Clark



SALLY HOGARTY

The final draft report of the Planning Process Review Task Force envisions this block of the Crossroads becoming mixed use with residential units over retail.

Wallace explained the proposed changes regarding downtown Orinda. "We believe that infusing housing into the downtown area will enliven the business districts as well as provide convenient residential units," he said. "Our goal is to create a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented village with a mix of retail, residential, cultural and office uses." His Powerpoint presentation divided Orinda into five areas: Country Club Village, Village Center, BART, Theatre District, and office and downtown residential. Major recommendations for the downtown areas included:

- Increase building height in some areas from 35 to 55 feet;
- Allow residential development over ground floor street fronting retail;
- Support efforts to make the Theatre District a more vibrant area.

Although the recommendations are for the Theatre District, the report notes that the Breed/Howkins property, which fronts Camino Pablo, Moraga Way and Brook-

[SEE PLANNING page 6]

Schools Brace for Cuts, Await Election Outcome

By CHRIS LAVIN
Assistant Editor

Orinda school officials are rapidly planning for large cuts in programming and staff – they just won't know how big their earthquake will measure on the Richter scale until further state budget cuts are announced. Much also will depend on whether Orinda voters approve Measure B on March 3, which would enable the schools to raise enough money through a parcel tax to preserve some core services.

"They are all hard choices," said Pam West, a school board member of the Orinda Union School District (OUSD), during the third study session of the board in February to identify priorities for the chopping

block.

With the state budget crisis still developing, school budget numbers are uncertain, but OUSD officials are bracing for cuts that will affect programs at its four elementary schools and Orinda Intermediate School (OIS). The state cut \$600,000 from the OUSD budget at the beginning of this school year, and is expected to make a further mid-year cut of another \$700,000. Therefore, officials have identified about \$1.5 million in cutbacks to the \$22 million budget, most of which is spent on salaries. The state also is expected to make further cuts for the coming school year.

[SEE SCHOOLS page 6]

Orinda Association's Awards Celebration



CAROL YATES

The Orinda Association honored Stephen Gentry (L) as the 2008 William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award winner and Lucy Hupp Williams (R) as the 2008 Volunteer of the Year at a gala awards ceremony at the Orinda Country Club. Supervisor Gayle Uilkema (C) presented a Contra Costa County Proclamation to the two winners as well. "My parents always volunteered and we were expected to do the same," said Hupp Williams. "I never thought anything of it. It was just something we did." Gentry remarked that he used to drive Mrs. Mott to meetings when he was a teenager. "It's kind of ironic to be receiving this award named after her husband," said the man known as the bee whisperer.

OA Members check
page 3 for your
March discounts!

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Del Rey Students Help Creek



SALLY HOGARTY

Students from Del Rey Elementary School spent the morning of February 5 pulling ivy and planting such native plants as Santa Barbara Sedge along Moraga Creek. The creek borders the school. The educational event was sponsored by Friends of Orinda Creeks and The Restoration Trust, a nonprofit dedicated to offering community groups assistance in creek and wetland restoration projects.

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Young Arts Ambassadors March Forth

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

The Orinda Arts Council (OAC), whose schools committee advocates for strong arts curriculum in all Orinda schools

(www.orindaartscouncil.org), will sponsor the Orinda Union School District's "Arts Ambassador Exhibit" at the Orinda Library Gallery for the third year in a row. The show opens to the public on Monday, March 2, and runs the whole month of

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BILL CARMEL

Art teacher **Linda Kam** (L) and parent **Lyn Goodman Molloy** (C) with Wagner Ranch students **Merrick Goodman**, **Olivia Goodman**, and **Ella Arnerich** show off art projects.

March; the artist reception (for all 80 of them!) is to be held Thursday, March 5, from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

The non-juried exhibit captures a snapshot of the visual arts program of the Orinda Union School District, funded by the OAC. One or more pieces of art from each and every class taught in the district will be showcased. Eighty students from the various schools have been dubbed "Arts Ambassadors" for the exhibit.

The visual art teachers do not take the privilege of being art educators lightly; Linda Kam, Hillery Paterson, Susan Weiss, and Susan Zib treasure the amazing community support in Orinda and are delighted to share the Art Ambassadors' work as a way of thanking the whole community. "Art programs have been cut everywhere and this is one of the last programs still in place," according to Hillery Paterson, Del Rey district art coordinator.

At the OAC sponsored Family Arts Night, held on January 22 at Glorietta School, student Claire O'Neill commented about her art project, "I like gluing it to-

gether - learning how to use the brush" while Ella Arnerich said, "You don't have to get it perfect."

To see what the students have created, visit the Orinda Library Gallery during normal library hours. Call 254-2814 for more information.



BILL CARMEL

Students and parents create art together at the OAC sponsored Family Arts Night at Glorietta.

real experiences

ROGER
Roger had a double knee replacement. After the surgery, he needed physical rehabilitation before returning home. We helped him regain strength and endurance. Roger is home and golfing with his friends and family.

MAGGIE
Margaret, an avid cyclist, suffered extensive injuries when hit by a car. After several surgeries, she transferred to our care and received intensive medical and rehabilitation services to help regain her ability to care for herself. Margaret is now back home.

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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
Climate of Change



Barnaby Beck

In my opening "Presidents Message," I shared that I would spell out my vision for the Orinda Association. In order to do that, the readers of this column and more importantly this paper need to understand what this organization does and why that is important to Orinda as a whole. We publish *The Orinda News*, which is circulated to over 9,000 households 12 months a year at absolutely no cost to anyone receiving it. The Orinda 4th of July Parade is put on by our organization, which last year included the wine tasting, classic car show in Theatre Square and all the activities in the Orinda Community Park following the parade. We also run "Seniors around Town," a door-to-door, on-demand transportation service for Orinda seniors – again this service is completely free. In addition, we run "Soccer 4 All," which donates uniforms and equipment to children all over the world. We set up disaster preparedness kits for both your home and car and have members who are an active part of OPSAC. We also run the Volunteer Center, where people can be paired with worthwhile activities that help a number of nonprofit organizations.

We do all of this with a board of eight and a part-time staff of three, which, when you have jobs and a family outside this organization, makes us all spread very thin. We are looking for members with fresh ideas and perspectives to come on board as an Orinda Association board member. In addition, we are looking for people to help 4th of July co-chairs Mark Roberts and myself plan and orchestrate the annual celebration. We are also looking for a committee to help us flesh out new ideas and work with the City of Orinda to plan new events in and throughout Orinda for the upcoming year. Finally, we need your financial help. The Orinda Association is supported by your tax deductible membership dues. We deliver *The Orinda News* to every resident and business in Orinda, even though only eight percent are members. This leaves a huge hole to fill so please folks, do yourself a favor and donate whatever you can, large or small, to this wonderful organization that is doing so much with so little.

Now let me get off my soap box for a second and thank all of you for what I know will be a great outpouring of volunteerism and writing of large and small checks.

We have another important decision to make here in Orinda and that is the current state of our schools. The schools are one of the reasons that I and my family moved here. They are so good and the teachers, principals and the entire staff do such an excellent job. To those of you who have children in our schools, you know what a dilemma we face. To those of you who are retired and have put your family through these schools, you know how important the schools were to you and how it positively affected the lives of your children and the jobs and futures they were able to secure. Couple with that the fact that our property values have continued to be strong because of a strong desire for families wanting to be members of this community and paying extra for houses here. The schools need your support now more than ever and that is why I am strongly asking, albeit pleading with you to vote Yes on Measure B on Tuesday, March 3.

Thank you for your time and support, and I look forward to seeing new members at our board meetings. Remember there are no free lunches in our life, someone somewhere has to stop and pay the bill. Let's shoulder these responsibilities together; it will lighten the load and make our entire journey more enjoyable. In the words of

The Orinda Association

The Orinda Association is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to:

- Maintaining and improving the quality of life in Orinda;
- Promoting awareness and discussion of issues that are important to the community;
- Encouraging and recognizing volunteer efforts to enhance the beauty, character, and security of Orinda.

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Robert Frost:
"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood . . . I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference."

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SALLY HOGARTY
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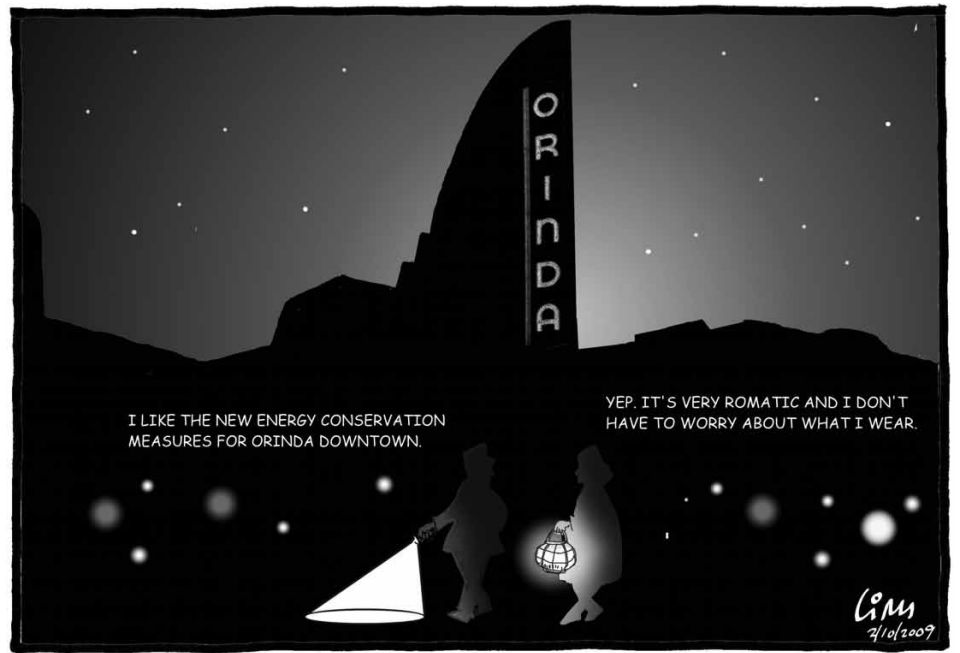
Conserve Where You Can But Not With Our Children's Futures

In today's economy, everyone is concerned with conserving, saving, and cutting back in one form or another. President Obama has put a cap on the salaries of top executives on his team, and one anonymous letter to the editor (which cannot be printed without a name) suggests that the Orinda Library, city hall, and other businesses should follow suit and not leave lights burning needlessly. While everyone is tightening belts to make it through this recession, one area needs more of our support rather than less.

The Orinda Union School District (OUSD) has been working tirelessly to find ways to save money and jobs without compromising the sterling education for which our schools are known. The long-awaited Pulte housing project on Altarinda Way is on hold as the developer renegotiates a lower purchase price with the school district. When and if money from the Pulte project materializes, it can be used only to update the aging facilities of the district's

four elementary and one middle school. Meanwhile, Governor Schwarzenegger has made drastic cuts to school budgets in an attempt to balance the state budget.

With the governor's current mandate necessitating cuts and the possibility of more to come, the OUSD has put Measure B on the March 3 ballot. Many argue that this is a bad time for a parcel tax measure. Indeed it is. But OUSD doesn't have much choice. They have a legal responsibility to notify teachers by March 15 as to whether their contracts will be renewed for the next school year. Preparing for a worst-case scenario, the OUSD has identified \$1.5 million in potential cuts for the 2009-10 school year. These include reductions in personnel, including at least one teacher, and increasing class size in K-3. OUSD decided the situation was dire enough to hold a special March election for a parcel tax measure. The passage of Measure B would allow the district to adjust these potential cuts.



While a parcel tax will not be easy on Orinda residents in these difficult economic times, especially seniors on a fixed income who may not qualify for the senior exemption, it will help preserve the quality of education prized by local residents. The OUSD is fortunate to have local residents capable

of not only giving time but also money to maintain quality local schools. Many other communities are not so lucky.

So turn off the lights, conserve on fuel, but don't cut back on our most prized resource – our children's futures.

-- Sally Hogarty, Editor

Clarification: In Chris Lavin's article "Special Election" (February issue), she stated that there is no senior exemption in Measure B but that there was an exemption for families whose annual income is \$43,000 or less. It should have read that there is an exemption for seniors whose income is \$43,000 or less.

Letters to the Editor

Help Our Schools

I'm an Orinda resident and retired elementary school teacher. I feel extremely fortunate that my children were able to attend our excellent Orinda schools. They went through the California schools at a time when the state's schools were the envy of the nation. Unfortunately, that's no longer true today. That's why it's so critical for Orinda voters to step in where the state has let us down, by taking local responsibility for the future of our children and our schools, Local action is the only reason Orinda schools have remained strong.

Since retiring, I've spent a good deal of time volunteering at schools that don't have the same level of community support. I can say without hesitation that local support provides an essential lifeline to our schools. I will gladly pay an extra \$10 per month to provide students with the same benefits of a great education that my children received. It's a small price to pay to protect our schools and our property values.

I urge others to join me in supporting Measure B for our students and our future.

– Carol Dewey

Not The Time for More Taxes

There will be a new Orinda school tax on a March 3 Orinda special election ballot. This new tax will raise the existing Orinda school parcel tax to \$509 per year. These taxes have no sunset or ending. They will go on forever, regardless of additional school income from state or federal grants.

The proposed tax is not fair. Residents who own a modest, small home will pay the same tax as those living in a palatial 5-million-dollar mansion.

The claimed "senior exemption" from this tax is a sham. Only 1 percent of Orinda households will qualify for this exemption. Why won't the proponents of the tax tell us who will qualify for the so-called "senior exemption?"

Fifty percent of our county property taxes go to the schools. The Orinda School District is expecting a 25-million-dollar payment for school land sold for the Pine Grove development. According to the 2008-2009 Orinda School District budget, Orinda teachers average \$75,855 per year per teacher. Medical and dental benefits are covered up to \$916 per month per teacher. Teachers have tenure or job security, and their pensions increase each year after retirement. Corporation employees enjoy neither of these benefits. In a time of severe recession, the worst since the Great Depression, we cannot afford more taxes. Orin-

dans are losing their jobs; their businesses are closing, mortgages are being foreclosed, and returns on investments are collapsing. This is not the time for new taxes.

My wife and I have been paying county property taxes, half of which go to schools, for 53 years and will be paying them and the existing \$385 per year school parcel tax for the rest of our lives. I believe we have done our part.

Proponents of the new parcel tax claim the high value of Orinda homes is due solely to Orinda's schools. If this were true, San Francisco would have low home values, since its schools are poor. Actually, San Francisco home values are high. Orinda home values result from having no polluting industry, spacious lots, beautiful hills, and closeness to the inner Bay Area.

To avoid waste of our tax dollars in a time of severe recession, please join me in voting no on Measure B.

– Clyde Vaughn

Seniors Support Measure B

I've had the distinct honor of meeting and working with many of Orinda's seniors through my 10 year involvement with the Three Quarter Century Club, which honors residents who are at least 75 years of age. I know these distinguished individuals to be intelligent, engaged, and concerned about our community. They have contributed to the community in numerous ways and many are staunch supporters of our excellent Orinda schools.

The seniors I know (and I count myself among them) care about the quality of

education and the readiness of today's youth to assume the responsibilities we will pass along to them. This is why we stay invested in our community - and our future - by supporting our schools and civic organizations.

My children and the children of most of my friends may be long out of school, but our commitment to education is as strong as ever. Additionally, the value of our homes are tied directly to the quality of our schools, which is more important now than ever before. I encourage every Orinda resident to support the schools by voting yes on Measure B. The measure insures that every dollar stays in Orinda for the benefit of our youth, and it includes an exemption for low-income seniors.

Some have been asked if this is the right time to ask for a tax increase. I say, if not now, when? Given the dire news that comes out of Sacramento daily, the only way we'll be able to save our schools is to act locally.

– John Fazel

Fiscal Responsibility Necessary

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. For many Americans, financial worries are an everyday preoccupation at this time. While with the start of a new year and a new administration in Washington we have hope, residents of Contra Costa County, Lamorinda and Orinda remain concerned about their economic futures.

The Orinda Unified School District has placed a bond measure on the ballot to

[SEE LETTERS page 8]

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Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis and should be no longer than 400 words. They must include the writer's first and last name, signature and telephone number.

Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, fax them to 254-8312, or email to news@orindaassociation.org. Letters to the Editor for the April issue are due March 5, 2008.

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MAYOR / POLICE

Mayor Dreams The Impossible Dream in Priority Update

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Mezzo-soprano, and Orinda resident, Lisa VanDerPloeg set the stage for Mayor Sue Severson's State of the City address by singing "The Impossible Dream" from *Man of La Mancha*. The annual address took place in late January at the Orinda Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce luncheon at the Orinda Community Center.

Designating 2009 as "the year of action," Severson said it was "time to act on the recommendations" of the Finance Advisory Committee, Planning Process Review Task Force, and the Revenue Enhancement Task Force. Top on the mayor's list is addressing Orinda's crumbling roads and finding the revenue to accomplish the task. "We must move forward in developing additional sources of revenue as well as enhancing ongoing revenue streams," said Severson.

According to Severson, the city is currently pursuing grants from state and federal sources, including \$600,000 for roads



SALLY HOGARTY
Opera singer **Lisa VanDerPloeg** sang "The Impossible Dream" at Mayor Severson's State of the City address.

from President Obama's stimulus package. "We have just obtained funding from the county to complete the final segment of Moraga Way by repaving from Camino Encinas to the freeway on-ramp east," she confirmed. A bond issue, which has failed to acquire the two-thirds majority in two past elections, is back on the table as well

[SEE MAYOR page 14]



POLICE BLOTTER

January 2009

False Residential Alarms: Officers responded to 104 false alarm calls throughout the city.

Auto Burglary (theft from a locked vehicle): 3 incidents reported, two on Orchard Rd. and one on Dias Dorado.

Petty Theft From Vehicle (theft of less than \$400 value from an unlocked vehicle): 3 incidents reported on Tahos Rd./Wanda Ln., Camino Sobrante, La Espiral.

All Other Petty Thefts: 7 incidents reported in the areas of Tahos, Orchard, Orinda Way, Patricia, El Nido, Knickerbocker Ln. and Birch Ct.

Grand Theft - From Vehicle (theft of more than \$400 value from an unlocked vehicle): 1 incident reported on Dalewood Dr.

Grand Theft Other: 3 incidents reported in the areas of Moraga Wy, Charles Hill Rd. and El Toyonal.

Stolen Vehicle: 3 incidents in the areas of Camino Sobrante and La Campana.

Residential Burglary: 3 incidents reported in the areas of Charles Hill, Greenwood and Lombardy.

Vandalism: 7 incidents reported on Tahos Rd., Las Aromas, Camino Sobrante, Orinda Way and Barbara Rd.

Armed Robbery: 2 incidents of armed robberies were reported on Brookwood and Davis Rd.

Arrests

Possession of Narcotics: 1 arrest was made on the off-ramp of 24 eastbound.


Probation Violation: 2 individuals were arrested on Camino Sobrante & Hidden Valley Rd./St. Stephens Dr.

Warrant Arrest: 1 arrest was made on Camino Sobrante.

Driving Under Influence (Juvenile): 1 arrest was made St. Stephens Dr.

Driving Under Influence - Misc.: 4 arrests were made on Calvin Dr., the on-ramp of Hwy 24, Camino Pablo and Minor Rd.

- Compiled by Jeanette Irving,
Orinda Police Department



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◆ **SCHOOLS** from page 1

Central to the extent of the Orinda schools cuts will be the outcome of Measure B, a \$124 annual parcel tax, which needs two-thirds of the vote to pass. Because the school district must give pink slips to teachers by March 15, district officials have identified a tiered set of priorities in the event the measure fails. Fewer teachers mean larger class sizes, so Jerry Bucci, the director of business operations at OUSD, worked with district officials and parents groups, as well as the school board, to try to figure out what could go.

“We know that we’re affecting people here. We know that we’re affecting children here. None of us takes this lightly. We hope the parcel tax passes and some of

this can be restored,” said board member Matt Moran.

The board identified the following areas for cuts, in descending order. The most important areas for preservation are at the top, those identified as easier to tolerate fall closer to the bottom:

- Enlarge class sizes at OIS. The class size average is now between 23 and 24 students, but raising that number to 30 would allow the district to cut 3.5 full-time staff positions. The board elected, however, to make class size growth a last resort.
- Increase class size in kindergarten through third grades at the four elementary schools from 20 to 30. This proposal, which would eliminate 18 teaching positions, also has been deemed unacceptable to the board.
- Eliminate the literacy coach position.
- Eliminate one counselor position at OIS. Currently, two counselors are responsible for 857 students
- Reduce the hours of instructional assistants.
- Eliminate OIS technology support position.
- Reorganize or eliminate elementary computer teacher positions,
- Reorganize custodial time.
- Eliminate one position from the district office.
- Eliminate staff positions from the environmental education program.

• Increase the number of students accepted through the inter-district transfer allowance.

• Eliminate elementary school librarians and the library assistant position at OIS.

“One thing that really helped was getting input from the parents and staff,” board president Riki Sorenson told a packed conference room at a February study session. “We really didn’t know that a literacy coach would be so important, for example, which now makes it a top priority.”

Measure B does allow an exemption for low-income senior citizens, meaning those who make less than \$43,000. To get the exemption a senior must mail in or deliver to the district paperwork, identification and a copy of his or her tax bill. For more information about Measure B and the exemption, and for a list of frequently asked questions, visit the website at www.supportorindaschools.org.

As parent groups and volunteers continue to campaign for Measure B, officials in the Acalanes Union High School District, which governs Miramonte High School, are considering going to voters in June for a parcel tax increase as well. The high school district needs to cut over \$5 million from its budget given the State of California’s revised budget figures.

◆ **PLANNING** from page 1

wood Road, offers the best opportunity for downtown retail revitalization through a major development plan. “The area from Long’s to Nation’s could work with housing above,” Wallace added.

Next Steps

The Orinda City Council will be considering the task force’s final draft report at subsequent meetings. The complete draft report can be found on the city’s website, www.cityoforinda.org.

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ROTARY / FRIENDS OF LIBRARY

Celebrating 60 Years of Making A Difference

■ Big band dinner dance planned for April 4

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Dictionary to every third grader in Orinda, the Frank Isola Rotary Field Day for Orinda elementary school students, the Tom Fitch Fishing Day at San Pablo Dam Reservoir for deserving Oakland students, scholarships for Miramonte students, foreign exchange students, yearly luncheon for residents of Orinda Senior Village, Meals on Wheels for Lamorinda seniors, the list of philanthropic endeavors seems endless because Orinda Rotary makes a difference in Orinda and around the world.

“Rotary really empowers our members to achieve things locally and internationally, to really make a difference,” says Orinda Rotary president Marshall Johnson.

Comprised of business and professional leaders, the volunteer organization began in Orinda in 1949 with 25 members. Now, Orinda Rotary boasts more than 90 men and women dedicated to improving life near and far. In addition to the programs listed above, the local club is involved in over 70 projects.

As part of Rotary International, local members strive to eradicate polio worldwide through their collaboration with the World Health Organization. “Thanks to Rotary International, 500,000 new cases of polio are prevented each year,” says Johnson. The international network of Rotary clubs also supports the manufacture and distribution of prosthetic hands to victims of violence and land mines in Asia and Africa, fosters peace and understanding through scholarships to American graduate students studying in foreign countries through the Ambassadorial Scholar program, and provides free cleft lip surgery to needy youth in



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

After 60 years, Orinda Rotary is still going strong. Shown above are the original members of the organization, who began the local chapter of the volunteer organization in 1949.

Friends Looking for Some New Friends

By BARBARA BONTEMPS
Contributing Writer

When we think of Orinda’s finest features, we are sure to think of its schools, its landmark theater, its semi-rural charm, and, of course, its outstanding library. “Our library is truly a reflection of the changes that have taken place in this technological age,” says senior community library manager Caroline Gick. “We are no longer just a repository for books, but a gateway to information of all kinds.” To help meet the challenge of keeping

the library current in this age of cyber-information sharing, the library relies on its “Friends,” who are hoping to bring some new, energetic volunteers into their fold.

For 50-plus years, the Friends of the Orinda Library (FOL) have dedicated themselves to serving our community – by raising funds to build the first (now old) library on Irwin Way, then by leading the charge on the capital campaign to fund our now state-of-the-art facility next to the Community Center, and today by raising the monies needed for new book and media [SEE FRIENDS page 18]

Mexico, Central and Latin America. Local club member Dick Burkhalter travelled with a team of doctors to Barquisimeto, Venezuela in early February to facilitate cleft lip surgery for young children. He was responsible for the 33 cases of supplies

that were going to a clinic and hospital as well as helping out with whatever might be needed during the trip.

“A wonderful thing about Rotary is that it can step in and do things that governments [SEE ROTARY page 14]

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CONTINUATIONS

◆ LETTERS from page 4

be voted on this March. Not supporting a school bond measure in Orinda is akin to being unpatriotic. Last November, Measure E was passed raising property taxes to pay for improvements to the local high school district. As a candidate for city council at that time, I did not endorse Measure E for a number of reasons. Living in Orinda for the better part of two decades, I have always supported school bond measures but found myself unconvinced by the need for the

magnitude of improvements and the consequential tax increase that was proposed.

At this point, I am concerned about the timing of another property tax increase. Orindans are not immune to underemployment, unemployment and living on a fixed income. The solution for desired community improvements invariably becomes property taxes. The reality is our city plan has not adequately addressed the need for increasing sales tax and commercial property tax revenues thus allowing us to meet our needs for infrastructure, schools and

other necessary services through means other than increasing property taxes. The Revenue Enhancement Taskforce was recently dissolved by action of the city council. It remains to be seen to what degree the council will effectively negotiate with the fire district. At a time in which a number of Bay Area cities are near bankruptcy due to the cost of police and fire services, our community also must be concerned about fiscal responsibility in addressing such needs. I hope that my fellow residents will ask questions of the school board, fire district board, and city council members regarding their plans for how we might finance proposed public projects in the future outside of the old paradigm that unnecessarily relies upon property tax revenue.

Wishing you all a happy new year,

–Dr. Bob Larsen

schools, and didn't end up with the public schools in communities like Orinda being "quasi-private." The inadequate funding from the state results in California ranking 30th nationwide in per pupil funding at the K-8 level and 48th when adjusting for cost of living variances.

It would also be better if the schools in Orinda got a fairer share of the state funding available for K-8 schools. But the consequences of the Serrano Priest court decision in 1973 has been formulations that result in Orinda ranking 992 out of 999 California school districts in funding. The OUSD has been working diligently to persuade state officials to give the district a more equal share, but to no avail.

Couldn't savings be found in administrative and non-critical school expenditures? As a former member of two OUSD budget study committees and as a former president of EFO, I know that any fat in the budget was trimmed away long ago.

Why should a non-parent care? Ask any real estate agent why Orinda's home values have not fallen as much as other areas, and they'll quickly answer: the quality of the schools. But I think there is a more important reason, and that is simply that it is the right thing to do.

Clearly parents of students in the OUSD will likely vote yes for the parcel tax. But they need the help of non-parents, too, if the two-thirds majority to pass the tax is to be met. I urge you to join me in supporting the school district and our young people.

– Steve Harwood

Schools Need Our Help

Orinda schools are in serious need of additional funds to maintain the outstanding school system that we have grown accustomed to for so many decades. Low class size and focus on literature and math have always been the primary focus of the Orinda schools, and it is imperative that this service to Orinda children be perpetuated.

The loss of state funds have prompted the need for Measure B that will replace a significant portion of these lost funds. The parcel tax of \$124 per parcel is a small price to pay to afford the special local schools that so many of us in Orinda have either directly or indirectly benefited from.

Please vote yes on Measure B and be proud that you have personally contributed to maintain the best public schools in California.

– Peter and Darlene Hattersley

Good Schools Essential

Having grown up in Orinda, we knew that our hometown was the place that we wanted to raise our daughter. Without a doubt, the quality of an Orinda education – and the spirit of community pride that has built our top-rated schools – topped the list of reasons to move back home.

As Realtors, we know first-hand that young families looking for a place to raise their own children share that same concern for good schools and strong sense of community that invests in education.

Without a doubt, it's the quality of our schools that contribute to the strong Orinda property values that have weathered the current economic slowdown. We're voting yes on Measure B: for the advantage of good schools that we benefited from, that our daughter enjoyed, and that today's young children deserve.

– Rick and Nancy Booth

Challenging Time

I am writing to ask my fellow members of the Orinda community, who are not parents of students in the Orinda Union School District, to vote in favor of the parcel tax vote scheduled for March.

Clearly this is a very challenging time economically for many of us, and an additional tax is about the last thing we'd like to see.

The Parents Clubs and EFO contribute about \$3 million annually to the OUSD, or about 15 percent of the total district budget. But this level of annual fundraising is not enough to stave off a loss of quality in the face of additional state cuts.

Wouldn't it be better if the funding problem were solved at the state level? It would be a far better solution if we had adequate funding from the state for all

[SEE LETTERS page 21]

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SUMMER CAMPS

Summer Camp Signups Begin Now

By CHRIS LAVIN
Assistant Editor

Even though the school year is nowhere near complete, parents are already signing up their children for summer camps. The variety is wide, from sports to science to just plain fun. Following is our annual listing of many of those that are available.

GENERAL CAMPS

Orinda Community Center
26 Orinda Way
Orinda, CA 94563
254-2445
www.cityoforinda.org

The following is a partial listing of the camps offered through the Orinda Community Center. Printed brochures will be available in the spring.

Camp Orinda, for ages 6 to 10.5, 10:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Five- nine- and 10-day camps including magic June 15-26, Animal Kingdom, June 29-July 10, Around the World, July 13-24, Under the Sea, July 27-August 7, and Super-heroes/Villains, August 10-14. Wagner Ranch. Prices vary from \$290 to \$579, depending on residency, dates and extended times.

OK Camp, "Orinda Kids Camp," for ages 3.5 to completing kindergarten, 9:30 a.m. to noon, with optional extended care on Tuesdays and Thursdays, June 16-27, June 30-July 11, July 14-25, July 28-August 8. Fees to be announced.

Art Camp to be offered throughout the summer. Times and dates to be announced.

Chess Camps, ages 6 to 16, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon, June 22-26, July 20-24, and August 10-14. Cost \$187.

Babysitting for Beginners Camp for ages 10 to 15, June 22-25, 10 a.m. to noon. Cost \$98. Teaches skills needed to be a trusted and responsible babysitter including child development, safety, bedtime strategies, and ways to make babysitting fun, and what to do in an emergency.

Carpentry Camps offered Monday-Thursday throughout the summer. Boys and girls entering grades K-6 learn to use hammers, saws, drills and other basic hand tools to make projects out of wood, including but not limited to boats, cars, trucks, bird feeders, dolls and doll-houses. Advanced students may make furniture, scooters, or skateboards. Call for fees.

Creative Writing Camp, for ages 10-16,

Mondays through Thursday, August 10-20, 10 a.m. to noon. Cost \$220.

Ballet, Jazz, Hip-Hop and tap Dance Camps, for groups ages 3 to 5, 5 to 8, and 8 to 12. Weekly sessions. Dates, times and fees to be announced.

Rock and Roll Summer Camps, cost \$260 for residents, including:

Intro to Rock Band Instruments for ages 8 to 11, August 3-7, 9 a.m. to noon, and for ages 12 and up July 20-24, 9 a.m. to noon.

Classic Rock, ages 12 and up, July 27-31, 9 a.m. to noon.

The Music of Green Day, ages 12 and up, July 20-24, 1 to 4 p.m.

Rock Jam, ages 8 to 11, July 27-31, 1 to 4 p.m.

Rock Jam, ages 12 and up, August 3-7, 1 to 4 p.m.

Science, Engineering and Lego Camps, dates, times and fees to be announced.

Camp Galileo
5237 College Avenue
Oakland, CA 94618
510-595-7293
www.campgalileo.com

Camp Galileo offers week-long programs throughout the Bay Area, from Lafayette to Marin, and this year includes Dublin, for pre-K through 8th grade. Science and art projects vary; check the website for the best location and programs for you.

Times are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with extended care options available in the morning and afternoon. Traditional camp programs include student collaboration and innovative projects. Programs begin June 15 and continue through August. Enrollment now open on the website. Art and science themes focus on green building, "building big and modern," inventions, mythology, and African art. Camp Galileo encompasses pre-K through 5th grade, and Galileo Summer Quest is 5th through 8th grades.

Fees range from \$349 for one-week sessions to \$997 for three weeks.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

For some performing arts camps, see the Orinda Community Center listing, above.

Academy of Language & Music Arts (ALMA)
Dr. James Fiatarone, Director
99 Brookwood Road

[SEE CAMPS page 10]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Campers from last summer's OK Camp offered through the Orinda Community Center.

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Sleepy Hollow offers an array of instructional programs for members of all ages and skill levels. Our swim programs include Swim Team, Mini-Legends, Learn-to-Swim Lessons and Masters Swimming. Our year-round junior and adult tennis offerings include clinics, teams, semi-private and private lessons.

Prospective Members
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Summer Programs Registration Event
March 12, 4:00-8:00 p.m.,
St. Stephen's Church

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April 26, 2:00-5:00 p.m.,
Sleepy Hollow Swim & Tennis Club

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SUMMER CAMPS

◆ CAMPS from page 9

Orinda, CA 94563
254-5056 or 254-5053

This camp offers a create-your-own program, for whatever block of time or lessons you need. It includes private lessons in music, including guitar, piano, voice, strings,

wind instruments, and percussion; also, private and group lessons in foreign languages and English as a second language. Special summer music classes include **Theory and Musicianship** (ages 12 to 17 and adults); **Guitar I** (ages 6 to 11, 12 to 17, and adults); **Intro to Guitar Ensemble** (ages 12 to 17 and adults); **Classical Guitar Ensemble**

(ages 12 to 17 and adults); **Jazz Guitar Ensemble** (ages 12 to 17 and adults); **Rock Guitar Ensemble** (ages 12 to 17 and adults); **Band Ensemble** (two levels); **Jazz Combo** (two levels); **Improvisation Clinic**; **Strings Clinic**; **Percussion/Drum Clinic** (two levels), and **Vocal Ensemble**.

Scholarships are available.

Five-Week Conservatory, the most intense of the theater's offerings, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., June 22 to July 24, Holy Names High School, Oakland. Cost \$1,300.

Two-Week Conservatory, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., July 27-August 7 is a condensed version of the five-week session for students new to the Cal Shakes summer camps or those unable to attend the longer session, Holy Names High School in Oakland. Cost \$475.

Two-Week Camp, introduction to Shakespeare, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. July 6-17, Bentley School, Lafayette. Cost \$450.

California Shakespeare Theater
701 Heinz Street
Berkeley, CA 94710
510-548-3422 ext. 127
www.calshakes.org

Cal Shakes Summer Theater Camp will offer two- and five-week conservatories in addition to a two-week camp for students ages 8 to 18. The theater helps students discover their artistic

Summer Drama Camp

P.O. Box 6145
Moraga, CA 94570
925-300-8337

www.afterschooldramaclub.com

Students in grades 2 through 8 will work with professional directors and choreographers for three weeks to learn singing, dancing and acting, culminating in a production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Camp to be held at Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Ave., Moraga, from July 6 - 24 from 1 to 4 p.m. The performance takes place on July 24 at 7 p.m. Cost \$515 with 10 percent discount for siblings. Tuition includes cast T-shirt, DVD of performance, and keepsake script.

Youth Theater
Shadelands Art Center

111 N. Wiget Lane
Walnut Creek, CA
925-943-5842

www.YouthTheatreCompany.org

Summer Production, for ages 7 to 14 from 1 to 4 p.m., and ages 5 to 6 from 2:30 to 4 p.m., June 15-July 2. This year's production is *Alice in Wonderland*. Call for fee. Performance to be 7 p.m. July 2. The Youth Theatre Company uses summer to join all of our groups together on one stage. Students will work together for 3 weeks in all aspects of theatre learning music, dance and acting from the YTC staff and Teen Interns.

Willows Theatre Company
1975 Diamond Blvd.

Concord, CA
925-798-1300

www.willowstheatre.org

SummerStage is open for students in grades 3 to 6. For half of the day, campers receive instruction in acting, music, singing, movement and dance followed by afternoon rehearsals. All campers will be cast in a show open to the public; casting is based on experience, skill level, and personal interest. Classes will be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. June 22 - July 19. Performances will be July 18 and 19 at the Willows Theatre. Cost \$650. Show not yet selected. Registration available online.

SCHOOL-RELATED CAMPS

Fountainhead Montessori School
30 Santa Maria Way
Orinda, CA 94563

[SEE YOUTH THEATER page 11]

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voices through Shakespearean training programs taught by performing artists. Each program will culminate with a student performance. Campers receive free tickets to the Cal Shakes' season.

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SUMMER CAMPS



SALLY HOGARTY

A student at **Holy Shepherd** enjoys a number game.

◆ **YOUTH THEATER** from page 10

925-820-1343

A Montessori-based summer school, 9 a.m. to noon with aftercare available. Age ranges toddler to kindergarten.

Holy Shepherd Church
433 Moraga Way
Orinda, CA 94563
925-254-3422
www.holyshepherd.org

Fun in the Sun for ages 2.5 to entering first grade; enjoy summertime activities in a small class environment; songs, games, cooking, arts and crafts, and water play; various dates throughout summer, 9 a.m. to noon with option for extended care until 2 p.m.

Orinda Academy
19 Altarinda Road
Orinda, CA 94563
925-254-7553
www.orindaacademy.org

Orinda Academy offers fully accredited (W.A.S.C.) academic classes for high school students. Classes meet state requirements and are U.C. approved. Two sessions offered: June 22 - July 15 and July 17 - August 8 (no classes July 4 or 11).

Academic Courses offered for high school credit include algebra 1, geometry, algebra 2/ trigonometry, U.S. history, and English literature for students in grades 9 to 12; students may take two semester classes or one full-year class; Classes for both sessions are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Basic Skills Review for junior high students; English and literature, and general math; classes for both sessions are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Critical Reading and Writing SAT Skills geared toward developing reading, writing and studying skills to help students perform better on the SATs; second session only.

SAT Math review of algebra, geometry and trigonometry in preparation for the SATs.

Saklan Valley School
1678 School Street
Moraga, CA 94556
925-376-7900

www.saklan.org

Located on the Saklan campus each week is carefully designed to incorporate our mission to expand the heart, mind and character of every child.

Mini Campers

Designed for children ages 3 to 5 (entering Preschool through Kindergarten).

We provide children with a nurturing environment which allows the imagination to unfold. The day is balanced between time spent indoors and out, including time spent in our well-equipped play yard with shaded areas, a wading pool, sandbox, water source, climbing structures, swings and lots of room to run around. Activities include swimming, crafts, circle games and story time. Within the rhythm of our day, a healthy morning snack is provided by the camp and children bring their lunches from home.

(Mini campers must be out of diapers and toilet trained.)

Explorers

Designed for children ages 6-10 (entering 1st grade through 5th grade).

There are new themed weeks offered as well as old favorites returning. Each weekly theme will be augmented with swimming opportunities and camp activities such as singing, games, and crafts. Explorers enjoy weekly field trips every Friday.

Kindergarten Readiness Camp

Designed for children entering kindergarten fall 2009.

Back for a 2nd year, Kindergarten Readiness prepares children for kindergarten. Children will work on their math, reading, and writing skills as well as developing essential social and life skills necessary to succeed in kindergarten. The day will include a variety of creative and imaginative play time, physical movement, music, arts and crafts, science and more.

July 6-July 31 (4-week Session, M-F) Morning Program: 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Camp Hours

Camp Saklan operates full day and half day camps every week.

The full day session is from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday.

Half day sessions are offered in the morning and afternoon. The morning half day session is 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The afternoon half day session is 12:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Extended Day

Children enrolled in the extended day program may arrive as early as 7 a.m. and stay as late as 6 p.m. There is an additional fee for the extended day program.

SPORTS-RELATED

Orinda Community Center Skyhawks Sports

Beginning Golf, ages 5 to 8, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. July 13-17. Cost \$185.

Flag Football, ages 6 to 12, 9 a.m. to noon, June 22-26. Cost \$174.

Lacrosse, ages 7 to 12, 9 a.m. to noon, July 6-10. Residents \$158.

Mini-Hawk Soccer, Baseball and Basketball for ages 4 to 6, provides a no-pressure way for young children to explore various sports; low camper to coach ratio with well-trained staff. Sessions June 22-26, 1 to 2:30 p.m., July 14-18, 1 to 2:30 p.m., August 10-14, 9 to 10:30 a.m., and August 17-21, 9 to 10:30 a.m. Cost \$118 for residents.

[SEE SPORTS CAMPS page 12]

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SUMMER CAMPS

◆ SPORTS CAMPS from page 11

Half-Day Soccer, for ages 6-16 and over, sessions June 22-26, 1 to 4 p.m., July 14-18, 1 to 4 p.m., August 10-14, 9 a.m. to noon, and August 17-21, 9 a.m. to noon. Cost \$161 for residents.

Multi-Sport for ages 4 to 7, teaches the fundamentals of soccer, baseball and basketball. Sessions June 15-19, 9 a.m. to noon, and July 27-31, 9 a.m. to noon. Cost \$158 for residents.

Multi-Sport for ages 5 to 12, August 17-21, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Cost \$258 for residents.

Sports Camps with Don Menez, ages 5 to 11, all sessions from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., including June 29 - July 3, July 14 - 18, and August 3 - 7.

Tennis Camps, offered throughout the summer, times and fees to be announced.

Mini Challenger British Soccer for ages 4 to 6; whole and half-day soccer for ages 6 to 16; June 23-27, July 14-18, August 11-15 and August 18-22.

Tennis Camps and Clinics for ages 4 to 16; offered throughout the summer; morning and afternoon sessions available.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Campers from last year's **St. Mary's** athletic camps.

Bottomley Farm
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www.bottomleyfarm.com

Summer Horse Lessons for all ages. Program provides an intensive learning experience focusing on dressage and natural horsemanship techniques as well as proper care of the animals and equipment; small classes limited to five students; all participants must supply their own properly fitted SEI or ASTM approved helmet and appropriate riding boots.

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at Oakland Estuary
510-652-6445
www.oaklandstrokes.org

Summer Rowing Camps are designed to introduce beginning rowers to the sport of crew and experienced students conditioning and continuing classes. The camp provides training in rowing techniques, fitness and teamwork. Participants must be 12 to 18 years old and capable of passing swimming tests; morning (9 a.m. - noon) and afternoon (1-4 p.m.) sessions beginning in June and lasting through the summer. Sessions are \$210 each if registered by mid-April; \$260 per session thereafter. The optional conditioning session during weeks 1 and 2 only is an additional \$50.

St. Mary's Athletic Camps
St. Mary's College
1928 Saint Mary's Road
Moraga, CA 94575
925-631-4FUN.

Click on "summer camps" at www.smcgaels.com.

This marks the 40th year that Saint Mary's College of California will offer Athletic Summer Camps to children between the ages of 6-18. Saint Mary's was one of the first institutions in Northern California to offer resident or day camps specializing in athletics. Overnight and day camps include All Sport, Baseball, Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Golf, Lacrosse, Rowing, Rugby, Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Softball, Tennis, and Volleyball. Prices range from \$150 to \$525. The camps run from June 14 through August 6.

Sleepy Hollow Swim & Tennis Club
1 Sunnyside Lane
Orinda, CA 94563
925-254-1126
email: shstc@comcast.net
www.SleepyHollowLegends.net

Sleepy Hollow Swim & Tennis Club is dedicated to providing excellent recreational opportunities in an environment that fosters legendary pride and spirit. The club offers an array of swim and tennis programs. Our swim

team is for kids ages 4-18; our Mini Legends swim program is designed for kids ages 4-6; and our Learn to Swim program is for kids ages 3.5 and up. Our tennis clinics, private lessons and tennis team are available to kids of all ages. Our young members also enjoy spending fun in the sun at Legendland, a supervised drop-off day camp.

OUTDOOR RECREATION AND NATURE

Lindsay Wildlife Museum
1931 First Avenue
Walnut Creek, CA 94597
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www.wildlife-museum.org

Summer Science Camp offers new adventures with live animals, indoor and outdoor games and songs, science experiments, and arts and crafts projects. Camper to counselor ratio is 3:1. The camp uses Lindsay Wildlife Museum's large community room, two private classrooms and adjacent Larkey Park. Camp shirt, snacks and drinks are included.

Counselor positions for 12- to 15-year-olds, for all camps. Mandatory training sessions for counselors on June 19 or July 26. Full details available at website. Cost \$40 for members, \$50 for non-members.


Creepy Crawler Critter Camp, ages 4 to 6, 1 to 3:30 p.m. July 6-10 and July 27-31. Cost \$100 for museum members, \$125 for non-members. Campers ages 4 to 6, 1 p.m.

Animal Adaptations Camp, ages 6 to 9, 1 to 4:30 p.m. July 13-17. Cost \$125 for members, \$150 for non-members. Focus on the differences between animals and learning how each protects its family and finds food, water and shelter.

Animal Habitats Camp, ages 6 to 9, 1 to 4:30 p.m., July 20-24. Cost \$125 for members, \$150 for non-members. Discover what animals live in your back yard or in the depths of the ocean. Each day will focus on a different habitat.

Healthy Planet Camps, ages 9 to 12, August 3-7. Cost \$125 for members, \$150 for non-members. Focus on keeping planet Earth clean and green, carbon footprints and climate change.

[SEE LINDSAY page 13]

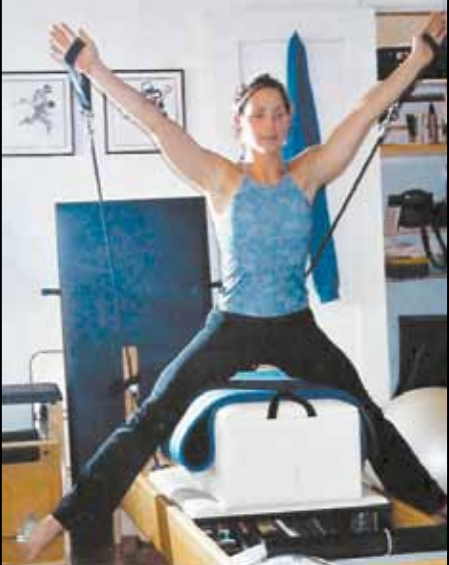


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SUMMER CAMPS

◆ LINDSAY from page 12

Oakland Zoo
 P.O. Box 5238
 Oakland, CA 94605
 510-632-9525
 www.oaklandzoo.org

The Oakland Zoo offers week-long camps, with second-week camps available without repeating activities from the first week. Campers from age 4 through 5th grade learn about nature and animals through hands-on experiential learning, as well as puppet play, games, craft projects, science activities and of course, animals. Extended care options are available. Middle school campers can spend the night.

Zoo members may register online starting March 15. Non-members may register starting March 23. Needs-based scholarship applications available at the website. Extended care also available. Full information available at the website.

Pre-K: Children need to be 4 by the start of the first day of camp, 9 a.m. to noon, June 15-19, June 29-July 3, July 13-17, July 27-31, and August 10-14. Cost is \$196 for members, \$216



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Campers from last year's **Roughing it** enjoying a day on the reservoir.

for non-members.

Kindergarten: 9 a.m. to noon or 1 to 4 p.m., must choose one. June 15-19, June 29-July 3, July 13-17, July 27-31, August 10-14. Cost \$196 for members, \$216 for non-members.

Grades 1 to 5, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 15-19, June 22-26, June 29-July 3, July 6-10, July 13-17, July 27-31, August 10-14. Cost \$291 for members, \$311 for non-members.

Roughing It Day Camp
 P.O. Box 1266
 Orinda, CA 94563

925-283-3795

www.RoughingIt.com

A Bay Area institution located at the Lafayette Reservoir for ages 4.5 to 16 years, with an emphasis on extended stays. Four- and eight-week sessions build friendships, teamwork, skills, and confidence. Transportation provided from home and central pick-up spots. Extended day programs, Junior High Camper in Leadership Training and Junior Counselor programs also available. ACA accredited. First session begins June 22, check the website for four- and eight-week differentiations. Brochure on how to choose a good summer camp available by calling the office.

There are lots of animals at this camp, including horsemanship programs starting at beginner. Website has complete information.

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◆ ROTARY from page 7

can't," Johnston explains. "For instance, when the tsunami hit Myanmar (formerly Burma), Rotary members were already in the country helping with various projects," says Rotarian Pete Giers. "The government trusted them and allowed them to help coordinate relief efforts." Orinda Rotary also helps our closest international neighbor, Mexico. The Orinda Rotary has purchased a mammography machine and an ambulance for a clinic in Tala, Mexico, funded a van and hot water system for a senior center, and distributed soccer uniforms through the Orinda Association's Soccer 4-All program, to underprivileged youth.

According to Johnston, there are approximately 1.2 million Rotary club members belonging to more than 32,000 Rotary clubs in approximately 170 countries. "We have a common bond to provide community and humanitarian service and to help build goodwill and peace in the world," he says.

"It's a non-political, non-religious organization, whose motto is to provide service above self."

To celebrate Orinda Rotary's 60 years of service, the club has planned a gala dinner dance featuring the 18-piece Mike Vax Big Band with vocalist Cami Thompson. The event takes place April 4 at the Orinda Country Club beginning at 6 p.m. In addition to a fun evening of dancing, there will be a \$5,000 cash prize and a chance to win a new Toyota Prius. For tickets, call David Pierce at 253-5424 or email him at david.pierce@prurealty.com. For more information on Rotary International, go to www.rotary.org.

Applications for Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarships

Applications for the 2010-11 ambassadorial scholarships are now available. Designed to further international understanding and goodwill, the scholarships provide for study abroad in more than 150 countries.

Academic-year scholarships provide a flat grant of \$23,000 or its equivalent. Multi-year scholarships are flat grants of \$11,500 per year for two years. Also available are cultural scholarships of \$10,000 and \$15,000 for three or six months of intensive language study and cultural immersion in another country.

Interested applicants should contact Dr. Paul Giers at 254-4667 or giers@silcon.com. Completed applications are due April 15. Additional information is available at www.rotary.org/en/students.

EFO Tours Del Rey



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO


The Educational Foundation of Orinda board toured Del Rey Elementary School recently to visit classrooms and programs it currently sponsors.

The board enjoyed listening to music students practice for the January 29 All Orinda Band Festival (above) and marveled at the library's new programs, which encourage reading and even offer chess-on-line competitions during recess and lunch.

In Hillary Patterson's art classroom, the board saw outstanding student work including paintings made while students listened to classical music and botanical drawings created at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area. EFO funded "Elmo," a document camera that Patterson uses to teach art to the students.

"It was a very pleasant visit," said EFO board member Gaby Mozee. "It reminds us that our children are being taught and guided by some of the best educators in the nation."


- Sally Hogarty, Editor



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◆ MAYOR from page 5

as a sales and use tax, utility user tax, a real property transfer tax, and a re-casting of Orinda as a charter city. "Charter cities, under California law, have much greater local control and flexibility in financial and governance matters than traditionally organized general law cities," she explained.

Other goals for 2009 include updating city codes and ordinances, creating a more user-friendly planning approval process, enhancing communications for public safety, emergency and disaster preparedness, and a police services study looking at ways to maintain a high level of service but at a more effective cost.

Mayor Severson's complete State of the City address can be found on the city's website at www.cityoforinda.org.



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ORINDA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Diverse Abilities Awareness Week Brings Understanding to OIS Students

By FRAN MILLER
Staff Writer

What is it like to read with dyslexia? How would it feel to speak and not be understood? Imagine not being able to remember anything your teacher said.

Sixth graders at Orinda Intermediate School recently had the opportunity to experience the frustrations and triumphs associated with varying disabilities, during OIS's Diverse Abilities Awareness Week, an integrated program of special assemblies and classroom work aimed at helping students develop an understanding and acceptance of differences in both mental and physical abilities.

Activities included rousing games of five-on-five wheelchair basketball during P.E. classes, classroom discussions on the wide range of differing abilities, research assignments on accomplished disabled persons, panel discussions with local disabled adults, and participation in learning stations.

Throughout the week, the central themes rang loud and clear – we all have varying abilities, some of which make it more difficult to function. And, support and acceptance from peers can go a long way in helping to make success easier.

In a multi-purpose room lined with posters of inspiring stories of those who have



FRAN MILLER

Orinda Intermediate School sixth graders participate in a sensory motor coordination exercise during Diverse Abilities Awareness Week. With mouths full of Skittles, students attempted to comprehensibly recite tongue twisters to their listening partners.

overcome their disabilities (Tom Cruise/dyslexia, Leonardo da Vinci/Asperger's Syndrome, Frieda Kahlo/chronic pain) students rotated through a series of stations intended to simulate the learning challenges that arise from difficulties with auditory processing and memory, visual perception, and sensory motor coordination.

The sensory motor coordination station, where Skittles played a key role, appeared to be a crowd favorite. With mouths full of the candy, students attempted to audibly recite tongue twisters for their visibly confused listening partners. Amidst the laughter though, the message got through – when a person's sensory discrimination

is jeopardized, motor output cannot be accurate.

Another station demonstrated what it might be like to have difficulty with visual perception, such as dyslexia. Students were asked to read sentences written in a manner as might be seen by someone with the reading disorder.

"I felt embarrassed that I couldn't read it," said one student. "It was really frustrating," said another.

Julia, an OIS seventh grader with dyslexia, participated in DAA week as a sixth grader, and is now volunteering as a helper

[SEE AWARENESS page 18]

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Green is the Theme for Middle-School Writing Contest

By LISA RODRIGUEZ
Contributing Writer

The Orinda Junior Women's Club (OJWC) announces that the theme for Youth Ink 2009 will be "green." Based on feedback from the middle school student community, the theme will focus on the environment, but students can also write about a green object, feeling green, or whatever they choose.

The annual creative writing contest is open to all sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students who live or attend school in Orinda. "We are glad to support a contest that recognizes writers – who are at times the unsung heroes of the arts," said Maureen Brown, president of OJWC.

Generous co-sponsors of Youth Ink 2009, including the City of Orinda, Friends of the Orinda Library, Ann Sullivan of Coldwell Banker, Denning & Company, and Dragonfly/Allyson Furlong Photography, have

made it possible to provide impressive prizes, including \$250 for 1st place, \$125 for 2nd place, \$75 for 3rd place as well as 10 honorable mention gift certificates.

A panel of four local professional writers, including reporters and best-selling novelists, will evaluate submissions and choose winners. The judges' names will be shared when the winners are announced at an awards ceremony at the Orinda Public Library in May.

Youth Ink 2009 submissions will be accepted on an ongoing basis but must be hand-delivered to a designated school representative or postmarked by March 4, 2009 in order to be considered for an award. Submission forms are available through the administrative offices and English departments at Orinda Intermediate School, the Orinda Public Library, St. Perpetua School, Orinda Academy, Bentley School, Saklan Valley School, and Julia Morgan School for Girls.

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ATHLETICS

Baseball Association's Opening Day March 7

By BARBARA BOSTER
Staff Writer

Orinda Baseball Association (OBA) president Greg Anderson invites everyone to enjoy a slice of Americana as the OBA begins the season on March 7 at Wagner Ranch fields. A representative from Orinda Motors will throw out the first pitch.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary, OBA has planned a fun-filled day beginning at 8 a.m. with team pictures and concluding at noon following the official opening ceremonies.

Peets Coffee and Starbucks will provide beverages with Safeway supplying donuts, and Noah's Bagels and Trader Joe's offering lots of other goodies. For those leaving directly from the ceremonies to play their first games, bag lunches will be available. The OBA thanks Orinda's new Turquoise

Grill restaurant, who will have salads and chicken wraps on hand, and Quenchers, who will bring smoothies for sale. But, what would a day of baseball be without a hot dog? The Lamorinda Lion's Club will be out in force cooking up the tasty treats all day long.

While teams are waiting for their team photos, they will have plenty to do. The OBA has organized a carnival with prizes for such fun games as speed pitch, strong man, and home run derby. A raffle is also planned. The Miramonte High School boys baseball team will be on hand, and the OIS girls chorus will sing the "Star Spangled Banner."

For more information, go to www.oba-baseball.com. A schedule for the various team pictures can also be found on the website.

Life Throws Miramonte Junior A Curve Ball

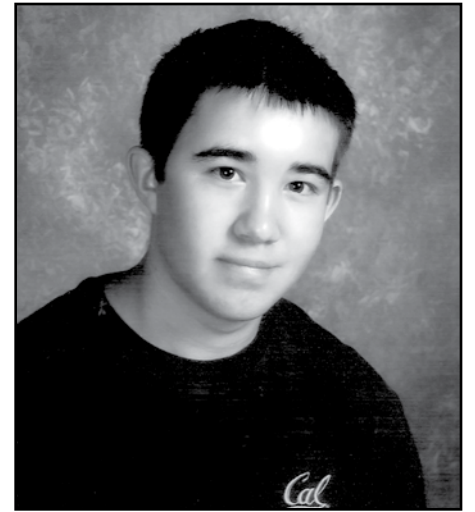
By GRACE KAPLAN
Contributing Writer

During our daily routine, though we have the best of intentions, we often remain unprepared for life's curve balls. The baseball metaphor is appropriate given the circumstances of the Gee family. Last year, during a Miramonte JV game at Dougherty Valley, Brian – who is currently a junior at Miramonte High School – was struck on the head with a stray warm up ball thrown back to the infield between innings. The blow caused him to fall down on impact, but he got up and walked back to the dugout and sat on the bench in pain.

A teammate brought Brian's injury to his parents' attention and they rushed him to John Muir Emergency, where shortly after a diagnosis of acute brain trauma, Brian was placed in a medically induced coma for two weeks, awaiting brain surgery.

No stranger to the game, Brian had come up through the OYA/OBA ranks. Though his dad, Dennis, has a long history of coaching OYA and OBA sports, and though both parents have served on boards of the same organizations, neither his dad nor mom Darlene could have seen this coming. Nor would they know how it would change their lives.

In a recent letter to the editor, the Gees expressed their concern for the safety of all our children when they take the field – be it for baseball, football, soccer or any other sport. In an interview, they stressed their desire to create awareness regarding sports related injuries, particularly head traumas. Given the severity of Brian's injury, they consider themselves lucky that every step following the accident resulted in the best possible outcome. They happened to be present at the away game; Brian's teammates brought the injury to their attention; they rushed him to the best trauma center in the county; and the on-call neuro-surgeon



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Brian Gee, a junior at Miramonte, is doing well following a brain injury that occurred when he was struck by a ball during a baseball warm-up.

seemed to make all the right medical decisions.

The nagging question remains, though: "How could this have ever happened?" Generally, most of the sports activities in which our children participate are volunteer coached. The exceptions are few (varsity and club sports), where there is enough adult supervision and proper medical staff. There was only one volunteer parent coach at the game and while several of Brian's teammates witnessed him get hit, no adult immediately knew of his injury or its severity. This is an opportunity to raise awareness about preparedness and safety. With both human and monetary resources lacking, it falls even more on us as parents to be our children's first line of defense.

We need to be as attentive to their activities outside the home as when they're under our watchful eye at home. It's our responsibility that they learn how to "play" safely and that responsibility increases as their world expands. We tend to become somewhat complacent as our children grow older, thinking they need us less than when they were toddlers and grade schoolers, but the truth is that when they begin to approach young adulthood, we have less control of their activities and whereabouts. If we instill safety consciousness into their lives early on, they will be more prepared later.

The responsibility extends to how we advocate for our children's safety. We can be physical presences at practices and games, aiding these volunteer coaches and their staff when there needs to be more supervision. We can remind other parents as well as other children of the importance of safe behavior and equipment use. Perhaps we can designate that portions of registration fees, parent fees, spirit fees or booster fees specifically go to trainers or sports medicine staff at all sports. We can

[SEE GEE page 18]



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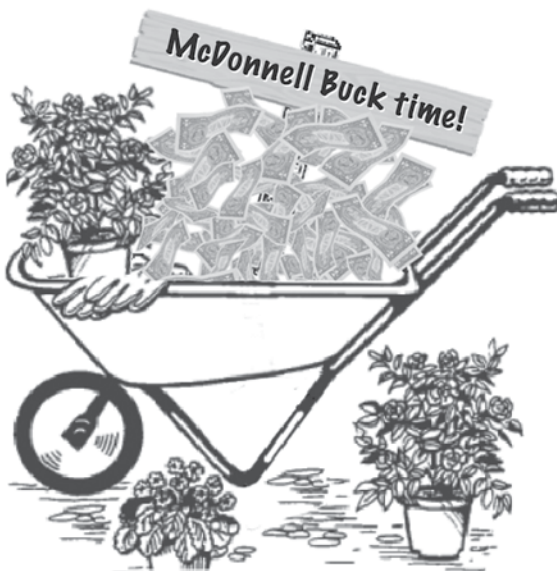
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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

MARCH

- 1 **Orinda Rotary**, noon, Orinda Community Center. Dave Parker, president of Lamorinda Wine Growers Association, will talk about wines. Tasting included, 254-2222.
- 5 **Author Talk**, 3 p.m., Orinda Books. Alan Brenner, will discuss his new novel, *Honolulu*, 254-7606.
- Orinda Rotary**, noon, Orinda Community Center. Caroline Gick, head librarian, will discuss library services and lead a tour of the library, 254-2222.
- Holden High School Friendraiser**, 7-9 p.m., Fellowship Hall, Orinda Community Church. 254-0199. The event is free.
- 7 **White Elephant Sale**, Oakland Museum's annual fundraiser, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., also on 3/8 same hours, 333 Lancaster Street., Oakland, www.whiteelephantsale.org, 510-536-6800.
- 14 **Cal Shakes Annual Fundraiser**, 6 p.m., Oakland Rotunda, Oakland. Theme is Gala Flamenco. Formal attire requested. Reservations required by March 4, 510-548-3422.
- 18 **Orinda Rotary**, noon, Orinda Community Center. "60 years of Orinda Rotary," a talk given by Pete Giers. Orinda Historical Society also invited, 254-2222.
- Orinda Rotary Career Night**, 5:30-9:30 p.m., Miramonte High School, 254-2222.
- 19 **Author Talks**, 4 p.m., Orinda Books, Sisters in Crime, Rhys Bowen, Cara Black, and Margit Liesche will discuss and sign copies of their new novels, 254-7606.
- Montelindo Garden Club Meeting**, 9:30 a.m., Orinda Community Church. Speaker at 10:30 a.m. with Amy Meyer, author of *New Guardian for the Golden Gate, How America Got a Great National Park*. www.montelindogarden.com or email montelindogarden@aol.com.
- 20 **Orinda Christian Science Church**, "The Healing Power of the Golden Rule," spiritual approach to health & healing, 7:30 pm, 24 Orinda Way. Free, 254-5757.
- 21 **Author Appearance**, 3 p.m., Orinda Books, Yiyun Li will discuss and sign copies of her new novel, *The Vagrants*, 254-7606.
- Mystery Writers**, 1 p.m., Orinda Books, Authors Vicki Delaney and Debby Atkinson will discuss and sign copies of their new mysteries, 254-7606.
- 25 **Orinda Rotary**, noon, Orinda Community Center. Susan McCollum will speak on "voice over" and how it is used, 254-2222.
- St. Mark's United Methodist Church** Guest Bible Scholar, 6:30 p.m. with program at 7:15 p.m., Dr. Mark Zier will present the Lenten study. Continues Wednesday evenings through April 8, 254-5965.
- Chamber of Commerce** Coffee and Danish meeting, 8 a.m. Village Pizza, 254-3909.
- Author Appearance**, 4 p.m., Orinda Books. Frances Bries Wojnar will discuss and sign copies of her new mystery novel, *Magdalena's Conflict* 254-7606.
- Author Appearance**, 4 p.m., Orinda Books. Beth Lisick will discuss and sign copies of *Helping Me Help Myself: One Skeptic, Ten Self-Help Gurus, and a Year on the Brink of the Comfort Zone*, 254-7606.
- Friends of the Orinda Library** Saturday Book Sale, 10 a.m., book shop and sorting room, Orinda Library. Book shop open until 6 p.m., 254-1358.
- Author Appearance**, 1 p.m., Orinda Books. Nina Egert will discuss and sign copies of her beautiful photographic essay, *Tracing Anza's Trail: A Photographer's Journey*.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified.

- 1 **Origami for Fun**, 3:15-4:15 p.m. Learn how to fold animals, shapes and boxes. Open to all levels of experience, from children on up. Repeats March 8, 15 and 22.
- Toddler Lapsit**, 10 a.m., for children under 3 and their caregivers. Repeats at 10:30 a.m. Also March 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25 and 31.
- Peek-a-Boo Story Time**, 11:30 a.m., for newborns to pre-walkers. Repeats March 10, 17, 24 and 31.
- 7 **Saturday Morning Live**, 11 a.m., for ages 3 and up. Repeats March 14, 21, and 28.
- 9 **Library Closed for staff training day.**
- 15 **The Perspective of Isadora Duncan: Life into Art**, 2-3:30 p.m. Celebration of Women's History Month. All ages.
- 18 **Docent Talk**, 7-8 p.m., with Berkeley Repertory Theatre talk on *Crime and Punishment*. For adults.
- 24 **Actors Reading Writers**, 7-8 p.m., reading of David Schickler's *The Smoker*. For adults.

For more information on library programs, call 254-2184.

MEETINGS:

CITY/FIRE/SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

- Acalanes Union High School District**, first and third Wednesdays, district office, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette, 7:30 p.m.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks**, Orinda Library, May Room, fourth Wednesday, 8 a.m., 253-1997.
- City Council**, first and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.
- Historic Landmarks Committee**, fourth Tuesday, 3 to 5 p.m., Library Garden Room, public is welcome, for information, call 925-788-7323.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks**, fourth Wednesday, 8:30 a.m., May Room, Orinda Library, 253-1997.
- Moraga-Orinda Fire District**, third Wednesday, 7 p.m., Administration Building, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga.
- Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees**, OUSD Conference Room, 8 Altarinda Road, 4 p.m.
- Planning Commission**, second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, 253-4210.
- Parks and Recreation Commission** Second Wednesday, 7 p.m., Community Center, room 7, 254-2445.

CLUB MEETINGS

- Diablo Star Chapter #214**, Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m., Orinda Masonic Center. Contact Karen Seaborn, 925-689-0995.
- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary**, Postino's in Lafayette, 7 a.m. every Friday, 254-0440, ext.463.
- Orinda Rotary**, Community Center, every Wednesday at noon, 254-2222.
- Orinda Association**, Orinda Library, May Room, second Monday, 7:30 p.m., 254-0800.
- Orinda Historical Society**, third Wednesday of the month, OHS Museum, 3 to 5 p.m., 254-1353.
- Orinda Job's Daughters**, first and third Monday, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 925-283-7176.
- Orinda/Tabor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation**, Fourth Thursday of the month, 7 p.m. social, 7:30 p.m. meeting, call 254-8260 for location.
- Orinda Woman's Club**, Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. to noon, call 254-3881.

CALENDAR BY CHRIS LAVIN

Send calendar items to chrislavin@earthlink.net

"Afghanistan, The War for Hearts and Minds," Topic for Friday Forum



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Budd Mackenzie, shown here with some Afghan youngsters, will speak at the March First Friday Forum.

By **BOBBIE DODSON**
Staff Writer

Ask the villagers of Lalander in Afghanistan if Budd Mackenzie of Lafayette has made a difference in their lives, and you'll hear a resounding baley (yes). Thanks to Mackenzie, they have a school, a new irrigation system, 22,000 fruit trees, a sewing project for women, and a crop project for men – and the list goes on.

The March 6 speaker for Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church's (LOPC) First Friday Forum, has entitled his talk "Afghanistan, The War for Hearts and Minds." Refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m. with the lecture in the Sanctuary at 1:30 p.m., 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette.

"After the many wars that have ravaged Afghanistan, there is now fighting among the war lords while most of the people are living on a starvation level. Their concerns are food, shelter, clothing and education, where to get them and who will provide them. I believe humanitarian efforts, which provide these things, will win the war. That's what we're doing with our Trust in Education approach," Mackenzie says.

He plans to show what progress can be made when one man leading an initial group of five who wanted to make a difference asked, "What can we do?" in response to the 2003 invasions of Iraq. Mackenzie says he was inspired by a *Parade Magazine* article about schools built in Pakistan with funds raised by Greg Mortenson, the author of *Three Cups of Tea*. "I realized we, too, could raise money and build schools. Our group decided that we would work to help the Afghan people since we felt they would now be receiving less attention, with the new focus on Iraq," Mackenzie explains. "It was important then and is imperative now

that 'we the people' become engaged. The war on poverty and the wars being waged for the most fundamental of freedoms will not be won by informed observers sitting in the bleachers, so we say 'come on down.' It's infinitely more rewarding to be on the field." There are thousands now working with him.

After first teaming up with the Central Asia Institute, Mackenzie concluded that in addition to building a school – a long-term solution – he also wanted to address the short-term needs. To this end, he founded the Trust in Education (TIE), a non-profit organization, to provide education and economic opportunities in Afghanistan. TIE's approach is to work intensively to get one village on its feet, rather than spread its efforts around the country. It chose Lalander, a village close to Kabul.

Along with the projects already mentioned, TIE provided fertilizer and onion seed to farmers for a cash crop, bought 300 sheep for 60 farmers, funded eight winter classes, and now it's putting together a budget to supply a computer class for girls – the boys already have one. Local Girl Scout troops sent athletic jerseys.

The Lafayette, Piedmont and Portola schools have participated in Change for Change for five years. "I've gone back to their schools every year to show slides and explain how the cupcake sales and change they've collected have helped the Afghan kids. How thrilled they were to receive soccer uniforms, shin guards and soccer shoes, and swings and slides for playgrounds. I've become a messenger between our children and the Afghans, taking art work and letters back and forth. What a positive relationship it is as it puts a face on both sets of children for the other,"

[SEE FORUM page 18]

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BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 20

softly in the background, and notice the wide assortment of eye candy attractively displayed. Proprietor Fay Farzaneh has been a businesswoman for 35 years, including a stint manufacturing women's wear in Persia, and she has spent the last 10 years providing Orindans with just about everything related to healthy hair maintenance, as well as dermatologic-approved skin treatments and nail polishes.

Not only will you easily find organic hair products Pureology and Nioxin, Farzaneh also stocks Bed Head, KMS, all lines of Matrix, Paul Mitchell, Redken and Joico. If Farzaneh does not have the shampoo or conditioner you are looking for in stock, she is happy to place a special order for

customers. The middle school set adores the spray on temporary bright colors for their coiffures. Everything from tortoise shell head bands and clips to lighted magnifying mirrors and professional grade shears and clippers can be had at Orinda Village Beauty Supply.

"My customers really like my shop. One woman said to me, 'Finally, a fun store in Orinda!'" Young people enjoy coming in and experimenting with the cosmetics and hair products," says Farzaneh with a smile. She is pleased to claim her inventory is quality tested and that she has earned her customers' trust. "My customers return happy," she adds.

Originally from Tehran, Iran, Farzaneh is married to Nasser Farzaneh, who earned a doctorate degree in metallurgy

and taught for many years. After spending many years in Achen, Germany, they immigrated to the U.S. Nasser also became a small business owner, and now has a gas station in Lafayette. The couple has two grown children. Their son, Nian, is an oral surgeon in Danville and their daughter, Nordin, is a registered nurse in Alamo. The couple enjoys spending time with their four grandchildren.

In addition to hair care products, the Trucco cosmetic line and Bodyography lipsticks, you will also find travel hair dryers, curling irons and hair straighteners with dual voltage 110V/220V, very convenient to bring on your next trip to Europe. The facial sauna looks appealing and the thermal spa will give your hair that beauty salon deep conditioning treatment.

Save yourself time and money by shopping at the Orinda Village Beauty Supply, located at 270 Village Square, adjacent to McCaulou's. For more information, call Kay Farzaneh at 258-9090.



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Hilton House Wins 2008 Best of Orinda Award

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Cyndi Girgis' trend-setting retail boutique, Hilton House Consign and Design, has been honored by the U.S. Local Business Association for its exceptional marketing success and ability to enhance the positive image of small business through service to its customers and community.

Hilton House offers a wide array of previously owned treasures as well as new items like hand-made rugs and teak furniture. "Every time a beautiful piece finds its second life in a new home, that saves resources, energy and space in a landfill," says Girgis. A loyal patron agrees, "There is no reason to buy new. I find the best stuff, help the planet, save money, and get some back by letting Hilton House resell items I



COURTESY OF THOMPSON GROUP MARKETING
These colorful vases are just a small example of what is available at Hilton House.

no longer need in my home."

Hilton House Consign and Design is located at 21 Orinda Way. For more information, call 254-1113 or go online to www.hiltonhousedesigns.com.

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David Pierce Wins Top Producer Honors

David Pierce, Broker-Realtor with the Orinda Office of Prudential CA Realty, has earned that office's title of Top Producer for the Year 2008, reports Regina Englehart, VP- Manager in Orinda.

Pierce, who joined Prudential in 1994, has over 20 years' experience in the real estate industry. His 2008 performance earned him a place among Prudential's Top Ten, a ranking encompassing 40 offices and more than 1,500 agents throughout Northern California.

In addition to his accomplishments with Prudential, Pierce also serves as director of the Friends of Big Band Jazz and, as an active Rotarian, he is coordinating the Orinda Rotary Club's 60th anniversary celebration, as well as delivering community service through the Orinda Rotary Club.

Pierce and his wife, Ellen, have resided in Orinda since 1985 where they



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

raised their two daughters, Kimberly and Brooke.

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Zohreh Arya Introduces Persian Hair Threading

If you are looking for a completely new beauty regime, aka makeover, then Zohreh Arya at the Orinda Hair Studio is someone you will want to see pronto. Originally from Tehran, Iran, Zohreh holds three cosmetology licenses from three different countries; Iran, Germany and the United States. She left Iran at age 20, stopping in Frankfurt, Germany, where she enrolled in a rigorous three-year program at the School of Beauty, Fashion and Clothing, and eventually landed here in Orinda three years ago.

“Cosmetology training in Germany is very comprehensive and includes not only hair styling, but also make-up, fashion consulting, and coloring. I am very skilled at matching clothes with my client’s features - eye color and skin tone - to create a special look tailored for that individual



Zohreh Arya at the Orinda Hair Studio.

client,” explains Arya.

The novel attraction that Arya is introducing to Americans is an Iranian technique for unwanted hair removal called “hair

threading.”

“I use thread to shape eye brows, wax the upper lip or full face. I never recommend wax for the face because it pulls the skin when it is removed, causing the skin to loosen and ultimately leads to wrinkling.”

As Arya describes it, face threading is akin to a dry facial massage. This process opens pores and cleans blackheads without involving any chemicals or stretching of the delicate facial skin. The procedure itself is very fast. “I have a client who wanted a face lift and after having her eyebrows lifted she was delighted and did not have a face lift. That is the kind of dramatic results that are achieved with threading,” says Arya.

“My clients are very pleased with the results. They trust my judgment in creating a new hair style that is right for them,” she adds. Arya is married to Arash Misaghi, who recently earned his bachelor of science degree in biotechnology at U.C. Davis. Misaghi is a pharmacy technician with Longs Drug Stores. To make an appointment with Zohreh Arya, call 510-213-4460. She is with the Orinda Hair Studio, located at 41 Moraga Way, near Morrison’s Jeweler’s at the Crossroads.

Stella & Dot Jewelry – Your Invitation To Style

Appealing across the board to all age groups, Stella & Dot offer a charming array of fine and affordable jewelry designs, from gold vermeil to sterling silver and trendy chunky turquoise beads. When not serving as a full-time mother or part-time teaching assistant to Gail Krompholz at Del Rey School, stylist Brook Forkas hosts jewelry parties at homes and offices. The multi-talented Forkas is also known locally for her adept skill at monogramming swim towels and sports bags.

“Women always enjoy jewelry and continue to collect it even during hard economic times. A new piece will completely update an outfit. After all, it is all in the accessories. Stella & Dot features very cur-



Brook Forkas of Stella & Dot Jewelry.

rent designs. In fact, it is often featured on models in the fashion magazines, not in the advertising section, but in the fashion pages,” says Forkas.

Two designers, Blythe and Maya, are responsible for all Stella & Dot styles, running the gamut from fancy, vintage modern, heirlooms, Paris flea market and romantic. There are only 12 individual stylists in all of Northern California, with Forkas being the only stylist located in Lamorinda. Forkas will arrange a show in a client’s home or office. She is looking to build a team of stylists and anyone interested should contact Forkas directly. Married to realtor Michael Forkas, the couple moved to Orinda five years ago. Their two daughters, Emily and MacKenzie, attend Del Rey School.

The Stella & Dot price range runs from an attractive \$30 up to \$300, with many styles reasonably priced in between. For more information, call Brook Forkas at 925-366-5320 and visit the new website at www.stelladot.com/katieb.



Fay Farzaneh of Orinda Village Beauty Supply.

Orinda Village Beauty Supply

Step inside the brightly lit Orinda Village Beauty Supply, with its wide plank pine floor and soothing jazz music playing [SEE BUZZ page 19]



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◆ LETTERS from page 4

Quality of Academic Programs At Risk

As a 31-year resident and proud Orinda teacher, I'm saddened by the misleading letters from Richard Colman and Clyde Vaughn that, through their clever use of exaggerations and misrepresentations, serve only to plant seeds of doubt.

Mr. Colman's latest is of particular interest because he at once calls for no new taxes to support education, while at the same time suggesting that teachers should get paid \$100,000 a year. Interesting to ponder; but totally unrelated to the issue our schools face today.

Measure B is needed, not because teachers should be paid more, but because the very quality of our academic programs is at risk. Measure B is about optimizing student learning through small class size, providing literacy and math support, and keeping programs such as foreign language, music and physical education alive.

As for Mr. Colman's call for accountability, I urge him to take a look at the many accountability measures our school district have established. On every measure, Orinda performs at the very top – and, even in this rarified atmosphere, continues to make gains.

Measure B is a sound investment in the Orinda schools that have proven time and again that they are accountable and achieve results.

– Gail Ronneberg

Generous Parents Not Enough

The State's budget outlook looks miserable, home values have declined, fuel prices are on the rise again, stock portfolios (for those that have them) have been diminishing, and the price of milk is outrageous – all of these items are out of our control.

What we do have some control over is local funding of our schools. Measure B will greatly aid in the perseverance of our excellent schools, arguably one of the most important assets in Orinda.

Thankfully, the generous contributions of many Orinda parents and community members through EFO and Parent Clubs have helped support our existing school programs. Unfortunately, these contributions and what our schools receive from the state are not going to be enough in today's economy.

Times are tough, but they will be even tougher on our students, teachers, and programs without the passage of Measure B. Help us preserve the excellence in Orinda by voting yes on Measure B.

– Bobby Glasser
President, Orinda Education

Association

Parcel Tax Misleads Seniors

I have spoken with seniors who mistakenly believe age alone exempts seniors from the proposed Orinda Schools Parcel tax. Unfortunately, the senior exemption requirements are so stringent only 60 or 70 of Orinda seniors will qualify.

In order to qualify for the exemption a senior must have an income of no more than \$43,050. The \$43,050 figure is based upon the median income of people from areas outside Orinda. Since Orinda homeowners will pay the tax, it is only fair to use the higher median income of Orindans and qualify significantly more Orinda seniors for the exemption.

Unfortunately, the proponent's documents submitted for the Voter Information Pamphlet do not disclose the \$43,050 figure or that this figure is derived from areas outside of Orinda.

It is just not fair the Orinda School District use the lower median income of areas outside of Orinda, which disqualifies a significant number of Orinda seniors.

Measure B goes on forever. It is misleading and unfair. This tax proposition should be defeated and rewritten with an ending date, full disclosure in the Voter Information Pamphlet, and fairness for seniors.

– Janet Maiorana

Schools A Good Investment

Orinda is a great place to raise a family for many reasons, but the most important may be the outstanding quality of our schools. I was fortunate to have my children attend the excellent Orinda schools, and now I feel doubly blessed to watch my grandchildren live in the same community and get the same great education that my children received.

Investing in schools isn't a young versus old issue, it's important for everyone. Sure, my own children are grown and successful, but I know that my quality of life, as well as that of my children and grandchildren, is directly related to the quality of education we provide our youth.

Will I vote for Measure B? Absolutely. It's the one investment in these uncertain times that I can count on.

– June McCord

Immigration Moratorium

The Orinda Union School District has been asking Orinda homeowners like me to pay more taxes supposedly to reduce class sizes. Why has it been accepting students who don't live in Orinda?

Richard S. Colman wrote in his letter that "President Obama... wants to reform America's public education system." Californians should realize that Obama

and most members in Congress want to push for the misleading "comprehensive immigration reform." If passed, that "reform" could add 120 million more people – job-seekers, drivers, students, users of water, energy and social services – to the U.S. over the next 20 years!

Presently, 11 million Americans, including legal immigrants, are out of work. Schools in many states are overflowing. At least 20 percent of kids in California grade schools speak little or no English and their education costs taxpayers at least \$11,000 a year each.

Many teachers and parents promoting mass immigration are paying the price: Due to budgetary shortfalls, many teachers have been laid-offs and American students also suffer due to program cuts.

Instead of borrowing from China and other countries to finance our current needs, President Obama and Congress should work together to enact some sort of immigration moratorium for the good of all legal residents.

– Yeh Ling-Ling

Preserve Moraga Adobe

Three developers are planning a 16-home planned unit development on the 20-acre property surrounding the Moraga Adobe house in southwest Orinda (near the Del Rey School).

The historic Moraga Adobe house, home of the owner of the Mexican land grant covering most of Lamorinda, may not be preserved in this development. If you wish the Moraga Adobe and several acres around it to be preserved, you should e-mail planner Roscoe Mata of the Orinda Planning Department, who is reviewing the plans, and express your concerns. The e-mail address is: rmata@cityoforinda.org.

Residents in the general vicinity of the Moraga Adobe will have a strong interest in the effect of the development on the severe traffic congestion near the Del Rey School. The proposed development will add the traffic from 16 homes to the already severe Del Rey School traffic. If you live in the Lavenida area, you will be concerned with the possibility of having Lavenida become an Emergency Vehicle Access route for the development. All area residents will be concerned with the possibility of the two sections of Donna Maria Way being connected as a through street. This would cause an influx of students driving to Miramonte High School and severely worsen the Del Rey School traffic congestion. Express your concerns to: rmata@cityoforinda.org.

If you wish to be kept informed of how the development is proceeding, send your e-mail address to: barbaravau@att.net.

– Barbara Vaughn

Severson Out of Line

I am not one of Ms. Severson's constituents, thankfully, but I must say how appalling and repugnant I find her support of Proposition 8. One would think that Mormons, of all people, would understand prejudice and discrimination against a minority – especially as it concerns marriage. Then again, I'm reminded that until quite recently African-Americans weren't welcome in the LDS either.

By supporting this hateful attack on constitutional rights, in word and deed, Ms. Severson has rendered herself unfit for the office you occupy – or indeed, any position of public service in the state of California. Not only did she betray her gay and lesbian constituents, but she supported inscribing intolerance and discrimination into the very law she is sworn to protect and defend.

Ms. Severson brings shame upon herself, her office, her constituents, and the City of Orinda. I urge her to resign immediately.

– Kenneth Overholt

Diversity Works Both Ways

May I remind Ken Brunt that "diversity" includes a different view? The view for which Sue Severson is targeted is the same as that of the majority of California voters. Sue Severson's service in our community will speak for her character.

The "quick glance at Prop 8 campaign records" by Ken Brandt and his friends has resulted in other such letters to the individuals personally, their community (as this one), and to their employer. I have read a few that impugn character and are extremely derogatory. Their purpose seems to be to intimidate the voter/donor and to cause problems with one's employer and/or loss of one's job. Perhaps it is such letter writers that we should "keep in mind."

– Mildred Salmon

Need Help Stopping Mail Theft

I am writing to ask for your help. All residents on our private court and many other residents in our neighborhood have had mail stolen numerous times over the last five weeks. We've approached the Orinda Post Master and Police Department although little to nothing has been done to help address this federal offense. We feel violated! This is an invasion of privacy, and we fear our identities have been compromised. We requested a relocation of the Birch Court residents mailboxes although the request was denied.

The current economic climate has forced people to resort to illegal means of survival of the fittest. I hope *The Orinda News* can help get the message out about this ongoing issue.

– Melanie West

**VOTE
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