

THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis
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Orinda in Action Brings Out the Local Community



Sponsored by the **Orinda Community Foundation** in partnership with the **City of Orinda**, this year's community service day saw more volunteers than ever. (far left) **Luke and Marco Rodriguez** planted poppies along Orinda Way; Orinda Garden Club members **Joyce Nelson and Ann Cinderey** add mulch to the daffodils at the Orinda freeway exit on Moraga Way; and **Anna Hillen, Frances Pope and Katie Pope** discovered buried treasure while weeding near the Orinda Chevron station. The mud colored bag they unearthed had Swedish writing on it. Inside, they found 50 coins from a variety of countries including a coin from the Czech Republic. On the Czech coin was a man on horseback, who resembles General Jan Ziska, whose statue resides in Orinda's sister city Tábor.

School District Dips Into Reserves

By **BILL O'BRIAN**
Staff Writer

The Orinda Union School District, just like all the other school districts in California, is trying to plan for next year's school budget even though at this point there is no budget agreement for the entire state. Schools by law must submit balanced budgets, so they must make plans even when there is no known funding amount forthcoming from the state.

At the February school board meeting, the board provided directions for the 2011-12 budget. Jerry Bucci, the director of business for the school district, says, "As a primary strategy, the OUSD will utilize one-time reserves to address a projected shortfall in revenue due to state cuts in funding for schools." The amount of the projected shortfall from state funding will vary depending on whether the proposed tax extension vote occurs or not. If the tax extension measure proposed by Governor Jerry Brown does not pass in a vote, then the projected shortfall for the school district could be at least \$700,000. Bucci explains that the district will spend the next 12 months developing strategies to address the shortfall. He adds, "The permanent strategies could be implemented as part of the 2010-12 budget."

The good news is that there are no budget [SEE OUSD page 6]

Buildings and Ball Fields Under Construction at Wilder

By **SALLY HOGARTY**
Editor

It's been a long time coming but the long-anticipated Wilder residential development is finally taking shape. Many paved roads now crisscross the site and three homes are in varying stages of construction along with the Quarry House, the recreation/social heart of the development. In addition, two of the five public playing fields are under construction.

"We hope to be able to schedule games this fall on the new fields," says Parks and Recreation director Todd Skinner. "They will both be artificial turf fields with night lighting." Prior to the two fields coming on-line, the development's tot lot, picnic area, and bathrooms will be completed. "These were part of two grants we received – the Robert Z'berg Block Grant and the Per Capita Fund – under the 2002 Resources Bond Act. The grant money had to be used by a certain time," he explains. The bond act provides for safe, open and accessible



One of the homes on Rabble Drive currently under construction with one of the mature Oak trees uprooted during grading and then replanted throughout the housing development.

park and recreation facilities. The five playing fields and tot lot area are situated at the beginning of the housing development and have their own parking facilities. The developer (Orinda Gateway, LLC) will turn the playing fields and tot lot over to the City

of Orinda upon completion.

The mature oak trees that had been uprooted and stored during the grading of the site are now in the ground once again. Currently the Ranch House, where a scale [SEE WILDER page 8]

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35th Annual Science Fair on May 14



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Come play with huge bubbles, visit with animals, and dig for dinosaur bones. Make a volcano explode, blast a rocket into space, or explore the gooey texture of slime. These activities and more await youngsters attending the annual science fair at Lafayette Nursery School, 979 First Street, Lafayette. Designed for children preschool age through third grade, the fair features over 20 hands-on experiments. Go to www.lafayettenurseryschool.com for more information.

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Orinda Library Gallery May Exhibit: Contra Costa Camera Club

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

If what Dorothea Lange says about photography is true - "I realize more and more what it takes to be a really good photographer. You go in over your head, not just up to your neck" - then the 60 plus members of the Contra Costa Camera Club (CCCC) have taken her words to heart. Their images will fill the gallery throughout the month. An artists' reception takes place on May 1 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Photographs from across the globe will entice you to stroll around the gallery, enjoying light refreshments while meeting these award-winning artists face-to-face.



PAT PRETTIE

Southern Pacific Otter Eating a Barnacle.

Jane Postiglione, president, says, "Photographers shoot things that other people walk by without noticing. They see that there is an image there, then work with it, and present it so that it says what they want it to say; that is so important." She considers herself as someone who always has to get another photographic image, just one more.

Titles of CCCC works exhibited include: "Tying Off in the Essaouira Marina, Morocco" by Pat Prettie; "Chief Lurking Behind Tree, New Guinea" by Bilha Sperling and "Skateboarding with Blue Shadow" by Jane Postiglione. Other members participating in the exhibit at press time include Bill Stone, Kalynda Stone, Stephen Busch, Bill Chambard, Joan Field, Rose Bower, Helen Sweet, Barry Hart, Al Gould, Tim Christoffersen, Barrie Bieler, Robert Wehrmeister, Marcia Hart, Leslie Crandell and Joe Hearst.

The biggest change the group has faced is in technology, moving from film to digital images, a challenge for all photographers. All the basics of good photography still apply when going digital, but everyone had to learn software to post-process images - most use Photoshop. According to many longtime members, the quality of images has improved over time due to the



JANE POSTIGLIONE

Flying Off the Bull.

ease and accessibility of digital images versus the darkroom. It takes diligence to keep up with the features and capabilities of digital cameras as well. But their passion for photography overcomes any allergic reactions to technology and the repugnance

of getting up at 5:30 a.m. to get the right shot! The majority of prints in the show are 11" x 14" which frame out to 16" x 20" including the mat.

Twice a month members enter competitions which are judged by professional photographers. Categories in both print and digital images include travel, nature, journalism, creative and pictorial. Each category has its own criteria as far as things you can or cannot do as a photographer. For example, in a photojournalistic shot what makes it really good is catching either peak action or telling a very good human interest story. But members are not allowed to manipulate the image with Photoshop or

[SEE LIBRARY page 6]

California wisdom

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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President *The Greater Good*



Mark Roberts

Orinda Police Chief Jeff Jennings is not chained to his desk – far from it. I've seen him at numerous functions, formal and informal, during his first year as chief of the OPD. Recently, I had an appointment to meet with him at his office at City Hall. I was told that I might need to wait a few minutes. Why? Because he was out on a call to the site of a possible burglary.

This is my kind of chief. While I'm sure he delegates responsibility to his department members effectively, when there's a need and he's available, he goes out on the call. When we sat down in his office to start our meeting, he said that's just his habit.

That's what I call a good habit. As we started to talk, however, I learned about a bad habit that many Orindans have – including yours truly.

A lot of us have installed security systems in our homes – including me. The problem, according to Chief Jennings, is that a lot of us don't use them consistently. We think, "Oh, I'm just running to the store and will be gone for only a few minutes. I don't need to turn on the alarm." Well, the truth is that many of the burglars, who have discovered Orinda, can break into a home, take what they want and be gone in only five to 10 minutes.

What's more unsettling is that they're watching us to learn our habits. Most home burglaries don't happen at night, when we're home, but during the day, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., when kids are at school and adults are at work or running errands. If a house looks inviting, the bad guys will "case the joint" and determine the best day and time to make their move. Chief Jennings said they'll knock on the door to make sure no one is home. If by chance someone is, they'll make up a story. If not, they'll break in – and if there's no alarm, they'll get to work.

The chief said that home security systems are an effective deterrent. Signs and stickers from an alarm company alone will deter some thieves – and nearly any burglar will beat a hasty retreat if a siren starts blaring when they attempt to break in.

So let's all get in the good habit of using our home security systems consistently. We paid for them – and if we have central monitoring we continue to pay for them each month. So let's get our money's worth and keep our valuables where they belong – in our homes.

Since the Fourth of July is coming up, there's another bad habit we need to break, especially for the safety of Orinda's children.

Over the years, it has become an Orinda

tradition for people marching or riding on vehicles in the parade to throw candy or other objects to spectators, especially children, along the parade route. It sounds like a fun and thoughtful gesture but there's a real danger to that practice. Kids love getting the candy but sometimes they run into the street to retrieve it, especially if it has been thrown only a short distance from a moving vehicle. As someone who has worked as a marshal along the parade for many years, I've seen many kids dart into the street and very close to the path of a moving vehicle in the parade. There have been no injuries that I know of but way too many close calls.

As the Fourth of July festivities organizer, the Orinda Association has for many years requested that parade entrants agree to not throw anything while marching or riding. Enforcement, however, has been virtually impossible. This year, Chief Jennings has agreed to help reinforce the importance of the prohibition on throwing candy or other objects during the parade. He even shared a great idea from the parade in his hometown of Fairfield. Youths and teenagers on rollerblades and skateboards ride alongside the parade entries and hand candy, etc., to kids along the parade route. Everyone has fun – and stays safe.

Let's make that our new tradition – and our new good habit. For more information about the Fourth of July festivities this year, visit the OA website at www.orindaassociation.org. That's always a good habit!



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Help Make This 4th of July the Best Ever

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Orinda's enthusiastic swim teams cheering as they pass by in a colorful float in the parade, children lining up to get a fun balloon animal, or to pet a soft, furry animal in the petting zoo, families relaxing on the grass while listening to a fantastic concert – you can help be responsible for making these special memories for your family, neighbors and friends.

The Orinda Association (OA) still has room for volunteers who are the backbone of the annual 4th of July parade and park festivities. Whether you only have a few hours to spare or an entire day, the OA has a way you can help. You can help out the day before by putting up decorations, help organize parade entries in the BART parking lot, or stay after the parade to help clean up (extra Brownie points for that one!).

The 4th of July is also a wonderful way to get the word out about your business by being a sponsor. Families and businesses alike have ordered banners (very affordable) that are located in a variety of places around town. There are also many levels of business sponsorship that will insure your business logo/ad is included on the OA



SALLY HOGARTY

Volunteers help young participants in the children's activity area at last year's 4th of July celebration.

website, in *The Orinda News*, announced at the parade, and included in newspaper articles.

Now is the time to get involved. For further information, go to www.orindaassociation.org or call 254-0800.



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The 4th of July Event Needs You!

Join the Orinda Association's volunteer team to make this 4th of July Celebration the best ever!

The Orinda Association has been sponsoring and coordinating this event for many, many years and has detailed information for all volunteers. This is a great way to make new friends and renew old friendships. Join us for a lot of fun and make this 4th of July the best ever for your community. Here are some of the positions we would love you to fill!

Decorations Coordinator - Make the Community Center and parade route better than ever with colorful balloons, flags, and more. Last year's coordinator will be on hand to help you get started! Need to be present on July 3 and 4.

Marketing Coordinator - Work on logo design for posters and banners and, along with other volunteers, distribute posters and banners to businesses in the Lamorinda Area.

Banners' Coordinator - Families and businesses love to buy banners that hang throughout Orinda from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Last year's coordinator will be on hand to help!

Kids in the Park Co-Chair - What could be more fun than planning games and entertainment for the kids? You'll co-chair with someone who has done this for years and is such fun to work with. Need to be present on July 3 and 4.

If you are interested in any of the above, email event chairpersons Chris Laszcz-Davis at chrisld@eq-organization.com or Mark Roberts at roberts-on-muth@comcast.net.

The OA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and your membership donation is tax deductible to the extent of the law. THANKS for your support!

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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Preparing for Warm Weather and Natural Disasters

With most of the rain over for the season and warm days ahead, many residents turn to that annual rite of spring – cleaning. It's a great time to air out the house and fix/clean all those things put off until better weather. While cleaning products may help you tidy up your home and reduce germs, they can also present their own health concerns if they contain chemicals that cause eye, skin or respiratory irritation. Thanks to Eco-Home you can access an interactive website with lots of room-by-room tips to minimize those harmful chemicals and help keep the Bay healthy and thriving as well. Go to www.baywise.org for both home and garden tips.

This is also a great time to discard various items you no longer use. The Central Contra Costa County Reuse program will

be happy to pick up those items and redistribute them to those in need. See the article on pg. 20 for more details.

And, finally, this time of year is perfect to access your family's disaster plan. While it is unlikely that Orinda will ever have to deal with a destructive tsunami or a compromised nuclear power plant, we do have the constant threat of earthquakes and fire, the later being of particular importance during the dry, summer months.

The Orinda Association has Red Cross disaster preparedness kits available at its office on the Plaza Level of the Orinda Library, and Rebecca Kunzman has written a comprehensive article on preparing to be self-sufficient in the event of a disaster. See pg. 10 for more details.



Two New Interns at *The Orinda News*



Nicole Sharp (L) and Mina Sofia Jameson. SALLY HOGARTY

Intern Nicole Sharp

Nicole Sharp is an outstandingly high academic achiever at Canyon Elementary School and stands out for her devotion to animals. Nicole hopes to help animals in need and travel all over the world, including

settling down in England. Nicole will dive headfirst into high school next year, and when asked where she wanted to stand socially, she said "I don't want to be all 'look at me!' but I don't want to be unnoticed. I want to be myself."

– Mina Sofia Jameson

Intern Mina Sofia Jameson

Mina Sofia Jameson is an amazing and rare individual. When she was seven years old, Mina declared that she wanted to be a journalist but, at the time, she might not have known what that was exactly. Now, Mina has refined her career and tells her friends at Canyon Elementary School that she'll become a novelist. Many believe that she will make a spectacular writer but, in the meantime, she can stick to being this writer's great friend.

– Nicole Sharp

Letters to the Editor

Orinda Not Paying More than Its Fair Share

Recent letters to the editor have claimed that Orindans pay more than their fair share of the costs of providing fire and emergency medical services. Some calculate the taxes paid by Orinda and compare them to those paid by Moraga. Others divide those taxes by the number of fire fighters in each city. Both are incorrect because their calculations are based on city boundaries.

The operations of every fire district in America are based on "service areas," aka "station and apparatus response areas." In other words, fire districts are divided into service areas based on response time, not city boundaries.

While the old fire district boundaries and

the old "Moraga and Orinda Zones" have been abandoned, service areas are essentially the same as they were before MOFD was formed in 1997 which means that the 700 Orinda homes that used to be in the old Moraga Fire District are still "first due" out of Moraga stations. The significant exception is that the homes between Ivy Drive and Glorietta now get ambulance service out of Moraga, and the rest of Orinda out of downtown Orinda, instead of from AMR out of Walnut Creek.

Since 700 Orinda homes are "first due" for all emergencies out of Moraga, and an additional 800 Orinda homes are "first due" for the Moraga-based ambulance, it makes sense that any calculations attempting to determine whether or not an area is paying its fair share should factor in that information. Our city boundaries are irrelevant to the operations of MOFD and irrelevant in

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any calculations to determine the fair share of costs.

The claim that Orinda is subsidizing Moraga has been investigated by several agencies and committees and proven incorrect. We do not need another task force to study this issue. It is time to move on and find practical ways of generating revenue to re-build our roads and infrastructure.

– Ellen Dale

False Accusations

A previous letter to the editor falsely accused me of using another person's calculations. I always use Contra Costa Auditor's documents to conclude Orinda is subsidizing Moraga's fire service. In 2002, I advocated Orinda detach from MOFD and form an Orinda Fire District.

[SEE LETTERS page 22]

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For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 or email to jill@aspenconsult.net. The deadline for the July issue is May 20, 2011.

FIRE / POLICE / THEATRE



POLICE BLOTTER

March 2011

False Residential Alarms: Officers responded to 76 false alarm calls throughout the city.

Burglary - Auto: 3 incidents were reported on Moraga Via, Meadow Ln. and Hartford Rd.

Burglary - Residential: 8 incidents were reported on Spring Rd., Alice Ln., Oak Rd., 3 on Las Vegas, Via Farallon and Claremont Ave.

Petty Theft - From Vehicle: 1 incident was reported on Donald Dr.

Stolen Vehicle: 1 incident was reported on Moraga Way.

Recovered Stolen Vehicle: 2 stolen vehicles were recovered on La Vuelta and Camino Pablo/Monte Vista Rd.

Arrests

Alcohol - Drunk in Public: 2 arrests

were made on Camino Pablo and Las Piedras.

Interfering with Public Officer: 1 arrest was made on Tamalpais View.

Other Felony: 1 arrest was made on Camino Pablo.

Other Misdemeanor: 1 arrest was made on Camino Pablo/Hwy 24 EB.

Outside Assist: 1 arrest was made on Camino Pablo.

Possession of Unlawful Weapon: 1 arrest was made on Irwin Way.

Recovered Stolen Vehicle: 1 arrest was made on Camino Pablo/Monte Vista Rd.

Warrant Arrest: 1 arrest was made on Orinda Way.

- Compiled by Jeanette Irving, Orinda Police Department

New Operators at Orinda Theatre Also Operate Rheem

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Orinda's beautiful art deco theater continues to struggle to keep the doors open. Owned by GLL Real Estate Partners, the theater's management was taken over by Tom Peterson and Jim Sheenan in May of 2009. Previously, the theater had been run by long-time operator Allen Michann, who also runs the Oakland Grand Lake Theater.

Peterson and Sheenan were given a substantial reduction in rent to help make the theater financially viable. Unfortunately, between the economic climate and competition from multi-plexes in nearby cities, the team was unable to turn the Orinda Theatre into a successful enterprise. As the initial agreement with the reduced rent came to an end, Peterson and Sheenan declined to continue as operators.

GLL Real Estate Partners, which purchased Theatre Square several years ago, turned to a known quantity to take over operations of the local landmark. "Zemrak/Pirkle Productions LLC is well known for their successful renewal of Moraga's Rheem Theater, and we expect that they will use that same expertise to strengthen the Orinda Theatre," says Peter Wenzel of GLL Real Estate Partners.



RICK KATTENBURG
The local architect/photographer captured the Orinda Theatre with its own rainbow.

Derrick Zemrak and Leonard Pirkle are founding members of the California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF), which showcased its festival two years ago at the Orinda Theatre. When the Rheem Theatre became available last summer, CAIFF moved to the Moraga location with Zemrak/Pirkle Productions taking over the commercial operations as well.

"We have been very pleased with the impact of our changes to the Rheem Theater over the past nine months," said Pirkle.

[SEE THEATRE page 6]

FAIR and OrindaCARES Present Opposing Opinions on MOFD Funding

By DAVID DIERKS
Staff Writer

On April 11, the Fire and Infrastructure Renewal group (FAIR) made their final presentation to the Tri-Agency Ad Hoc Committee for Moraga Orinda Fire District Fire (MOFD) and Emergency Medical Services. The Tri-Agency committee consists of Moraga Town Councilmember Ken Chew, Moraga Vice Mayor Mike Metcalf, Orinda City Council member Amy Worth, and Frank Sperling and John Wyro representing the MOFD. After FAIR spoke, OrindaCARES (Citizens Against Reducing Emergency Services) made their presentation, and then the meeting was opened to public discussion concluding with the committee making closing statements. Councilmember Worth will now take the group's findings to the Orinda City Council, where it will be added to the agenda and opened for public discussion at a future council meeting.

Steve Cohn started the FAIR presentation by outlining FAIR's goal to "correct the inequitable funding of MOFD by Orinda taxpayers." He then went on to present a detailed analysis of the property tax revenue

allocation by Orinda and Moraga, along with the amount of service that each town receives from the MOFD. FAIR's findings indicate that Orinda is paying 33 percent more per firefighter than Moraga does. According to Cohn, "With this review of operation facts, FAIR believes there is no reason for Orinda taxpayers to pay significant portions of the operating costs of Moraga based equipment and personnel. Orinda taxpayers are currently overpaying \$1.2 million in property taxes to MOFD every year. In a January 2010 survey, 40 percent of Orinda residents said that they would defer any request for new taxes until the MOFD question was explored. Orinda has to understand its own particular situation and do what it thinks is best; not rely on others to hand them the answers with no critical community input," Cohn suggested.

Ellen Dale of OrindaCARES made the second presentation of the evening. Dale said "FAIR's calculations are fundamentally wrong. In order to demonstrate that Orinda is subsidizing Moraga's fire service, FAIR takes the total revenue of the City of Orinda and compares it to the total revenue of the Town of Moraga. Using the city limit

[SEE MOFD page 18]



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CONTINUATIONS

◆ LIBRARY from page 2

any other software. They are allowed to do whatever would be possible in a darkroom such as crop, dodge or burn the image. In contrast, in the creative category, the image is not supposed to look realistic. Looking at other people's work keeps their work fresh, and the ever-present need to keep up with technology pushes everyone to keep learning.

Winners go on to compete at Northern California Council of Camera Clubs (N4C) competitions. CCCC is also a member of the Photographic Society of America and

competes in their travel and pictorial categories. The group came in sixth from the top out of 36 clubs across the country in the travel category.

The CCCC was formed in 1948 with 36 members and is still going strong with over 60 members. The youngest member is 23, the oldest members in their eighties, with all ages in between. They meet at 7:30 p.m. three times a month (first, third and last Thursdays) at The First Christian Church in Pleasant Hill. Webmaster Pat Prettie keeps the website filled with images in every category, program/membership information and links (see <http://contracostacc>.

homestead.com/ for more information). The first two meetings are competitions and the last Thursday includes various educational presentations. Suzi Eszterhas, award winning wildlife photographer, recently spoke to the group showing images of gorillas (Rwanda), orangutans (Borneo and Sumatra), and chimpanzees in the wilds of Africa (see www.suzieszterhas.com). Eszterhas travels seven months each year to obtain these images. CCCC membership includes a subscription to their monthly newsletter, the *Bellows*, field trips, mentorship and various member-sponsored programs to enhance skills.

Postiglione says that photography is both an art and a science, originally because of the chemical processes associated with film in the past, and the optics of the camera. Without those, you wouldn't have a good image. She hopes that the exhibit will educate people about photography and inspire them to see what images in the world each photographer believes are worth a second look.

Visit the gallery during normal library hours – Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Call 254-2814 for more information.

◆ OUSD from page 1

reductions, based on the current budget assumptions, planned for the 2011-12 school year. Additional good news is that the OUSD did not issue any layoff notices to teachers this year. However, if state cuts in funding are larger than presently projected, the board "may consider some budget reductions for next year," says Bucci. At this point nobody can say specifically which types of reductions in services could occur.

Asked if the district has ever used reserve funds before, Bucci states that during previous periods of state budget cuts, one-time reserves were used to address funding shortfalls. He says, "Most recently, in 2009-10, the state reduced funding by \$600,000 for the OUSD as part of the final state budget. This cut had not been proposed prior to the final budget discussions at the state level."

Total revenue for the current year is estimated to be \$23.5 million. This amount includes revenue from all funding sources. The bulk of school funding comes from the state generally based on a per pupil amount. In Orinda, the official parents' clubs contribute 10 percent of the total revenue for the Orinda Union School District. Additionally, individual parents also

contribute to children's classes for field trips and specialized supplies for projects. This figure totals about 0.50 percent of total revenue. The Education Foundation of Orinda contributes five percent every year. Bucci explains that "these contributions along with the local parcel taxes allow the Orinda schools to maintain very important aspects of education: low class sizes, a full music program, elementary art and PE teachers, additional counseling services and many elective classes at the middle school.

When asked if there are flaws in the school funding formula for schools in California, Bucci explains, "The biggest flaw which has been apparent recently is that state revenue is heavily dependent on personal income tax. Personal income tax tends to fluctuate dramatically due to economic changes in the state. This variation in state funds causes great uncertainty and fluctuations in funding for schools. It is difficult to make commitments for school programs, staff and services when state funding is so uncertain." Bucci states that 12 years ago when funds were available, the state made a commitment to fund small class sizes in Kindergarten through third grade (at a 20 to 1 student/teacher ratio). Yet over the last three years, as the state has

cut school funding, many districts have had to abandon the class size reduction program and lay off teachers. Class sizes are now in excess of 30-1 in many schools. He adds, "California has one of the highest teacher to pupil ratios in the nation. It will likely take a long time for class sizes to return to the 20-1 level for many schools."

Currently, the governor has proposed to allow voters to decide whether they want to continue current tax levels. If that vote occurs and passes, it will generate around \$12 billion. In addition, Governor Brown has signed off on cutting just over \$11 billion from the budget. The Governor's initial budget proposal included "flat funding" for schools in 2011-12. This assumes that the tax extension measures will pass a vote. Under this scenario, the OUSD would actually experience a reduction in funding of approximately \$47,000 due to the calculations used by the state. The OUSD would

be able to submit a balanced budget based on this scenario. If the tax measures do not pass, then Bucci says, "The OUSD plans to use one-time reserves to address this shortfall in funding. If the shortfall is significantly larger than projected, then budget reductions may need to be considered."

Asked if he sees any hope for changes on the horizon regarding school funding, Bucci remains optimistic about the commitment of Californians to their schools, but is realistic about the current economic climate: "Education continues to be a high priority for Californians, so there is hope for the future. But until the economy recovers and the unemployment rate drops substantially, state revenue may not be sufficient to increase funding for schools. It may take another three years before revenue increases enough at the state level for consideration to be given to increasing financial support for schools."

◆ THEATRE from page 5

Current plans are to keep the CAIFF festival at the Rheem Theatre but expand the hours of operation at the Orinda Theatre. "We immediately increased the hours at Orinda by opening everyday at 1 p.m.," says Zemrak. "We've also negotiated with the people who have been picketing since the last operators took over, and they will no longer be out front."

Zemrak and Pirkle plan to operate the two theaters as one rather than in competition with one another. "We will basically have seven screens now – three at Orinda and four at Rheem – that will allow us more flexibility in scheduling.

"Both theaters are beautiful buildings in their own right, but they need their local community support to survive," Zemrak says. "It's all in the programming. We hope to be able to offer films that the community will want to attend." Zemrak also noted that the configuration of the Orinda Theatre poses problems for larger operators. "The

47 seat theater is too small, the 750 seat too big, but the 178 seat is just right. Most larger operators would not be able to deal with this and the theater would go dark," he explains.

Zemrak and Pirkle are also working with the Lamorinda Film and Entertainment Foundation (LFEF) to continue the group's popular International Film Showcase at the Orinda Theatre. The monthly series has been bringing much-needed revenue and exposure to the venue. LFEF will premiere an international film May 20 – 25. The title was not available at press time. Go to LFEF's FaceBook page "International Film Showcase" or www.lfef.org for more information. The showcase will be on hiatus during June and July and return in August or September with a line-up of international films.

The new operators plan a re-opening event at the Orinda Theatre on May 14 at 5 p.m. featuring comedian Rich Little. Go to www.newrheemtheatre.com for more information.

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CAR TALK / CLINIC

CAR TIME

Gas Price Blues

by JOHN VANEK



With gas prices hitting \$4 per gallon and climbing, local motorists are looking for ways to save money on gas. Some owners are even thinking about replacing their current vehicle with a hybrid or other economy car. Regardless of what kind of vehicle you own, there are driving and lifestyle habits that can help decrease your fuel consumption. First of all, we must think of a radical thought called "not driving." Is there a way to leave that fossil fuel burning, planet spoiling beast in the driveway? We can entertain carpooling with coworkers or friends. Take turns and share the fuel costs. Use BART or other public transportation. Combine your errands and avoid unnecessary trips. There are other options like biking or walking. I know, you probably just want to drive your car. I imagine that you may not really want to drive a car that looks like a pod or a tiny Smart Car that would fit in the back of a Ford F250. No, neither do I.

Let's start with your driving habits. Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas. It can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by five percent around town. Accelerate smoothly from a stop and avoid "jack rabbit" starts. Drive at a smooth steady speed once you are on the highway. Use your cruise control whenever possible. Sensible driving is also safer for you and others, so you may save more than gas money. Your car will benefit from a proper warm up when the engine is cold. It puts out more emissions in the first few minutes of

operation so always let the engine run for at least a minute. Once your vehicle is warmed up, avoid extended idling periods. Idling gets zero miles per gallon. While each vehicle reaches its optimal fuel economy at different speeds, gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph.

Regardless of what you drive, vehicle maintenance is crucial. Simple items like clean engine oil, clean filters and spark plugs make a big difference. Keeping track of these items is the responsibility of the owner. You should check your owner's manual and understand the mileage intervals for items like spark plugs and other maintenance requirements. Also check your manual to see what octane level of fuel should be added to the fuel tank. Some cars require high octane fuel. You are not saving money by using the wrong fuel. You are actually slowly hurting your engine. Driving with a check engine light on is never a good idea. Even if the engine seems to drive normally, there is still a silent threat building. Modern vehicles are equipped with self diagnostic systems to monitor all of engine management components. If the check engine light is on, it is trying to tell you that there is a problem with one of these components. It could mean that there are excessive emissions coming out the tailpipe or evaporative emissions escaping from the fuel system – that is why a car with a check engine light present can not pass the California Smog Test. Nonetheless, it is never a good idea to continue to drive with a check engine light on. Tire pressure is probably

Free Women's Car Care Clinic on May 14

by DAVID DIERKS
Staff Writer

On May 14 at 1 p.m., Orinda Motors, in partnership with the Orinda Woman's Club, will be co-hosting a community car care clinic. The clinic will focus on education for women motorists including car maintenance, operation, hands-on car care tips, safety information and how to be a better consumer.

John Vanek, service manager of Orinda Motors, says "I felt inspired to do the clinic, because I get the feeling that women are not comfortable dealing with car maintenance due to their lack of knowledge of the cars. A lot of women are the person in the family who deals with the car. There are also a lot of single women concerned about being taken advantage of. What I hope to do is educate the consumer so that they are prepared with knowledge prior to taking their car in."

The clinic's goal is to educate women

motorists about their responsibility for caring for their vehicle. Attendees will learn how to check the oil, what the different fluids do, how to find information in their owner's manual, and how to keep records of the service performed on their vehicle. Also covered will be understanding potential maintenance costs, recognizing signs of trouble (odd sounds and smells, strange vibrations, warning lights), how to prepare for a road trip, what to do in the event of a breakdown, and what maintenance should be performed at mileage milestones.

There will be some hands-on under the hood so that motorists will be able to visualize the different parts, where they are located and have a general idea of what they do. Vanek says "We will cover what to do when a warning light comes on and how to recognize what worn items look like. When someone says 'You've got a worn air filter,' we'll explain what that means. We'll show some worn tires, and explain why

[SEE CAR CLINIC page 18]

one of the most important items related to fuel mileage. That is why the federal government mandates car manufactures to include built-in tire pressure monitoring systems (TPMS). As a matter of fact, California just passed a regulation that calls for all auto repair facilities to check and record your tire pressure every time you bring your car in. Rolling resistance is crucial, and it starts where the rubber meets the road. Never ignore a TPMS warning light.

Did you know that you get better gas mileage at 60 mph with your air conditioning on compared to two windows down? It is still a good idea to avoid using the air conditioning whenever possible. Aerodynamics plays a big part in fuel efficiency and also plays a big part in the design of

the modern car. A ski rack or bike rack will cause aerodynamic drag. Even the cross bars on the roof rack that you do not use will hurt the air flow over your SUV or van. I recommend removing all racks and crossbars if not often used. It is a good idea to track your gas mileage so you know if it drops, you may need to take action.

I guess it comes down to the accumulation of many small things that combine to make a measurable difference. Driving selectively, taking advantage of alternate transportation, performing proper vehicle maintenance, and utilizing gas saving driving habits is a good start.

I am always available for advice related to your automotive concerns. I can be reached at Orinda Motors at 925-254-2012.

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Orinda Books Expands Its Arts And Crafts Department

By MARIAN NIELSEN
Staff Writer

Ten local crafts people and artists are now displaying their work at Orinda Books. "It is a pleasure to announce an expanded area devoted to arts and crafts," states Orinda Books owner Janet Boreta. According to Boreta, the west side of the bookstore has been renovated to showcase these handcrafted works of art.

The bookstore has long been home to outstanding creative artists. Gerry Wallace's remarkable ceramic art and Paul Kratter's much admired landscapes are permanent fixtures, and each month the walls continue to feature the work of local painters and photographers.

The following craftsmen and women

and their hand-made gifts are currently on display:

Barbara Woolmington – knitted baby sweaters and booties; Bill Helsel – black & white photography – framed and unframed – and greeting cards using same photography; Margaret Helsel – one-of-a-kind sterling silver earrings and felted totes and handbags; Ellis Sjoberg – wood crafted boxes, bowls, and vases; Sarah Smith – Hand-sewn stuffed animals, mobiles, and stroller toys; Jackie Smith – beaded bracelets and brooch pins; Terrie Chan – *découpage* glassware and beaded eggs; Lois Mead – acrylic collages on canvas and mosaics; Kathy Kerr – fabric wall hangings, fabric covered tins, and memory boxes; and Sarah Liron – silver jewelry and hammered silver bracelets.



Kseinja Sostin Olmer looks at some of the items available at the new arts and crafts section of Orinda Books.

Between the Lines Let Books Take You Back to the Future!

Marian Nielsen, Orinda Books



◆ WILDER from page 1

model of the 245-unit housing development can be found, is the one completed building on the site, but the 7,500 square foot Quarry House isn't far behind. "We hope to have an opening reception for Quarry House in late May," says spokesperson Jason Keadjian. Located on 5.3 acres, the Spanish Colonial Revival-style club house includes an open courtyard, lounge, caterer's kitchen, multi-purpose room, large fitness area, and a state-of-the-art swimming pool complete with electronic timing system to record swim times automatically. "The Quarry House contains many of the indoor/outdoor components that are also included in our homes," Keadjian says. Adding in the 1,120 square foot pool pavilion, this private facility for Wilder residents comes to a total of 8,620 square feet.

Three homes are now under construction. Designed by award-winning Robert Hidey Architects, the model home and the home at 6 Rabble Road are both interpretations of the Bay Area Cottage, consisting of five bedrooms, five baths and two half-baths, interior courtyard and much more. Both are on two-levels with the model home at 5,300 square feet and the Rabble Road home at a little over 6,000 square feet. The third home at 22 Rabble Road is Hidey's version of the classic Orinda Ranch style featuring a single-level floor plan, three bedrooms, three and-a-half baths, and 2,380 square feet of living space. A total of 18 different floor plans, including East Bay Arts and Crafts, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Adobe Ranch, have been approved by the

Orinda Planning Department.

According to Keadjian, the developer decided to build several homes in addition to the model so that prospective buyers could visualize how the custom homes fit into the soaring vistas of Gateway Valley. "It's one thing to see a set of plans and something very different to actually walk through a home and enjoy the landscaping and amenities," Keadjian explains.

When the project is completed, the 1,600-acre site will include 245 homes, a recreation center, five public playing fields, a public art and garden center, and 1,300 acres of open space, which will include a network of local and regional trails.

"Some people have been following this development for quite some time," says Keadjian. "For the past five years, we've been occupied with grading and building the infrastructure. It's exciting now to see the homes take shape. We've already taken deposits on some home sites and are actively taking prospective buyers on tours."

To get to this point, Wilder development (previously known as Gateway Valley and Montanera) has made many changes since the previous owner, Pacific New Wave, applied for building approvals in 1991. A series of lawsuits, roadblocks from several governmental agencies, and economic downturns have transformed the original 225 home development with championship 18-hole golf course and only 600 acres of open space into a much more environmentally-friendly reality.

For more information on the Wilder development, call 925-254-9900 or go to www.orindawilder.com.

Even before Dorothy danced down the yellow brick road, or the Pevensie children opened the door to a wardrobe and found themselves in Narnia, fantastic tales have been enthralling (and sometimes scaring the socks off) young readers. In 1997, Harry Potter gave an electric jolt to the world of wizards and witchcraft — was it only 14 years ago? — when J.K. Rowling pushed Harry, Ron and Hermione out onto their broomsticks and into the hearts and minds of young readers everywhere.

This spring, the tradition continues. Thrilling and other-worldly adventures continue to play a major role in fiction for young audiences. Publishers have brought out new installments in continuing and very popular adventures as well as some tempting fresh entrants into the world of magical adventure.

Much of the appeal of good fantasy novels is the credibility that skilled and empathetic authors have been able to give to their young heroes and heroines. Even though these fictional youngsters are confronting shatteringly dangerous situations — most young readers will *not* have to save their world from the powers of evil — their responses and actions are totally recognizable to us. Remember Edmund's jealousy of Lucy's first adventure into Narnia — what siblings haven't had an "Ah-hah!" moment when they read the opening chapters of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*? It is no wonder that two of our currently popular writers of fantasy for kids (John Flanagan and Rick Riordan) are fathers of young sons and one of them, Rick Riordan, was also a middle-school teacher for many years. They obviously took good notes.

John Flanagan, an Australian writer, has created a fantasy world with a medieval flavor — and Tolkien touches — in his *Ranger's Apprentice* series. We first meet Will, a 15-year-old orphan, in *The Ruins of Gorlan*, when he becomes an apprentice to the Rangers whose duty it is to keep their kingdom safe from traitors and invaders. Throughout the series, Flanagan stresses the importance of courage and loyalty to one's friends. In the final volume, *The Emperor of Nihon-Ja* (published in April by Penguin Books) Will and two comrades leave their homeland to rescue Horace, who has traveled east and become entangled in a military coup. Exciting reading for 10-12 year olds!

Like John Flanagan, Rick Riordan is a writer whose heroes have captured the imagination of youngsters everywhere by combining ancient history and magic with intrepid boys and girls of today who brave great dangers to save their world. His



Percy Jackson and the Olympians series, which concluded with an epic battle for Western civilization fought on the streets of Manhattan, has been followed by *The Kane Chronicles*. Leaving the Greek pantheon behind, Riordan started this new three-book series in which the two children of an Egyptologist confront the wrath of Egyptian gods inadvertently unleashed on the modern world. Riordan's new *Kane* adventure is *The Throne of Fire*, coming from Hyperion Books this month.

John Stephens is a new entrant in the world of juvenile fantasy fiction, though his career as a screen-writer and contributor to other young adult series, gave him a leg up in writing his *The Books of Beginning* trilogy of which *The Emerald Atlas* (published by Random House in April) is the first installment. This highly anticipated title — the hottest book at last year's Bologna Children's Book Fair — introduces us to orphans, Kate, Michael, and Emma, who travel to dangerous corners of the world, acquire lovable allies, meet sinister opponents, and — what else? — save their world. Eight-to-twelve year olds and their parents will love this new novel.

Two familiar names in the fantastic fiction department are Brandon Mull and Garth Nix. Both have new novels for middle readers this spring. *Trouble Twisters* by Garth Nix and Sean Williams is due in bookstores in May, and *Beyonders*, a new series by Brandon Mull of *Fablehaven* fame, debuted with *A World Without Heroes* in March. Lest we get too serious in our attempts to save the world, note that Dav Pilkey's *The Adventures of Ook and Gluk*, the story of two silly cave kids in 500,001 B.C. who travel into the future to rescue mankind from time-traveling terrorists, is just out in paperback.

Fantasy comes in many forms. One of my new discoveries has been the Tiffany Aching series of young adult novels by Terry Pratchett. (Like Harry, Ron, and Hermione, Tiffany is also mastering the art of the broomstick.) I have been a fan of Pratchett's *Discworld* fiction for both younger readers and adults but only recently discovered that his books have been recorded on audio CDs by a fine actor, Stephen Briggs, who has such fun with accents — brush up on your Scottish — that listening is a delight for any age. Pratchett's sly humor will tickle all funny bones. Start with *Wee Free Men* about little blue guys six inches tall who help Tiffany rescue her little brother from the monsters of Fairyland. Grown-ups don't laugh! This is very clever and great fun! These audios would be grand companions for a family road trip this spring or summer.

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HELPING OTHERS

Orinda Woman's Club Educational Grants Help Women Towards Goals

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Twelve low-income women were given a significant boost in their quests to become self-sufficient citizens thanks to the \$1,000 scholarship checks they received at the Orinda Woman's Club April meeting. "We're very proud of being able to provide these grants as they go to a group of women generally overlooked when money is awarded," said Barbara Rogan, president.

"Our club's mission is to help women and children. To provide support so women can go to school, learn the English language, obtain new skills to improve their earning ability. Whether the money is used for books and tuition, baby sitters, or gasoline, it can make the difference in whether they can be involved in programs which help them lead more productive lives," she adds.

Shavae Payton, the single mother of a two year old, said, "I'm so excited to receive this aid. To think that I wrote an essay that the women liked is amazing. I've improved my reading skills in Project Second Chance, and this really has given me confidence that I can succeed in school. My plan is to finish the Wilson Reading System and the class in math I'm taking at Las Medanos College. Then I want to face a fear I've had all my life and finish a college English class." Shave hopes to get an AA degree in a field of nursing. She adds, "My son, Zach, is my inspiration. I want to have the confidence to read to Zach and help him be a strong reader when he grows up. My current income barely covers my cost for gas to Project Second Chance and to school and doesn't cover childcare when my mom is not available. This grant will help provide for those needs." Shavae's tutor, Sue Kling-

man, says, "It's a joy to work with Shavae. She's so motivated. I'm very impressed with the progress she has made."

Sheila Wahab has an entirely different story. A native of Afghanistan, she came to the United States with her husband in 1995. Now divorced, she is raising her 15-year-old son and working as a Montessori teaching assistant. "I was a nurse in my native country, but it takes a lot of training to become a nurse here, so I needed a career for which I can complete the requirements more quickly. I love working with young children, and I have almost completed the Early Childhood Education training program at DVC. My goals are to improve my English reading and writing skills. Project Second Chance is helping me achieve this. In the fall, I will begin course work to become a formally trained Montessori teacher. This grant will help pay for transportation costs, study supplies, and college expenses," Wahab explains. When her son enters college, she hopes to attend nursing school to secure an American nursing degree.

Rachelle Norton participates in the Opportunity Junction training. A homemaker, she currently attends Merritt College to complete her AA degree. She looks forward to a career in Environmental Studies and Waste Management. Manager of Professional Development for Opportunity



BOBBIE DODSON
Rachel Norton, Shavae Payton, and Sheila Wahab were among the women awarded scholarships by the Orinda Woman's Club.

Junction, Michelle Stewart said, "We train 60 women per year in three seven-month classes which concentrate on computer and other skills needed for administrative careers. We also feel 'Staff of Life' skills such as getting to work on time, and dressing appropriately are important."

The Orinda Woman's Club Community Service Committee chairwoman, Gail Roche Van Wye, said, "Talking with these women is an inspiration, and often the money we provide makes the difference as to whether they can continue to improve their skills so they can earn enough to support themselves. Another example is the six young women who were referred to

[SEE CLUB page 18]

Make-A-Wish Fundraiser Coming to Lamorinda

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Since 1980, the Make-A-Wish Foundation has given hope, strength and joy to children with life-threatening medical conditions. From granting that first wish to make one young boy's dream to be a police officer come true, the organization has evolved into a well-known nonprofit that grants a child's wish in the United States every 40 minutes.

Now the organization will have a local presence with a fundraising event at Saint Mary's College in Moraga. The Walk for Wishes offers a unique opportunity to help raise funds and awareness for the program. The 5K walk/fun run takes place on Saturday, June 4, at 9 a.m. Registration begins at 8 a.m. The moderately easy walk is designed to be wheelchair and stroller-friendly.

Wish children and their families, along with friends and supporters of Make-A-Wish, will participate in the walk. There will also be music, refreshments and kid



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Unidentified walkers from a previous Make-A-Wish fundraiser.

activities.

The registration fee for the June 4 walk is \$25. For more information on the event, call 415-982-9474 or email events@sfwish.org. You can find out more about the Make-A-Wish foundation at www.walkforwish-esbayarea.org.

AAUW Fundraiser Funds Summer Camp Scholarships

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

The Orinda, Lafayette, Moraga branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) has created a fun, educational and entertaining event that will fund week-long summer camps for local seventh grade girls.

"Life in the Lafayette Garden" takes place May 14 and features garden tours

sponsored and designed by John Montgomery Landscape Architects. The event includes outdoor cooking and urban farming demonstrations, light refreshments, live music, and docent-led tours of five Lafayette gardens.

To encourage young women to consider careers in science, technology, engineering and math, the California AAUW established Tech Trek camps. These week-long

[SEE FUNDRAISER page 18]

Orinda Junior Women's Club Announces Winners of Youth Ink 2011

By LISA RODRIGUEZ
Contributing Writer

The Orinda Junior Women's Club (OJWC) is pleased to announce the winners of Youth Ink, an annual creative writing contest open to all sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students who live or attend school in Orinda.

Each Youth Ink submission was read and critiqued by an esteemed panel of local professional writers comprised of Ann Manheimer, Melissa Manlove, and Yvonne Prinz.

The 2011 Youth Ink winners are: First Place, Prize of \$250: Gabriel Moran, OIS, Grade 7, for "The Burdens of Trojuma"; Second Place, Prize of \$125: Kate Nerone, OIS, Grade 6, for "Swimming Upstream"; and Third Place, Prize of \$75: Riley Hummel, OIS, Grade 7, for "Silver Doors."

In addition, the following individuals were selected by the judges to receive an honorable mention: Katherine Cane, OIS, Grade 6, "My Best Friend (If you really knew me, you would know that I love my dog, Maddie)"; Paul Cane, OIS, Grade 8, "The Alexander Parker Cattle Ranch"; Hannah Fishlow, OIS, Grade 6, "Athlete";


Olivia Fishlow, OIS, Grade 6, "Who I Really Am"; Jessica Guo, OIS, Grade 6, "But If You Really Knew Me..."; Haley Lewis, OIS, Grade 7, "Super Siblings"; Anna Saldinger, OIS, Grade 8, "She Isn't Real"; Clarissa Sandvik, OIS, Grade 7, "Strangers"; Christian Schillinger, OIS, Grade 6, "The Day I Learned"; and Aoife Tejada, OIS, Grade 7, "If You Really Knew Me."

All other participants will receive a gift certificate for Loard's Ice Cream in Orinda.

"This year's Youth Ink participants approached the *But if you Really Knew Me...* theme with honesty and creativity," said Molly Griffin Wilson, president of the Orinda Junior Women's Club. "We were particularly impressed with the number of sixth grade writers who participated this year, and we hope to see this trend continue in the future."

Generous cosponsors of Youth Ink include The Orinda Association, Orinda Community Foundation, and Orinda Books. The Orinda Junior Women's Club welcomes additional sponsorships to ensure continued success.

Youth Ink winners were honored at an awards ceremony and reading at the Orinda Library auditorium.




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DISASTER PREPAREDNESS/COMMUNITY EVENTS

Why We Must Be Prepared for Disaster

By REBECCA KUNZMAN
Orinda Citizen Corps Council

Chile, New Zealand and Japan are countries that have made major efforts to prepare for disaster and recent events have shown that even with preparation, a disaster causes widespread devastation. While we live in earthquake country, we also face the threat of wildfires, floods, landslides and terrorism.

So, are you ready? Surely, you don't think it won't happen here. The latest estimate from UC Berkeley is that the likelihood of a major event on the Hayward fault is now 99 percent in the next 30 years. We do not expect a Richter magnitude 9 earthquake or tsunami here in Orinda, but we need to prepare for a magnitude 7-8 earthquake epicentered in this densely populated area.

At best, we would be without gas, electricity and water for a week. At worse, it can be much longer. Many of Japan's devastated areas are still without these vital lifelines after a month! Do you have your water, food and supplies to take care of your household? Do you have first aid and medical supplies so that you could take care of injuries when help cannot reach you? Do you have a plan that allows your

family and friends to know what to do and where everyone will be? Do you have a communication plan with an out-of-area contact number where everyone can check in and find out how other family members are and where they are? Do you have and know how to use FRS and/or Ham radios to communicate with your family, neighbors and the City Emergency Operation Center? Are you ready?

Our community is very fortunate. We have more than 600 trained Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members in Lamorinda and ongoing training classes at St. Mary's College (lamorinda-cert.org). There are more than 150 organized neighborhood groups in Orinda and the Orinda Citizen Corps Council is available to help you organize your neighborhood (rkunzman@comcast.net). You can take classes and get a license to use a Ham radio (mheman@smas.com) right here in Orinda.

The big earthquake is overdue, and everyone needs to be ready. Start now! Go to the Orinda Association website or office and order a Red Cross 72 hour survival pack for your home and the smaller pack for your cars and office. You don't drive your car without insurance so please, don't live in earthquake country without being prepared.

National Bike to Work Day – May 12



SALLY HOGARTY
Karl Strand used his skateboard to get to Giorietta Elementary School during last year's Bike to Work day.

Join neighbors and friends in the 17th Annual National Bike to Work Day. Funded by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and such local sponsors

as Kaiser Permanente, REI and Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the event takes place May 12. An energizer station will be at the Bev Mo parking lot at Moraga Way and Brookwood Road from 6 – 8 a.m. on that day.

For more information, go to www.511.org.

– Sally Hogarty, Editor

EFO Announces Orinda Eats

The Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO) has partnered with local restaurants to help fund local schools. Each month one or more local restaurants will donate 15-20 percent of meals on specific days to EFO. In April, Europa Hofbrau donated 20 percent on April 15 and for the month of May, La Cocina will donate 15 percent from meals purchased on May 8, 9 and 10 and Lava Pitt will donate 20 percent on May 31 and June 1. Just mentioned EFO when ordering. Enjoy!



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Therapeutic Riding Center Adds Covered Arena

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

It's a dream come true for the dedicated volunteers at the Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center as they broke ground on a new covered arena on April 16. "Now we can expand our program to year-round, increasing the number of lessons offered and students we serve," says executive director Mari Parino.

Located at 60 Don Gabriel Way in



SALLY HOGARTY
Carmen Reyes (R) and his sister Monica help break ground for the new covered arena

Orinda, Xenophon provides therapeutic riding to children with mental and physical disabilities in a safe and secure environment. "It's amazing to see what can be accomplished," Parino explains. "Riding



SALLY HOGARTY
Eleven-year-old **Jane Griebstein** has been taking lessons at Xenophon since she was five. She is riding 12-year-old **Wimbledon**.

the horses helps build trunk tone, balance, and cognitive skills. The warmth from the horse's body helps the rider's muscles relax as well."

Parino says that the horses undergo an intensive program that makes them comfortable with volunteers who walk beside the horse, helping the student stay safe and secure. The horses are also chosen for their size, steady movement, and calm disposition.

With the addition of the covered riding area, the riding lessons can continue throughout the year. "It was heartbreaking to see a rider make incredible strides in their physical abilities and self confidence and then have to stop over the winter," says Parino.

According to Xenophon board president Chris Legallet 115 donors raised the \$145,000 necessary to build the covered

[SEE XENOPHON page 23]



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BUSINESS BUZZ

Business Buzz Putting a Personal Face on Local Business

Valerie Hotz



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L.J. Wilson Construction

With 33 years experience as a general contractor, Walnut Creek native Larry Wilson brings a wealth of experience to residential home remodeling and addition projects. L.J. Wilson Construction serves Contra Costa County and specializes in kitchen and bath remodels. Unlike the cobbler whose children have no shoes, Wilson has devoted time to remodeling his own lovely Orinda abode, where he and his wife, Patricia, have lived for the past 11 years.

"We focus on one job at a time. We realize how intrusive remodeling is for the homeowner and make an extra effort to keep the invasiveness down to a minimum by keeping the area clean at the end of the day. My crew is friendly, and we have been together for many years. That makes a big difference for the homeowner," says Wilson. "It is important to me that we finish a project on time and within budget, which we accomplish routinely. An example of this is having the cabinetry on site before starting a kitchen remodel."

Most of Wilson's clients are word of mouth referrals from other satisfied clients. He works with local real estate agents as termite and home inspection reports come in for homes going on the market. "Realtors always recommend a homeowner have these reports done and take care of repairs before putting a home on the market. I handle repairs or refer to another specialist

if necessary."

Throughout his career Wilson has seen situations where homeowners undertook projects without having the expertise to complete it successfully. "I always advise people to learn what they are going to do



Larry Wilson focuses on "one job at a time."

before starting a project. Electrical can be a potential problem area and potentially very dangerous as well. I also advise homeowners to research a contractor, get references, and actually look at the work the contractor has done. Sometimes the lowest bid is not the best bid. It really pays to do your research," explains Wilson.

Wilson and his wife, Patricia, have been married 14 years. Together the couple has four adult children. "It is very peaceful now," smiles Larry. Patricia is a medical assistant who also has a seamstress

[SEE BUZZ page 14]

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Take Me Out to the Ball Park – In Orinda!

By WILL KNOX
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Orinda Baseball Association's 2011 Spring Season is in full swing. This year, 26 Orinda teams participate in the following categories: three Pony teams (ages 13-14), six Bronco teams (ages 11-12), nine Mustang teams (ages 9-10), and eight Pinto teams (ages 7-8).

Sponsored by Orinda Motors, OBA opening day festivities were held at Wagner Ranch with more than 400 Orinda families attending. There were many events such as a home run derby and a fastest pitch competition as well as contests where you could win such things as a free pitching or batting lesson with Jeff Pick or Mike Murphy or even a family pack to a Giant's

baseball game. Last year's champions were recognized and awards were handed out including the Curtis Bottomley award, the Will Newton award, and the Manager of The Year award.

In the OBA Pinto and Mustang divisions the competition is against other Orinda teams and two Piedmont teams. In the Bronco division, there is a house league where four Orinda teams play against each other and against Moraga and Piedmont teams. Also in Bronco, two additional teams play in weekly tournaments against other towns along the 680 corridor, such as Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, and Fremont. In the Pony division, the three teams always play against other towns.

There is one team that OBA has extra [SEE BASEBALL page 18]



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2011 CYO National Division Champions



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Santa Maria Catholic Church's eighth grade team went on to win the 2011 Catholic Youth Organization's championship with a 12-0 record. (top row: L-R) Coach **Peter Jackson**, **Andrew Lewis**, **Connor Jackson**, **Jack Kovalik**, **Michael Zheng**, and Coach **Scott Kovalik** (bottom row: L-R) **Matthew Tom**, **Kyle Weikert**, **David Becker**, **CJ Novogradac**, and **Mark Laughton**.

Brownie Troop Assembles "Birthday in a Bag"



BARBARA BOSTER

Sleepy Hollow Elementary School Brownie Troop #573, led by **Michelle Lehman** and **Jacque Childers**, celebrated the 99th birthday of the founding of the Girl Scout organization by assembling "birthdays in a bag" for children at the Monument Crisis Center. The Concord organization provides assistance and resources to low income and at risk families in Contra Costa County. The bags, which included all the ingredients for a fun birthday party, will be given to children who might not otherwise have the means to celebrate birthdays.



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ODYSSEY OF THE MIND

Orinda Teams Move on to World Competition

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Congratulations to Del Rey Elementary School's 5th Grade Odyssey of the Mind team and Miramonte High School's team. Both have qualified for the world competition in College Park, Maryland at the end of May.

consists of Edward Anaya, Jonathan Holobetz, Nick Luckenbach, Matt Mahoney, and Nikhil Shastri.

While Sleepy Hollow School's 4th and 5th grade teams placed first in the regional competition, they did not place high enough in the state competition to advance to the world competition. "Despite not moving on to the next competition, these two teams of



Miramonte High School's team moves on to the world competition. (L-R) Ann Pister, Ariel Cohen, Kathryn Butler, Caety Klingman, and TJ Barber. Not pictured: Melissa Chenok.

Sponsored by the Orinda Masonic Lodge #122, the Miramonte team consists of seniors TJ Barber, Kathryn Butler, Melissa Chenok, Ariel Cohen, Caety Klingman, and Ann Pister. All attend Miramonte High School except Barber, who is a senior at College Preparatory School in Oakland. In addition to the team advancing to the world competition, Caety Klingman was one of two students awarded the California Odyssey of the Mind scholarship. Led by coach Sid Luckenbach, the Del Rey team

girls did a remarkable thing," says Susan Warner. "It is very unusual for two separate teams from the same school to win as they have."

Odyssey of the Mind is an international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students from kindergarten through college. Team members apply their creativity to solve problems that range from building mechanical devices to presenting their own in-



Sleepy Hollow Elementary School's 4th grade team came in 9th in the state competition. (top row: L-R) Katie Lyons, Audrey Warner, Alison Eversole, Paige Millham, and Bridget Tague (bottom row: L-R) Jacqui Yuke and Gracie Guidotti.



Del Rey Elementary School's 5th grade team will compete at the world competition in Maryland at the end of May. (L-R) Jonathan Holobetz, Nick Luckenbach, Nikhil Shastri, Matt Mahoney, and Edward Anaya.

terpretation of literary classics. Thousands of teams from throughout the U.S. and from about 25 other countries participate in the program.

The teams are judged on a long-term

problem and a spontaneous problem. At the beginning of the school year, each team chooses one of the five given problems. They must solve that problem in an

[SEE ODYSSEY page 23]



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BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 9

business on the side. She is an avid flamenco dancer. In his free time, Larry plays golf and enjoys gardening. His many projects this spring include prepping his home for exterior painting. "There is always some sort of project going on here as we bring the house around," he adds.

Wilson provides free bids on remodeling and home additions. He can be reached at his office at 925-254-1884 or 925-818-1550. You may also email Larry at larry51@msn.com.

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April Matthews

As a founding member of the real estate team of Village Associates, April Matthews has seen many changes in the Lamorinda real estate market over the years. She speaks enthusiastically about the upswing in home sales this year, which she reports is much better than the past two years. "Buyer confidence is high. We are seeing several properties receive multiple offers at asking price. It is still a price sensitive market. Prices are definitely softer than in 2006, when it was at its height, but I believe we have stabilized some," explains Matthews.

In a turn for the better, buyers are confident and are able to secure loans. "Some lenders, but certainly not all lenders, are loosening up more and are lending at 85 percent loan to value ratio, and that is good news. There are buyers out there for homes

in Orinda. They want flat yards, a home that has been maintained and is in an updated condition," she adds.



VALERIE HOTZ

April Matthews says the local housing market is beginning to stabilize.

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"I like to help people prepare homes to sell. There are steps people can take to prepare their home for sale that will show it in the best possible way so it will attract buyers. It is a process to get a home ready to sell, and you only have one chance to make a great first impression. It has to look right and be priced right," explains Matthews. In addition to the stabilization of the single family home market, Matthews observes condominiums in the Lamorinda area are moving well this year. "There are not many condos on the market at this time in Moraga and Lafayette."

April Matthews and her husband, Gordon, have lived in Orinda since 1993. The couple's two daughters attended local schools. Lauren is a 2005 Miramonte High School graduate and is currently working at an apparel company in Los Angeles. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at Barnard College. Hillary is a 2008 Miramonte High School graduate and is currently a junior at Scripps College in Claremont. April has been a longtime community volunteer. She is a member of the board of the Educational Foundation of Orinda and maintains the Neighborhood Watch program in her neighborhood. She is a member of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce.

Enjoying the great outdoors in one of her main hobbies, and this may take the form of hiking or cycling. April's special interests include traveling when possible and oil painting and spending time with her daughters is a high priority. "I am focusing on business and especially enjoy helping buyers and sellers have a great transaction," she says.

For more information about April Matthews, visit the websites at www.dream-homelamorinda.com and www.village-

associates.com.

You may reach April at (925) 253-2147. The Village Associates office is located at 93 Moraga Way, Suite 103.

Orinda Travel Gets High Ratings

Originally established in 1971, Alan and Barbara Reader purchased Orinda Travel in 1994, back when it was one of the original tenants at Theatre Square. In 2002, this small business moved to its present location – facing Brookwood Road - at Suite 160 in Theatre Square. The office reflects a warm tropical theme with a bright yellow ceiling and sage green walls, where five agents are available to help put together your itinerary. Alan Reader obviously has a lot of enthusiasm for his work and is pleased to explain the advantages today's traveler enjoys by working with a small travel agency.

"There are a variety of different consortiums that travel agencies may belong to which enable an agent to offer more resources to a client. We belong to Signature Travel Network, a co-operative of 180 travel agency owners with 300 retail locations in the United States. Over 6,000 frontline agents are part of Signature Travel Network. So you can see, with so many knowledgeable people accessible to us, we are able to relatively quickly do the necessary research for our clients," explains



VALERIE HOTZ

Alan Reader and his wife Barbara purchased Orinda Travel in 1994.

Reader. "Our recommendation is for people to come in and talk with a professional who can put together the best vacation experience. Some people think the least expensive option is on the internet, which is not the case. Travel agents know the lay of the land," he adds.

Orinda Travel offers corporate and leisure travel services, specializing in Foreign Independent Travel, or (FIT). The FIT itinerary is a custom designed cruise or land experience. "We have the ability to locate an agent who has been to the destination and can put our client in touch with interesting people, which really heightens the

[SEE BUZZ 2 page 18]

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SCHOOLS / STUDENTS

John Nickerson New School Superintendent

By DAVID DIERKS
Staff Writer

John Nickerson has been appointed the Superintendent of the Acalanes Unified High School District (AUHSD). He will officially take the position on May 1, replacing John Stockton, who is retiring.

Nickerson graduated from Harvard's School of Economics and then taught in Kenya for two years. He returned to the United States and taught in Brooklyn, New York, before getting his masters and teaching credentials at UC Berkeley. He taught at Piedmont High School and Miramonte High School, before becoming associate principal of Campolindo High School and then principal of Acalanes High School. Since 2009, Nickerson has been the Associate Superintendent of Education Services of the AUHSD.

When asked about the future of the district, Nickerson said, "The primary challenge facing AUHSD, as well as all California public schools, stems from the



Superintendent John Nickerson.

state fiscal challenge. California funding for public schools has been cut drastically in recent years. Our current state funding is approximately 20 percent below the expected state allocation, and we anticipate additional cuts for the 2011-2012 school year. Our challenge is to navigate this budget crisis and maintain quality programs and high student achievement."

New Principal at Glorietta

by DAVID DIERKS
Staff Writer

Ron Langer has unanimously been approved by the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) board and appointed the principal at Glorietta School. Langer has been serving as the interim principal at Glorietta since January, when he stepped into the role because his predecessor, Wendy Sparks, had to take a medical leave. Langer said "It's a great community and a wonderful opportunity to enrich and expand on the experience of the kids. I look forward to getting to know the traditions of the school and building on them."

Langer has been involved in education since 1983, when he started as an elementary school teacher in the Hayward Unified School District. Sixteen years ago he moved to the OUSD and started working at Orinda Intermediate School (OIS). During his tenure at OIS, Langer served in many positions, including associate principal for the last five years.

Orinda Teen Advisory Council (OTAC) Sponsors the Orinda Teen Movie Night!

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1 (PG-13)

Saturday, May 14, 2011
7:30 p.m. - approx. 10:15 p.m.

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Food, Ice Cream, and Treats Available
- Loard's Ice Cream & Candies

Orinda Academy Spring Arts Festival - May 13



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dancers (above) from last year's Spring Arts Festival perform a modern dance. This year's festival takes place at the Orinda Library Theater on Friday, May 13 at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets can be obtained through the school at 254-7553. The Spring Arts Festival features all the performing and visual artists at Orinda Academy, including the musicians and singers of the jazz band, dancers, actors, faculty band, art class, and multimedia.

Orinda Academy To Add Sixth Grade Class For Fall 2011

By MIRIAM SHAFFER
Contributing Writer

Orinda Academy, a private, non-profit day school in Orinda, California for boys and girls announced the addition of a sixth grade class beginning with the Fall 2011 semester.

"We have had repeated requests from the community for a personalized, quality middle school program that includes a sixth grade," says Ron Graydon, founder and head of the school. "This will give families another option when choosing a middle school for their child, and will allow students to spend their entire middle school years with us and then continue on to a successful high school experience."

The sixth grade class will open in August

2011 when the fall term begins. Dedicated to a small class size with a low student-to-teacher ratio, Orinda Academy offers supervised homework time, study skills and organizational prep, counseling, academic coaching, personalized class placement and a nurturing, supportive and structured school environment.

Electives in music, art, dance, drama, PE and computers are part of the school's program. In addition, the Educational Adventures week long program gives students the opportunity to choose classes that include travel and other experiences beyond the classroom.

Orinda Academy is currently accepting applications for fall as well as summer school. For more information, go to: www.orindaacademy.org.

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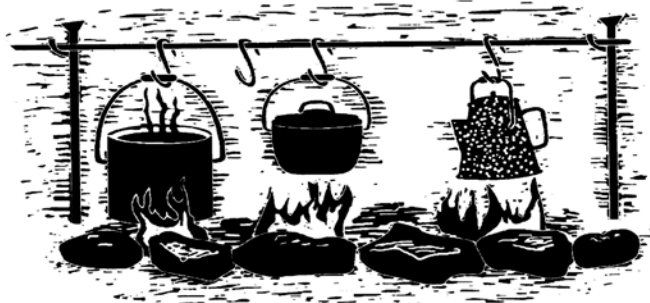
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Becoming More at Ease in China

By JULIE MCCORMACK
Contributing Writer

This is the fourth in a series of articles written by Julie McCormack on life in China. The Orinda mom, her husband Michael, and two children (9-year-old Conor and 8-year-old Erin) have moved to Chengdu, China for the year.

One Wednesday in December, I was asked to make 300 cookies by Saturday. Given that my toaster oven pan accommodates exactly six cookies, this was a great undertaking, but Conor's teacher asked me, and it was difficult to refuse.

I'd been wanting to volunteer and here was my opportunity, so I struggled to prepare multiple batches of gingerspice, shortbread and chocolate chip cookies. My arm got a fabulous workout; we don't own an electric mixer so I made do with a wooden spoon. This was for the school's Winter Festival, a traditional event celebrated on the winter solstice. Each class had a booth selling handmade items or food.

Around this time, Erin had her first playdate with a Chengdu Waldorf classmate, Zhong Xin Yue. They had a grand time. For the most part, Erin could say what she wanted to say. Zhong Xin Yue, like most of Conor and Erin's classmates, speaks little English. Conor still claims he has no friends at Chengdu Waldorf. This is not entirely true as Conor has many classmates with whom he plays soccer or basketball at

recess and before and after school. He also plays chess with some of them at lunch, as the kids must stay indoors after lunch for quiet time. In Erin's class (3rd grade), most of the kids still nap. This is a Chinese custom, so trying to get our kids' teachers to let them run around outside after lunch has been one of our losing battles at the school.

The kids are now speaking more and more Mandarin. They both know many colloquialisms. Zhong Xin Yue's mom and our neighbor both told me recently that Erin's Mandarin had improved significantly.

One of my favorite things about living in China is the convenience of many services. The neighborhood knife sharpener sits on the lane outside our apartment complex all day every Friday. He brings a chair, a bucket of water and his low-tech knife-sharpening equipment. Having lived with our three dull knives for several months, I was overjoyed the Friday I discovered him. He was meticulous about his job, and it took about 10 minutes to sharpen the three knives. He charged 10 yuan (\$1.50). Right next door to our local supermarket is the watch fixer who, along with his wife, conducts his business out of a 30-square-foot lean-to. First, I needed a new watchband. That set me back 20 yuan. The second time, I needed a new battery. It took about five minutes, and he interrupted his steaming bowl of beef noodles to change it. In addition to the knife sharpener and the watch fixer, there's a street side seamstress, shoeshine, pirated movie seller, and much more.

On Christmas Eve, my sister and her three kids arrived to spend 10 days with us. We traveled for a week in China – first to a small village near the town of Yangshuo. Near Guilin, Yangshuo is characterized by the strangely shaped Karst mountains that have been painted by Chinese artists for centuries. These unique geological formations are found throughout North and Southeast Asia, including Halong Bay, Vietnam and Phuket, Thailand. We stayed in a guesthouse a Dutch couple had converted from a 100-year old farmhouse. With its courtyard, lounge with fireplace and pleasant rooms, it was very charming. We rented bikes and cycled across the countryside through farms, villages and stunning scenery.

I've noticed an increasing nostalgia for the China I knew when I first visited the country over 20 years ago. This is puzzling as then everything was gray; restaurants had menus, but few dishes actually available and getting around was extremely difficult. It was distinctly China, though, and no other place felt like it. Now, much of



MICHAEL ROEMER
Julie McCormack and her children Conor and Erin show Julie's sister Celia and her children China's Great Wall. (back row L-R) Julie, Celia, Evan, Lindsay. (front row) Conor, Erin and Matthew.

China has developed to such an extent that there are few traces of the old, monotonous, slow China. The country, like countless other places worldwide, is becoming homogenized by globalization. In Yangshuo and the surrounding villages, most people are still farmers and life continues there as it has for centuries. Tourism has certainly intervened, but the rhythms of the locals have remained much the same.

Traveling with my sister and her kids was like being a celebrity: eight *wai guo ren* (foreigners) together – five of them kids ranging from 8 to 18. We found that when we would stop to photograph each other, many Chinese would snap pictures of us at the same time. They also asked if they could take pictures with us.

On New Year's Eve, we traveled to Beijing. The temperature ranged from 10 – 30 degrees Fahrenheit, and we felt like we never got warm. Although more places are heated than in Chengdu, many of the heating sources are less than adequate, and we kept hats and scarves on while eating many meals. We did a *hutong* (old alleyways) tour, and it was one of the highlights of the trip. Although we had to sit in a bicycle rickshaw and, therefore, become even

colder, seeing the *hutongs* and learning about their history was worth it. Most of the housing in the *hutongs* is government owned and rented to elderly people for tens of yuan per month (1 US dollar = ~6.6 yuan). Very few young people are willing to live in the *hutongs* as the housing has very low ceilings, no bathrooms and no central heating. The residents burn coal for their heat, and the smoke escapes through a 5" diameter hole near the ceiling. Bathrooms are down the alley. Descendants of previous owners have reclaimed some of the houses, and they have been allowed to take them over. Although I have read many articles describing how the *hutongs* had all but disappeared, they seemed to be everywhere and thriving.

Beijing is laden with old Chinese architecture and boasts neighborhood after neighborhood full of character. It also retains more of the "old China" feel. We did not see one Beijing taxi driver run a red light, make an illegal left turn, park on the sidewalk or commit any of the numerous traffic violations that Chengdu drivers risk on an hourly basis. Beijing is orderly and Chengdu seems like the wild and unruly

[SEE CHINA page 18]



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All Orinda Band Concert Featured School Bands



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rick Meyer conducts the Miramonte High School Symphonic Band at the All Orinda Band Concert on March 30. The annual event features bands from every school, including a combined elementary school band led by David Uyeno, two bands from Orinda Intermediate School led by Travis Gould, and the above Miramonte band. Works performed ranged from traditional marches to Scottish dance music to classical and much more. The instrumental music programs in Orinda schools are funded by the Educational Foundation of Orinda through generous donations from the community and parents.

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LOCAL RESIDENTS



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Orinda resident Clarice Judah is known for her sense of humor and positive attitude at the Clay Arts Guild studio where she creates sculptures and ceramic artwork.

Orinda Potter Uses Her Art To Help Fight Cancer

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

As a potter, Orinda resident Clarice Judah believes in facing life head on and finding ways to grow, change and take risks regardless of what obstacles come your way. “The Big C is a bummer to say the least,” says Judah, who has been bat-

ting chronic leukemia for 30 years. “But I prefer to consider the “C” as clay instead of cancer. I find working with clay to be very healing.”

A long time member of the Clay Arts Guild (CAG), Judah was recently honored with a Lifetime Membership to the guild. As a lifetime member, she joins an elite

[SEE POTTER page 20]

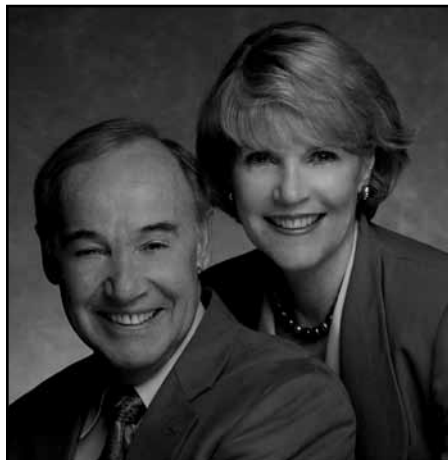
Local Couple Take Their Medical Show Into Cyberspace

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

After more than a decade on the air, local icons, Vicki and Len Saputo, have bid farewell to their KEST radio show. “Prescriptions for Health” has long been a staple for the latest medical, natural and holistic treatments.

A highly respected member of the medical community, Len Saputo, MD, is a 1965 graduate of Duke University Medical School, who served on the staff at John Muir Hospital for many years until Vicki, an RN at John Muir, became seriously ill. When western medicine could not determine the cause of her life-threatening attacks, the Saputos turned to more non-traditional means. Thanks to an extensive Chinese method of determining allergies, Vicki’s debilitating allergic reactions were stopped.

The couple began investigating more holistic methods for diagnosis and treatment that combined with Western methods would benefit patients. They developed a new paradigm know as integral-health medicine. They founded the Health Medicine Forum in 1994 and went on to found the Health Medicine Center in Walnut Creek. The center has a reputation for helping people with health problems that have been considered unsolvable and often receive referrals from physicians Len worked with at John Muir.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Len and Vicki Saputo now have an Internet radio show.

In addition to the center and numerous books, the Saputos have also helped countless people through their radio show on KEST AM. But fans of the now defunct show need not worry. The Saputos will continue to share their vast medical knowledge through Internet radio. “Prescriptions for Health” will air each Friday at 8 a.m. with special Fast Track editions Monday through Friday at 6:30 a.m. The shows can be accessed at www.doctorsaputo.com. Archived shows will also be available on the site.

“We thank all our local listeners for their dedication to our show and for taking responsibility for their health,” says Vicki. “We look forward to taking them with us into cyberspace.”

Retired Nurse Continues to Help Those in Need

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

In 2008, Bert Sebila retired from his position as director of nursing in a Bay Area medical center and found himself with another career – volunteering in non-profit health care.

In addition to working part-time providing primary medical care to the uninsured at The Order of Malta Oakland Clinic, the Orindian works with the American Red Cross Bay Area Disaster Action Team and the Federal Disaster Medical Assistance team.

Sebila recently traveled with a team of 18 medical disaster workers to study Cuba’s Disaster Preparedness system as well as the country’s universal health care system.

“For a poor country, they have an effective system,” Sebila said, noting the country “spends lots of resources on emphasizing early intervention and prevention,” as opposed to our own country’s concentration on treating illnesses and developing technology. “It’s a whole different approach. I don’t see us doing that model, but there has to be some way to cover the uninsured. Ultimately, we are paying for them in our ERs,” he adds.

As part of his volunteer work with the Contra Costa County Medical Reserve Corps, Sebila does a variety of work, including staffing flu vaccine clinics and providing educational outreach programs. He is particularly excited about a program that teaches CPR to every 9th grader in the county. “The hope is that the kids will teach others,” he explains.

In his work with the Red Cross, Sebila has worked in an array of different scenarios. He was called to duty in response to Hurricane Gustav where he worked in rural areas surrounding Baton Rouge. He was one of two nurses stationed in one of the many shelters serving some 3 million people displaced by the disaster that caused \$6.6 billion dollars in damage.

Sebila also volunteered during the recent San Bruno fire, primarily helping response workers and fire fighting teams. His wife Carol is also a Red Cross disaster volunteer. She is a licensed clinical social worker, who teaches at Diablo Valley College. They often work in tandem to help area residents facing disasters.

“It’s a shock to people. They had everything, and now they’ve lost everything. The impact on kids is the hardest part. They are outside, in terror,” Sebila says, “It’s a nice



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bert and Carol Sebila with therapy dog Myrna.

feeling to get to help meet their immediate needs, such as shelter, food and clothing.” His face lights up when he tells the story of a 15-year-old girl whose *Quinceañera* gown was found in the rubble of her family home and rescued by firefighters.

Sebila originally got into nursing after graduating college with an accounting degree. He says he was lucky to volunteer with a first aid squad in New Jersey. “We were always in emergency rooms where I got to meet the nurses. I realized accounting was not where my true interest was,” Sebila continues. He enrolled in a nursing program at a hospital and found his passion.

Sebila says that besides helping the needy, his work at the free clinic in Oakland offers him the opportunity to “keep in touch with nursing – providing direct care to people.” It also gives him a chance to “mentor new nursing graduates who can’t find jobs” in the recession. Even though it might initially be difficult for graduating nurses now, Sebila is as staunch an advocate for the vocation as he is for the Red Cross. “Nursing is a great career, I loved it. I loved every minute of it.”

“The Red Cross helps “people in crisis,” Sebila explained, adding that the organization’s needs are as diverse as the people it serves. “There’s a volunteer job for everyone.” To find out how to help, visit www.redcrossbayarea.org.



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CONTINUATIONS

◆ BUZZ 2 from page 14

experience. Anytime you meet people for the first time, travel is a common denominator," says Reader. The Orinda community reflects an eclectic group of travelers. With Hawaii and Mexico the mainstays for the California travel industry, Reader points out his clients tend to go to Europe, Vietnam, Cambodia, Bangkok, as well as a lot of upscale cruising experiences that include Alaska, Southeast Asia, South America and the Mediterranean.

"One of the best values today is Mexico, because they want tourists to come back. Tourism accounts for a significant portion of the gross national product of Egypt, employing some two and a half million people. River barge operators on the Nile are anxious to get back to business, and it appears a lot of tour companies are opening up again for business in Egypt. We want our clients to be aware of the conditions that exist now and, of course, we work with professional tour operators who would not send clients in unless they were comfortable doing so," explains Reader. Clients looking for unusual experiences make it interesting for Reader and the agents at Orinda Travel. Excursions into the Gobi desert and unpopulated parts of China count as some of the more unusual destinations Reader has seen over the years. Five agents at Orinda Travel, Ann Baldwin, Cindy Olsen, Sylvia Victoria, Rosemary Long and Jan McDonald, offer decades of experience in the industry.

The consumer service rating company Checkbook gave Orinda Travel a 100 percent rating in five out of the six criteria included in its survey, with a 91 percent rating for the category of letting a client know the cost early on. This organization can be accessed at www.checkbook.org

Orinda Travel is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. For more information, visit the website at www.orindatravel.com or give Alan Reader a call at 254-0757. You may also email to areader@orindatravel.com.

◆ MOFD from page 5

lines as the relevant boundaries, FAIR has calculated the cost per firefighter by dividing the tax revenues by the number of firefighters stationed in each city. The result may show that the City of Orinda may pay more taxes toward the MOFD, but this is irrelevant, because these numbers ignore where our fire district operates, which has nothing to do with city boundaries. Orindans pay more for fire than Moragans, but that's a totally irrelevant number, since everyone in California pays the same 1

◆ CLUB from page 9

us through the Independent Living Skills Program. They are all high school students and their class schedule didn't allow them to be here today, but we will present their awards at a school recognition banquet. They are reaching adulthood through the foster care system and thus are faced with financial insecurity and limited support for their post high school educational expenses. Our grants provide a modest opportunity to begin a college education or attend a skills training program," Van Wye explained. "This year, we had applicants from three agencies: The Independent Living Skills program for older foster children; Project Second Chance, which teaches adults to read; and Opportunity Junction, which helps in transitioning homemakers into the work world.

Along with the recipients already mentioned, Sherece Bailey, Andrea Lee-Ann Evans, Judy Henley, Tatiana Hill, Nalani Kaisa, Tupekai Mangal, Lawhawn Moore, Talie Morales, and Traci Stephen were awarded \$1,000 educational grants.

◆ CAR CLINIC from page 7

they may be worn and how they affect the performance of the vehicle." Participants will be shown how to become more preventative in the care of their vehicle. The emphasis will be on how to achieve good communication between the consumer and the car care provider.

The clinic will last a couple of hours and refreshments will be provided. After the clinic, there will be a question and answer session.

To sign up for the event, visit www.orindamotors.com. Registration forms are due by Friday, May 13. The clinic is free of charge, however, a donation of gas gift cards or cash will be accepted to help the Senior Helpline Services charity defray expenses of their volunteer drivers. For more information about Senior Helpline Services, visit www.seniorhelpline.net.

percent tax rate."

Retired attorney, Carl Weber, questioned FAIR's ability to put their recommendations into practice. "No one, to my knowledge has addressed the questions, 'Can this be done?' 'Is it legal?' and 'How do you go about doing it?'" I assume that the MOFD, as an independent board, will oppose, unanimously, any change to its structure. I make the same assumption about the representatives from Moraga," said Weber. "The most important document that talks about the issues we're dealing with today is the tax apportion made by the County Auditor every year. The Tax Code of the State of California obligates the County Audit Controller to establish these percentages. If FAIR can't convince the Audit Controller to change the numbers, there aren't going to be any changes. What

Summer Drama Camp at Holy Shepard

Doug Cole brings his summer drama camp to Holy Shepard Lutheran Church on Moraga Way this summer. The camp, for students entering grades 1-3, takes place August 1-12 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

According to Cole, the camp includes creative drama and theater games, comedy, improv and storytelling. The camp culminates in a production of an original fairy tale by Cole entitled *The Return of the Magic Drops*.

Cole teaches drama and storytelling at 10 East Bay schools including Glorietta Elementary in Orinda. For more information on the camp, go to www.dougsdrama.com.

– Sally Hogarty, Editor

◆ CHINA from page 16

west by comparison. The people still push, though, and our 18-year old niece Lindsay became particularly irritated with this. When contrasting Beijing and Chengdu I thought about breaking the rules and why the Chinese seem to flaunt so many rules on a daily basis. It's survival. So many rules and regulations and an ever-present government circumscribe their lives. The only way to function in this environment is to privately thumb the government by breaking little rules whenever possible. My own behavior mirrors it: A rule follower by nature, after five months in China, I now jump at the opportunity to break any rule.

As we passed the time sightseeing, we encountered hawkers selling everything from Chinese purses to chopstick sets to t-shirts at the Great Wall. At one point, my sister Celia turned to me and said, "What does *bu yao* mean? You say it all the time!" *Bu yao* means don't want. After that, *bu yao*

became Celia's one Chinese phrase of the trip, while *mei ling guan* was Lindsay's. *Mei ling guan* means American Consulate. We live right near the American Consulate in Chengdu, so we often tell taxi drivers to take us there. At one point, Lindsay realized that if her family became separated from us, they'd have no idea how to get a hold of us, find us or find our apartment, so she memorized *mei ling guan* so that they could get back to our apartment, if needed.

Traveling around with Celia and her kids, as with Michael's parents, drove home to us how unbelievably opaque and difficult this country can be to navigate if you do not speak the language.

I thought we'd descend into a funk after my sister and her kids left but, surprisingly, we did not. There seems to have been a shift in our outlook here. Maybe it's that we hit the halfway point of our stay here or maybe getting out of Chengdu for a week did it, but we are in a rhythm now and life in Chengdu is OK.

◆ FUNDRAISER from page 9

math and science camps are held at various college campuses throughout the state. According to AAUW-OML president-elect Deana Vick Davison, proceeds from the Lafayette garden event will be used to send four local girls to the Grace Hopper Tech Trek camp on the Stanford University

campus.

Tickets to "Life in the Lafayette Garden" are priced at \$25 and can be purchased from May 1 – 13 at Across the Way at the Moraga Shopping Center.

You can also order online at www.aauwoml.org/techtrek.html. For additional information, call 925-376-5155.

is proposing."

Sperling added "I remember the original FAIR presentation back in January of 2010, which resulted in these three agencies getting together to research it further. However, after our series of meetings it does appear that their methodology is flawed." Worth ended the committee's discussion by saying, "I want to extend my deep appreciation to Moraga and to the MOFD for participating in this process together. As a result, we have a much closer working relationship with the fire district and with Moraga."

To find out when the Orinda City Council will take up this topic, go to www.cityoforinda.org and click on City Council.

◆ BASEBALL from page 12

high expectations for this year: the Bronco 680 11 and under team, called the Desperados. Last year, as a Mustang All-Star Team, they went further than any OBA team ever in post-season sanction play. This year, they and other OBA teams hope to surpass that accomplishment and possibly go on to the World Series in Chesterfield, VA this summer.

OBA is a fun part of the Orinda community that everyone should appreciate. It truly is a great association to take your young baseball dream on a journey.

To view the OBA game schedules go to www.obabaseball.com.

Will Knox is a sixth-grade student at Orinda Intermediate School and a contributing writer to The Orinda News.



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The Orinda farmers' market got a head start on the seasonal market scene this year, opening on the first Saturday in April. With a full month of market shopping already under our belts, we can expect May to usher in more of what's in season and fresh from the local farms.

This year is cause for a little extra excitement as we celebrate 15 seasons of being part of the community. The market has re-located a few times but the current location on Orinda Way in Orinda Village has turned into the ideal setting for growers, vendors and shoppers to enjoy their Saturday mornings.

Spring brings with it the bundles of asparagus and baskets of cherries along with

plenty of salad greens, the first cherries, and fava beans. And it also stars one of my favorite vegetables – peas. All types of peas are on my *carte du jour* while they're at their best.

Pea shoots are a real treat when I can find them at the market. (Ledesma Farm stand is a good place to look!) Sweet and tender these make a delicious statement in salads, soups, pasta and on their own as a side dish. A few weeks after the peas are planted, the 6 to 8 inches of young pea shoots, leaves and tendrils, are ready to harvest and bring to market. If the plant is already on its way, only the top tender portions are cut off of the vine and sold as pea shoots. Once left on their own, the plant will continue to grow



BARBARA KOBSAR

Dan Carlson and Mitch Zehnder of Bistro Blends have a delicious Meyer Lemon Oil perfect for preparing many fresh vegetables.

to produce pea pods as long as the weather remains relatively cool.

Not all pea pods are created equal. Some like the snow peas are completely edible – pod and all - while other pods just keep the peas cozy inside until they're popped open. Edible pod peas open the pea season in March and April followed by shelling peas in May. Field peas are a particular variety grown specifically to be dried (they usually split along a natural seam which is why they're called split peas).

The snow pea (or Chinese pea pod or sugar pea) is one type of edible pod pea with tiny flat seeds inside a flat, tender 3 to 4 inch pod. If left to mature on the vines too long, the pods become too tough to eat - the peas are still edible but tend to be a little starchy tasting. My choice of edible pod pea is the sugar snap pea (like those found at the McKeown Farm stand) - a cross between green garden peas and snow peas. They resemble small garden peas with thicker pod walls and plumper peas than snow peas. The bright green sugar snap pea pods are harvested before reaching full maturity so that the peas remain very tender.

To prepare edible pod peas, break off both ends and remove any strings before cooking briefly in stir fries, steaming for a side dish or using raw in salads. I like to finish off a serving of peas (or spinach or chard) with some delicious Meyer Lemon Oil from the Bistro Blends stand – stop by to talk with Dan or Mitch.

Green, garden or English peas all refer to the same variety and are found inside inedible pods. Harvest begins when the pods are filled out but when the peas are still considered immature. You shouldn't be able to actually see the shape of the pea inside the pod. If the pod is bulging with peas, they'll be starchy and tough.

Another spring must-have is rhubarb. Whether it's for the proverbial strawberry and rhubarb pie or for jam-making, it's available for only a short time at the Ratto Farm stand at the market. The Red Crimson variety has the eye-appeal and the greener Victoria variety extends the season, but they really taste the same in their straight-from-the-garden state – tart! But that tartness is

what makes them perfect candidates for pies, jams and chutneys.

Rhubarb stalks come to market without their beautiful large, heart shaped leaves. The leaves are impressive to look at, but contain oxalic acid and may be toxic. If you like to have a supply of rhubarb all year long it freezes extremely well. Wash the stalks, cut into 1 inch pieces and seal in freezer bags to pop in the freezer where it keeps for up to a year.

The Orinda Farmers' Market is open ev-

Wagner Ranch Nature Area's Wildlife Festival



PHOTOS BY SALLY HOGARTY

(top) Dr. James Fiararone of ALMA (Academy of Language, Music and Arts) accompanies Annaluna Giacich, who is singing in Italian. Helen Holobetz shows Erin Mohr and Taryn Lausch how to make paper. These events plus a solar oven demonstration, pond study, animal track rubbings, a scavenger hike and more were part of the 10th annual Earth Day/Wildlife Festival held at Wagner Ranch Nature Area on April 17.



BARBARA KOBSAR

Noel Ledesman always has a good selection of peas.

ery Saturday from 9 am to 1 pm on Orinda Way in front of the Community Park and Rite Aid. For more information visit the website at www.cccfm.org or call the market hotline at 925-431-8361.

Barbara Kobsar, The Seasoned Shopper, can be reached at atckitchen@aol.com.

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PERFORMING ARTS

Clean-up/Reuse Days Take Place in May for Orinda

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

A program funded by Central Contra Costa Waste Authority partners a waste hauler, a recycling company, and reuse organizations to collect usable discards from local communities and redistribute them to those in need.

The reuse and clean-up program has been operating for over 10 years and prevents nearly 10,000 tons of material from being deposited in the landfill. Once picked up, rescued goods are distributed to social service and humanitarian aid organizations serving low-income families, migrant farm workers, and victims of natural disasters.

Orinda and Moraga are scheduled for May this year. Residents will be notified about the on-going pickups throughout the month.

Residents can put out various reusable

items such as furniture, clothing, sports equipment, and household goods in front of their homes. Pacific Rim Recycling will pick them up and deliver them to a warehouse in Benicia. The East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse then sorts and collects items for redistribution to local, national and international non-profit organizations and social service agencies. Electronics are separated out and recycled with non-reusable items disposed of by Allied Waste.

Local agencies receiving the reusable goods include: Contra Costa Interfaith Coalition, Boy Scouts of America, Benicia/Vallejo Humane Society, Contra Costa County Juvenile Hall, Contra Costa County Child Protective Services, Stand Against Domestic Violence, and Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation.

For further information, go to www.wastediversion.org.

◆ POTTER from page 20

group of dedicated artists who give of their time and talent. "All of us knew that Clarice would be a shoo-in," says CAG member Gary Guglielmineo. "She has been an ardent and involved supporter taking on numerous jobs over the years including chair of our twice yearly sale, serving as PR person, organizing the monitors who oversee our workshop, doing clean-up and much more."

Judah is grateful to Civic Arts Education (CAE), where she takes classes, and CAG for helping her "play in the mud" all these years. "The freedom that clay gives me is what takes me to a place where nothing else seems to be important except creating and seeing the outcome."

Her pottery and quilting give her purpose Judah explains. "As a potter, I can appreciate the sophistication of intention as well as

accident in my work. One learns the correct way and then, breaks the rules."

Judah learned early to break the rules. When her mother was teaching her to quilt and encouraging her to use the traditional pattern "flying geese" as a border, her daughter obliged but her geese were flying backwards.

Judah will join over 50 artists in showing her work at CAE and CAG spring art sale, April 29 (5-9 p.m.); April 30 (10 a.m. – 8 p.m.); and May 1 (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.). The sale takes place in two locations: Shadelands Art Complex, 111 N. Wiget Lane and the CAG Studio in Civic Park, 1365 Civic Dr. The Shadelands location will feature paintings, photography, jewelry, textiles and more while the Civic Park location will offer a wide variety of ceramics and sculptures including many of Judah's work.

For more information on the spring art sale, call 925-943-5846.

Local Chamber Symphony Hopes to Form Lamorinda Board

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Providing educational programs and concerts at several East Bay locations, the Pacific Chamber Symphony hopes to expand its role in Lamorinda.

Conductor and former Orinda resident, Lawrence Kohl is currently looking for local residents to form a Lamorinda board. "We have a board in Livermore where we perform at the Bankhead Theatre, but we also perform at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church and have presented musical programs in Lamorinda schools, it just makes sense that we also have a local board," says Kohl, who now lives in Moraga.

With a local board, Kohl envisions the symphony becoming more involved with local schools and offering additional concerts. "The California educational code requires that students learn about the elements of music," says Kohl. "We put together fun themes and a small group of musicians and introduce those elements in an entertaining and educational way." One such theme is "Postcards from Around the World," in which Kohl and his professional musicians teach the various musical scales. Often after teaching a program, Kohl says the schools realize an increase in their music programs. "We also invite students to our local concerts and give special clinics and master classes to students," he adds.

Currently, the Pacific Chamber Symphony offers three yearly concerts in several locations including Hayward, Pleasanton, Livermore, Castro Valley, San Leandro, Napa and Lafayette. "We are very fortunate that in addition to the classics, we have



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Lawrence Kohl conducts the Pacific Chamber Symphony.

music especially arranged and composed for us," Kohl says. With a group of up to 35 professional musicians plus various guest artists, the chamber symphony is able to perform a wide variety of work. "I try to have a particular theme or thread that runs through the concert. Sometimes it might be concertos by the same composer or it might be something much more subtle but equally satisfying," explains Kohl.

On May 22 at 2 p.m., the group will present a brass ensemble concert at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. From Sousa's "Stars and Stripes" to Copeland's "Fanfare for the Common Man," the Pacific Chamber Symphony closes out its 22nd season with a historic tour from 16th century brass works through the great marches and lush symphonic brass of the 20th century.

For tickets to the May concert or to inquire about joining the Lamorinda board, go to www.pacificchambersymphony.org or call 800-838-3006.

Auditions for Orinda Idol Take Place May 19-21

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Local performers are gearing up for the Orinda Arts Council's Orinda Idol auditions. All students living or attending school in Lamorinda, grades K-12, are invited to participate. Registration has been on-going since April and those wishing to audition must register by May 1. Registration forms and parental permission forms are available on the website, www.orindaartscouncil.org.

The actual auditions will take place May 19-21 at Orinda Intermediate School. Audition times will be emailed to those auditioning around May 8.

A sought-after title, past Orinda Idols have performed throughout Orinda at a variety of community events, including the Orinda Association's 4th of July parade and the Orinda Chamber of Commerce's Dine Around Town event. Winners in each age

category also receive a cash prize.

Each student or group will sing up to two minutes at the audition and should bring an instrumental recording on a CD or iPod to accompany their vocal performance.

Singers will be judged by music and performing arts teachers and professionals from the community with up to 10 finalists and two runners-up selected from each of the six age categories. Special seminars will be held June 15-18 to help finalists and runners-up prepare for the final competition held at the Orinda Theatre on September 11.

As in past years, the winners in the final competition will be determined by a combination of popular vote and three judges. Local media celebrities will moderate the competition and the three judges will be prominent Bay Area music and performance professionals.

For more information on the competition, go to www.orindaartscouncil.org.

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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

MAY

- 1 **Miramonte High School**, JF Kapnek 8th Annual Family Fun Run, 750 Moraga Way, 9 a.m., featuring races for children and adults, music, activities and crafts and brunch. Proceeds benefit the JF Kapnek Trust's HIV/AIDS prevention programs in Zimbabwe. Register online at www.active.com (keyword: Kapnek) or visit www.jfkapnektrust.org. **California Shakespeare Theater** is taking reservations for its summer season, June 1 through Oct. 16. First show *Titus Andronicus* by William Shakespeare. Call 510-548-9666 or visit www.calshakes.org.
- 3 **Cal Shakes Literary Society**, a discussion group led by Shakespearian scholar Philippa Kelly and other California Shakespeare Theater members. Meets Tuesdays through June 7 at Lafayette Library and Learning Center, 3491 Mount Diablo Blvd., 7 to 9 p.m. Wine and cheese will be served. Register at www.calshakes.org. Call 510-809-3293 or email learn@calshakes.org.
- 4 **Orinda Books** hosts Dr. Ricki Robinson who will discuss and sign copies of her book, *Autism Solutions: How to Create a Healthy and Meaningful Life for Your Child*, 276 Village Square, 7 p.m. Call 254-7606.
- 6 **First Friday Forum**, business writer Justin Fox, Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Dr., Lafayette, 1:30 p.m., 283-8722.
- 7 **Orinda Books** hosts a double bill: Janet Dawson will discuss her new mystery, *Bit Player: a Jeri Howard Mystery*, and Kelli Stanley will talk about her new historical thriller, *The Curse-Maker*, 276 Village Square, 2 p.m. Call 254-7606.
- 8 **Orinda Eats**, LaCocina donates 15 percent of meal purchases to Educational Foundation of Orinda. Also on May 9 and 10, Lava Pitt will donate 20 percent on May 31 and June 1.
- 11 **Second Wednesday Book Group** will read and discuss *Blindness* by Jose Saramago, 3 p.m., Orinda Books, 276 Village Square. New members welcome. Call 254-7606.
- 13 **Orinda Academy Spring Arts Festival**, featuring visual and performing arts, 1 and 7 p.m., 254-7553.
- 14 **Orinda Teen Advisory Council** presents Teen Movie Night, Orinda Library Auditorium. Email orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com. **Women's Car Care Clinic**, Orinda Motors, 1 p.m., sign up at www.orindamotors.com.
- 17 **World Affairs Book Group** will discuss *Country Driving: A Chinese Road Trip* by Peter Hessler, 3 p.m., Orinda Books, 276 Village Square. New members welcome. Call 254-7606.
- 20 **Orinda Ballet Academy**, *The Sleeping Beauty*, Orinda Library Theater, 6:30 p.m. Also May 21 (1 and 5:30 p.m.) and May 22 (1:30 p.m.), 254-2445. **Orinda Connects**, Community Public Services Fair, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Orinda Library Plaza. A community fair to introduce both new and long time residents to Orinda's city and public safety services, utility providers, local non-profits and clubs, www.cityoforinda.org.
- 22 **Pacific Chamber Symphony**, brass ensemble concert, Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 2 p.m., www.pacificchambersymphony.org or 800-838-3006.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. The library will be closed on Sunday and Monday, May 29 and 30, for the Memorial Day holiday.

- 2 **Tell It! Tales for Preschoolers**: A storyteller brings adapted myths and folktales to life for 3- to 5-year-olds, Tutoring Room, 11 a.m. Also May 9, 16 and 23.
- 3 **Origami for Everyone**, learn how to fold boxes and animals in this Japanese paper art. For ages 7 and up, Tutoring Room, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. All skill levels welcome. Also May 10, 17, 24 and 31.
- 7 **Friends of the Library Book Sale** Bookshop and Sorting Room, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 10 **Peek-A-Boo Time** with songs, stories, rhymes and rhythm for newborns through 1-year-olds and their caregivers, 11:30 to 11:55 a.m. Also May 17, 24 and 31.
- 14 **Saturday Morning Live**, story time for 3- to 5-year-olds and their caregivers, Picture Book Area, 11 to 11:30 a.m. Also May 21 and 28.
- 17 **Toddler Lapsit**, stories, songs and fingerplays for 1- to 3-year-olds and their caregivers, 10 to 10:30 a.m. and 10:30 to 10:55 a.m. Drop-ins welcome, but please limit attendance to once per week. Also May 18, 24, 25 and 31.
- 20 **Mystery Book Club** members discuss their favorite genre, Tutoring Room, 3 to 4:30 p.m.
- 25 **Just Say What You Think Book Club** for middle school students who share their reactions to thought-provoking books, Tutoring Room, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. This month's book is *The Mysterious Stranger* by Mark Twain. **Yupik Eskimo Dance: Stories in Dance and Slides**, Patricia Bulitt will share her experiences with the people of the Far North, 6:30 p.m.
- 26 **Storytelling for Adults**, hosted by the Contra Costa Tale Spinners, share your own story or just come to listen, 7 to 9 p.m.

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

CLUB MEETINGS

- Diablo Star Chapter #214**, Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m., Orinda Masonic Center. Contact Karen Seaborn, 689-0995.
- Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe**. Third Monday, 7:30 p.m., Moraga-Orinda Fire District Conference Room, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga, www.moragaadobe.org.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks**. Fourth Wednesday, 8:30 a.m., May Room, Orinda Library, 253-1997.
- Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition**, every third Wednesday, 10 to 1:30 a.m. at Orinda City Hall Sarge Littlehale Room, and 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Supervisor Uilkema's office, 3338 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Call 925-687-8844, ext. 227.
- Lamorinda Sirs** for retired men. Second Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. Luncheon speakers plus golf, tennis, bocce, bridge and astronomy. Call Pete Giers, 254-4667.
- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary**. Every Friday, 7 a.m., Postino's, Lafayette, 254-0440, ext. 463.
- Lamorinda Toastmasters**. Every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Temple Isaiah, 3800 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, www.lamorinda.freetoasthost.net.
- Montelindo Garden Club**. Third Friday, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, 9 a.m., www.montelindogarden.com. April's speaker is Stefani Bittner, a teacher at Magic Gardens in Emeryville, who will talk on *Growing Spring and Summer Vegetables*.
- Orinda Rotary**. Every Wednesday, noon, Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, 254-2222.
- Orinda Association**. Second Monday, 7:15 p.m., Orinda Library, May Room, 254-0800.
- Orinda Hiking Club**. Please visit our website at www.orindahiking.org or call 253-2465 for schedule of upcoming hikes.
- Orinda Historical Society**. Third Wednesday, 7 to 9 p.m., Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, 254-1353.
- Orinda Job's Daughters**. First and third Monday, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 283-7176.
- Orinda Juniors** community service group. First Tuesday, September to June, 7 p.m. Contact Diane Petek and Amy Campbell at orinda.juniors@yahoo.com for location.

Ballet Academy Presents *The Sleeping Beauty*

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Orinda Ballet Academy and Company will present the romantic ballet *The Sleeping Beauty* May 20 at 6:30 p.m., May 21 at 1 and 5:30 p.m., and May 22 at 1:30 p.m. at the Orinda Library Theater. Call 254-2445.

Nationally Recognized Business Writer Returns Home for First Friday Forum

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Nationally acclaimed business writer, Justin Fox, will be First Friday Forum's speaker on May 6, 1:30 p.m., at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Choosing the topic, *Bad Predictions; Why we keep getting the economy wrong*, Fox will elaborate on why predicting is so difficult and why the belief among scholars that financial markets can predict everything doesn't work. He cites as an example how the Japanese earthquake and tsunami and the uprisings in the Arab world occurred quite unexpectedly and caused turmoil in world markets.

Fox is currently the director of the *Harvard Business Review* and is a contributor to *Time* magazine, where he wrote a weekly column until his new assignment. Previously, Fox spent more than a decade working as a writer and editor at *Fortune* magazine, where he covered economics, finance and international business.

His book, *The Myth of the Rational Market* has been a *New York Times* (NYT) and *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) bestseller and a *New York Times* "Notable Book of 2009." It was selected as the best business book of 2009 by the editors of Amazon.com. NYT reviewer, Paul Krugman called it "a must-read for anyone who wants to understand the mess we're in."

Fox is a regular commentator on the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business writer Justin Fox is the First Friday Forum speaker on May 6.

PBS programs *Nightly Business Report* and *Marketplace*. Before joining *Fortune*, Fox worked at several newspapers. He was a Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum, "Before I got too old," he says. A graduate of Princeton University, he now lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts with his wife and son. Fox grew up in Lafayette, where his parents, Joe and Shirley Fox, still reside. He graduated from Acalanes High School.

Refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m. with the lecture to follow at 1:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. For further information, call 925-283-8722 or click on LOPC.org, News and Information.

Orinda/Tabor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation. Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m. social, 7:30 p.m. meeting, call 254-8260 for location.

Orinda Teen Advisory Council. Second Wednesday, 4 p.m., Community Center, 28 Orinda Way. For information, email orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com.

Orinda Woman's Club. Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. to noon, call Jean Barnhart, 254-3881.

CITY/FIRE/SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

Acalanes Union High School District. First and third Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., district office, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette.

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. Call 925-788-7323.

Moraga-Orinda Fire District. Third Wednesday, 7 p.m., Administration Building, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga.

Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees. Second Monday, 4 p.m., OUSD Conference Room, 8 Altarinda Road. For the latest listing of dates, please check the website at www.orindaschools.org.

Planning Commission. Second and Fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.

Send calendar items to Maggie Sharpe at m.sharpe66@gmail.com

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND

◆ ODYSSEY from page 13

8-minute entertaining skit. The team members make all the skit, props, backdrop and costumes without using outside assistance.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sleepy Hollow Elementary's 5th grade team came in 6th in the state competition, led by coaches Janet Tarkoff (L) and Tracy Gittings (R) middle of back row. The team consisted of (L-R back row) Katrina Drake, Carly Harris, Olivia Gittings, Claire Tarkoff, and Frankie Veverka (L-R front row) Caroline Ricksen and Ella Lagomarsino.

The Miramonte team chose the "Le Tour Guide" problem in which a character from a list of literary works acts as a tour, guide to a group of tourists, taking them to two existing places on Earth as well as a team created location. During the tour, an inanimate object must show signs of life, the guide must give the wrong explanation about something, and give a creative explanation as to why it is important to guard and secure a worthless item.

The Del Rey team chose the problem: As Good as Gold...berg. This problem required the team to present an uncomplicated existing item that is used in a simple and effective way to complete a real life task. The team also created their own solution, a Rube Goldberg type device (similar to the game Mouse Trap) made out of a complex series of components that performed the same task as the existing item. Reuben Goldberg (July 4, 1883 – December 7, 1970) was an American cartoonist, sculptor, author, engineer and inventor. He is best known for a series of popular cartoons depicting complex devices that perform simple tasks in indirect, convoluted ways—now known as Rube Goldberg machines. Goldberg

received many honors in his lifetime including a Pulitzer Prize for his political cartooning in 1948.

For more information on the competition, go to www.odysseyofthemind.com.

◆ XENOPHON from page 10

riding area. "We had people give anywhere from \$10 to \$50,000," says Legallet. "We are very grateful to our donors and to PG&E, from whom we lease the land, and to Clark Construction for providing their expertise." The new facility should be completed by the end of July.

For more information, go to www.xenophontrc.org.

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