



THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis
Volume 36, Number 2

www.TheOrindaNews.com
Delivered to 9,000 Households and Businesses in Orinda

12 Issues Annually
February 2021

COVID Delays but Doesn't Nix Black History Month Lessons

By ROWENA GONDEN
Contributing Writer

As Orinda's schools focus on the logistics of how and when to reopen against the backdrop of a pandemic, their plans for observing Black History Month in February also remain up in the air.

But that doesn't mean district supporters don't think it's important.

"Ofentimes when American history is covered, the only time black figures are introduced, has to do with civil rights," said Roxanne Christophe, a parent of two girls, one at Wagner Ranch Elementary and the other at Orinda Intermediate school.

Christophe helps lead both schools' community coalitions, a parent-group dedicated to fostering a campus climate that welcomes students of all races, religions and other backgrounds.

"There are so many black figures that have had an influence on shaping our country beyond civil rights," she said.

The tradition of celebrating black history and culture in February dates to 1926 when



SALLY HOGARTY

Demonstrators at the June march and rally in Orinda to protest the murder of George Floyd and show people of color who live in Lamorinda they are welcome.

scholar Carter Godwin Woodson, the son of former slaves and the second black to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University, announced the inception of Negro History Week.

He chose the second week in February because it encompassed two dates blacks celebrated as part of their history, the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

Over time, cities around the United States started recognizing Negro History Week

with proclamations, and the observance eventually became a month-long tradition on many college campuses.

Black History Month achieved official national recognition in 1976 when Presi-

dent Gerald Ford affirmed the importance of honoring the achievements of Black Americans.

Other nations also have adopted the practice: Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands all now set aside a time of year to acclaim what Africans and their descendants have contributed to the countries they have settled in around the world.

The festivities and other activities that typically mark Black History Month in the United States make up a significant part of the curriculum in K-12 classrooms, like those at Orinda's Sleepy Hollow Elementary, where children are learning about the contributions of blacks in general — and Martin Luther King Jr. in particular. February, fourth graders will spend art classes creating a portrait of the civil rights leader;

[SEE HISTORY page 12]

OUSD Navigates Changing Requirements for School Campus Openings

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

Continual changes and unclear policies from the State of California and Contra Costa County have led to frustration and anger for the Orinda Union School District's (OUSD) board, staff, teachers, parents and students as they try to find a way back to in-person education.

Parents and students want in-person learning to begin as soon as possible, while many educators prefer to return after being vaccinated.

OUSD had hoped to open its schools Nov. 30 with a hybrid learning model for grades TK-2, gradually bringing in other grades. On Nov. 16, however, Contra Costa County's increased COVID-19 cases

[SEE SCHOOLS page 12]

Orinda Association Celebrates Its 75th Birthday During 2021

By HILLARY HOPPOCK
Contributing Writer

In 1945 when William Penn Mott, Jr. brought down the gavel opening the first meeting of the Orinda Association (OA), the city we know as Orinda, was an unincorporated area in Contra Costa County with 3,500 residents.

For 40 years, the OA served as Orinda's watchdog, lobbying for repair and upgrade of local streets and highways by county authorities, creating the Orinda General Plan approved by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors in 1973 and supporting an eight-year battle to save the Orinda Theatre in a tireless pursuit of local self-rule.

Along the way, the OA provided the major capital down payment for purchasing the land that became the Orinda Library, Community Center and Park.

Bobbie Landers, who served as OA Administrator from 1976-1986 and Orinda City Council Member from 1986-1996, said when the City of Orinda became a reality in 1985, The Orinda Association faced an uncertain future.

"There was a great deal of discussion about the OA, which had served as our *de facto* government in dealing with the county," she said. "There were those who thought we should 'close up shop,' but the OA turned a corner, reorganized and reinvented itself as a non-political, nonprofit, supporting the newly established city."

Recent Past President Carlos Baltodano



COURTESY STEVE HARWOOD

Steve Harwood, singing at one of the 4th of July OA-sponsored event said, "The singing Elvis gig brings a smile to my face. My daughter Alison was just 10-years-old and needed a ride to the parade. To her chagrin, the option was to ride with me, dressed as Elvis, in the backseat of Jim Barnett's gaudy convertible that we had set up with a sound system. She was so embarrassed that she lay down in the back seat to avoid being seen."

said The Orinda Association continues to be a strong essential civic organization after 75 years "thanks to its ability to connect with the community and respond to its needs in terms of service and events."

Baltodano added, "I was delighted, especially last year, with the creativity and

[SEE OA page 5]

Mash Gas & Food

Orinda's Lowest Gas Prices

Buy Lotto & Lottery Here

Self Service Gasoline			
	CASH	CREDIT	
Regular Unleaded	2.89 ⁹ / ₁₀	2.99 ⁹ / ₁₀	
Plus Unleaded	3.19 ⁹ / ₁₀	3.29 ⁹ / ₁₀	
Premium Unleaded	3.29 ⁹ / ₁₀	3.39 ⁹ / ₁₀	

22 Bryant Way - Next to Casa Orinda

Mon - Sat 5 am - 12 am; Sun 6 am-11 pm

Find these stories and more on our website TheOrindaNews.com.

NON-PROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
ORINDA, CA
PERMIT #4
EGRWSS

Postal Customer



IN THIS ISSUE

News		Business Buzz	16
Business	16	Calendar	Online
Financial	13	City Council	2
Police	5	Community	3, 7, 14
Firewise	9	Classifieds	13
Schools	1, 6	Editorial	4
Around Town		Everyday Orinda	9
Club/Meetings	10	Fitness Tip	15
Events	15	The Orinda Association	1, 3
Galleries	11	The Reel Less Traveled	8
Residents	7	Seasoned Shopper	10

NEWLY ELECTED ORINDA LEADERS

Welcome New and Returning Office Leaders to Orinda and Moraga

By CHARLEEN EARLEY
Editor-in-Chief

Elections are over, votes were cast, ballots tallied and results are in for Orinda and Moraga, making this a good time to welcome five new and returning officeholders for Orinda and a new Orinda Chamber President.

Two incumbent directors of the Moraga-Orinda Fire Department, (MOFD), John Jex and Craig Jorgens, won new terms of office.

Director of District 2, Jex has called Moraga home for nearly 50 years. He was born and raised in Utah and earned a master's degree in accounting from Brigham Young University's Marriott School of Business.

He said he was surprised he won another term, "because of the strong opponent, Na-



COURTESY MAYOR AMY WORTH
As newly elected Mayor of Orinda, **Amy Worth** said she will work with the Council and the community to implement the voter-approved Measure R for increased fire and infrastructure safety in Orinda and continue the City and School District initiative for inclusion and diversity.

than Smith, who ran for the same position."

He speaks willingly about his top three priorities, and he's happy to share details of each: "Continue to focus on the need to improve financial capability of the District to meet its obligations; expand the District's contribution to assist both communities to be better prepared to deal with wildfire threats; and support activities to enforce new fire code requirements."

To provide context for his agreeing to serve on MOFD, Jex summarizes what he loves about Moraga and Orinda: "The people who live here, the high quality of the schools and the involvement of the citizens to support and contribute to worthwhile efforts that lead to continued improvement to the environment and community."

Jorgens, also an incumbent Director of District 5, is not native to Orinda, since he was born and raised in Spokane, WA, but said a job change brought his family to Orinda where he and his wife Lisa have lived for the last 28 years. It's also where they raised their two daughters, Laura and Emily.

He calls Orinda wonderful because, "the residents are friendly, helpful and actively involved in making their community better."

Jorgens' top priorities include working to increase MOFD's commitment to fire prevention, not just suppression. "Fire prevention is not simply fire code enforcement," he said. "It must include much more actual fuel removal by MOFD."

Wage increases are also at the top of Jorgens' list.

"Since our firefighters work hard, they deserve the same wage and benefit increases that are given to hard-working teachers, federal, state and city employees who live in our community," said Jorgens.

Jorgens also thinks it's important to

look ahead since recessions are always a threat: "Reasonable salary increases will also allow for increases in much needed fuel reduction programs and increases in reserve fund balances to prepare for the next economic downturn."

Jorgens sees his background and expertise benefitting the MOFD and his community.

"After my retirement from the satellite industry, I wanted to leverage my knowledge and experience to help my local community where the results are directly observable," he said. "The Board is a team effort and making Orinda more fire-safe through my actions related to prevention, use of technology and being mindful of the budget on the MOFD Board will benefit all Orindans."

Orinda Mayor Amy R. Worth, no stranger to the Orinda City Council, has been on the Council since 1998. Her current term on the Council ends in 2022.

A graduate of the University of California, Berkeley with a bachelor's degree in history, Worth was born in Boston, MA, and raised in Portland, OR and Palos Verdes in Southern California. Her grandfather, Edward Miller, was the managing editor of *The Oregonian* newspaper.

Worth, who has resided in Orinda for the last 38 years, places public service, community outreach and development as her core areas of focus.

The mother of three daughters and wife of Tom Worth sees her most significant accomplishments as her leadership role in the building of Orinda's library and the completion of the fourth bore of the Caldecott Tunnel.

As a good listener and a visionary, she's concentrating on specific areas to target first.

"I will work with the Council and the community to implement the voter-approved Measure R for increased fire and infrastructure safety in Orinda and continue the City and School District initiative for inclusion and diversity," said Worth, who officially took office as mayor Dec. 8, 2020.

She said she also looks forward to completing the downtown planning process and continuing to engage the community



COURTESY KRISTEN SOUTHWORTH
Voted in as Orinda's Chamber President, **Kristen Southworth** said her business philosophy consists of "competence and compassion" and her goal of becoming chamber president is about giving to others.

in that important process: "COVID-19 has had a huge impact on our community, and I will continue to work together to promote public health safety as we support our local businesses and schools and provide youth recreation activities as the protocols allow."

When not working, Worth enjoys studying Spanish and playing with her two grandsons. Her other loves consist of living and serving in Orinda. "I love the people here and Orinda's beautiful setting with its wonderful access to both the city and the beautiful outdoor parks."

Two open seats were filled on the City Council by re-elected Council Members Darlene Gee and Inga Miller.

Gee, an Orinda resident for the last 31 years, who prides herself both on Orinda's family focus and the volunteerism that connects the community, talks about her top three areas of concentration for 2021.

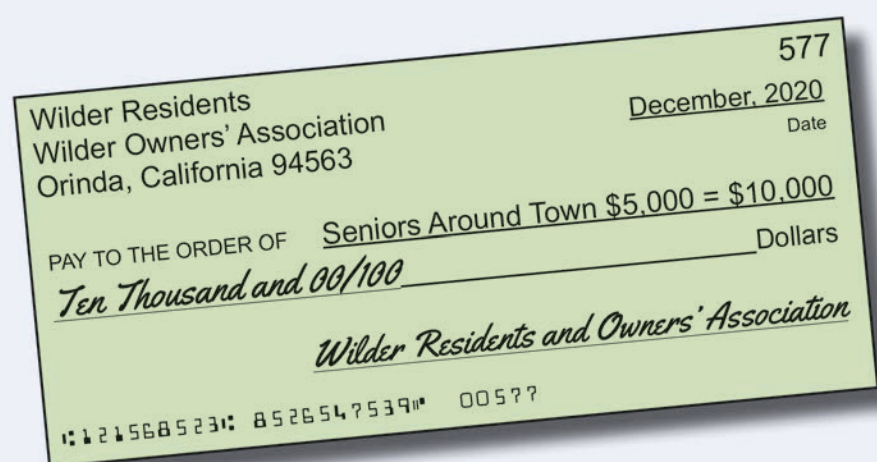
"My top priorities are planning and initiating the effective expenditure of Measure R funds and improving our emergency preparedness, progress on the Downtown Planning process and solidifying long-

[SEE LEADERS page 4]

Wilder thanks its residents and Owners' Association for supporting Seniors Around Town with \$5,000 in donations!

BETTER YET, OUR CONTRIBUTIONS WERE MATCHED!

\$5,000 = \$10,000 IN TOTAL DONATIONS



"In our 15 years of service providing, no one has ever done what the Wilder community did - spread the word, informed the neighbors, endorsed the program and encouraged the community to give - and very generously."

Kate Wiley
Director and co-founder of Seniors Around Town
Board Member and past President of the Orinda Association

Congrats to the 2021 Orinda Chamber of Commerce Slate of Officers & Board of Directors

President: Kristen Southworth of Southworth & Chavez
Vice President: Juliet Don of Chevron
Treasurer: Ally Fattore of Mechanics Bank
Secretary: Tom D'Amato of D'Amato Law

THE BEST TIME TO BUY OR SELL? FRANKLY, TODAY.

925.980.3829
Shannon@ShannonConner.com
ShannonConner.com

DRE# 01885058
Villageassociates.com
925.254.0505



SC shannon conner



THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President

SERVING THE COMMUNITY DURING COVID AND BEYOND

BILL WATERMAN



I am honored to serve as The Orinda Association's President a second time, and on behalf of the entire OA Board I'd like to thank Carlos Baltodano for his dedicated service as our president the past two years.

This is indeed a tumultuous time, and yet like most non-profits, we have continued to serve the community in the wisest way possible. We reopened our office last June, and have maintained and even expanded our essential services, including this newspaper and our Seniors Around Town (SAT) free ride program.

And, we look forward to hosting an actual Fourth of July celebration and Classic Car Show later this year – details will follow next month.

But first I wanted to share the following update from Kate Wiley, our SAT Director: "As seniors are now starting to get the COVID-19 vaccines in our county, Seniors Around Town is encouraged that more vaccination groups will follow, and we can return to providing more than medical transportation for seniors.

"This generates the need for more volunteer drivers. Orindans, we're ready whenever you are comfortable to do so. We've been driving seniors to critical medical appointments during the pandemic since June 2020, with complete safety and protection thanks to all of our riders and drivers consistently following SAT COVID protection guidelines. Thank you!

"SAT also wants to thank the very generous support of the community during this past, most challenging year. A shout out to all who participated in the #giving Tuesday matching gift event, heavily supported by the Wilder homeowners. You all helped us

reach our fundraising goal!"

Our OA office continues to serve the community in other ways too. For example, here is an update from Cindy Powell: "Answering the phones for the Volunteer Center has been so rewarding. People in Orinda, young and old, have been asking how they can help. They have donated warm coats (450 by Dec. 15), rides for seniors, eyeglasses and their time and money.

"And thank you to our city and county offices. They have continued to send information for our Senior Resource Center. The first *Orinda News* email reminder was a hit!! We are amazed how many people like receiving the *The Orinda News* online, whether college students, family members working out of town or residents living away for a bit. To get the monthly newspaper reminder sent to your email, just call or email the OA office, or go to www.theorindanews.com, and we will add you to our growing list."

And finally, the OA Board will be working on ways to celebrate our 75th year! The William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental award provides a valuable reminder for us to appreciate our beautiful environment. We will be announcing more details about our celebration of this award, our Volunteer Award and other events in the coming months. And lastly, we all thank you again from the bottom of our collective hearts for your support of the OA, *The Orinda News*, SAT, the Fourth of July celebration and parade and the Classic Car Show. Stay safe!

Bill Waterman can be reached at b.waterman354@gmail.com.

Brawner is Newest OA Board Member

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

Attorney and Realtor for Compass, Barb Brawner joined The Orinda Association Board of Directors at its January meeting.

A long-time resident of Orinda, Brawner moved from Southern California to Orinda in 1964 with her family. After graduation from Miramonte, she moved south again to attend the University of California, Los Angeles and Loyola Law School.

Following graduation, she worked as Senior Trial Counsel for USAA Financial Services and in private practice, both in Southern California and San Francisco, defending construction defect, asbestos and general liability cases. Retiring from legal practice in 2014, Brawner joined Pacific Union Real Estate (now Compass).

"I'm passionate about construction, remodel and design," said Brawner. "I love the Orinda community and the people who call it home. I'm very much looking forward to working with The Orinda Association and developing and expanding new and existing programs and services for our Orinda residents."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Barb Brawner, a Realtor with Compass, joined The Orinda Association Board in January.

Brawner's previous volunteer activity included Orinda Juniors, Orinda Jr. Garden Club, Acalanes Chapter National Charity League and Miramonte Boosters.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed working with students be it at Lamorinda Idol, cleaning up the Wagner Ranch Nature Area or serving food at the football game snack shack," she said.

Brawner and her husband have two college-aged daughters attending the University of California, Berkeley and Princeton University. When not working or volunteering, she loves to ski, trail run, garden, ride horses and travel.

Sally Hogarty can be reached at sally@theorindanews.com.

The Orinda Association

The Orinda Association is a not-for-profit 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.

Visit our office at 26 Orinda Way
(Library Plaza)
Phone: 254-0800
www.OrindaAssociation.org

The Orinda Association
P.O. Box 97
Orinda, CA 94563

OFFICERS

President Bill Waterman
Vice President Sally Hogarty
Secretary Bryan Silveira
Treasurer Diane Lautz
City Council Liaison Inga Miller

BOARD MEMBERS

Kyle Arteaga
Carlos Baltodano
Barb Brawner
Jacqueline Buettner
Joe Haughin – Board Member Emeritus
Chris Laszcz-Davis
Latika Malkani
Cindy Powell
Devan Sudra
Kate Wiley



All officers and board members volunteer their time.

A.G.
REALTY

Masterfully connecting exceptional people with compelling properties.

Over 25 years of experience
www.AGrealty1.com
925-254-7600

Alexander Gailas
DRE # 01356574
C-925-788-0229

Katia Gailas
DRE # 02033175
C-925-788-6646

Love it or leave it... to us!

Donate your used vehicle.



It's quick, easy, painless and supports
The Orinda Association and **Seniors Around Town.**
Cars2ndChance takes care of all the details.

To donate visit the Orinda Association website
and click on Cars2ndChance Vehicle Donation Button
or call Cars2ndChance at 925-326-5868
& specify donation to SAT.



Cars2ndChance saves you money, taxes, DMV fees, insurance. Don't trade it - donate it!



One Warm Coat

The One Warm Coat drive, sponsored by The Orinda Association, garnered 450 coats for those in need, during November and December.

EDITORIAL

Family Collage Left at local UPS Store



LINDA HEASELL

Above is a family photo collage left behind in a bag of packing materials dropped off at The UPS Store at 21 Orinda Way. We would like to reunite it with its owner. Please call 925.254.4490.

◆ LEADERS from page 2

term solutions to our infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance,” said Gee, who was born and raised in Bloomington, IL.

Gee moved to California in 1980, but said, “I still appreciate my Midwest roots and enjoy visiting, but I’m not willing to go back to the weather.”

She considers holding the councilmember seat an honor.

“I was grateful that I won [reelection],” she said. “It is a great responsibility that people entrust you with making good community decisions, and I take that very seriously and will work hard to be both a good listener and responsive to residents’ concerns and interests.”

With her professional expertise as a civil engineer, Gee, who has been on the Council since 2012, is happy to continue giving back to her community in this way.

“My husband and I raised our family here. We had a wonderful experience doing so, and I want to help ensure our community remains a pleasant, safe and welcoming place for everyone, even as we make positive improvements for our future,” she said.

Miller, who shares a similar focus as Gee, sees herself as a voice of the community for Orinda.

“Orindans have made clear that safety, infrastructure, downtown revitalization and inclusivity are our biggest priorities for 2021,” said Miller, who has served on the Council since 2016. She grew up in north

Orinda near the Country Club “where Lake Cascade was my playground.”

Miller is specific, when it comes to fortifying against wildfires.

“We need to continue to maintain our newly improved roads and work on the El Toyonal corridor and other evacuation routes to make them safer,” she said. “And to delve deeper into drain work to avoid another infrastructure failure like the Miner Road sinkhole – all of which were discussed as uses of Measure R funding during the campaign.”

A graduate of the University of California, Santa Cruz, Miller has come full circle, returning to where she first started.

“Orinda is an unparalleled place to grow up,” she said. “With the intent of moving back as soon as possible to our own home here, I moved from Orinda in late 2003 or early 2004 as a requirement of my position as a news reporter for *The Modesto Bee*. I still spent significant time in Orinda during those years and was so grateful to be able to move back permanently with my husband Paul in 2010 to our home in south Orinda near St. Mark’s.”

She’s more than honored to win one of the City Council seats to serve another term.

“Winning reelection showed we Orindans are on the same page for priorities at City Hall, and this was not a surprise, given that we have been working together as a community corroboratively for four years,” she said. “I am looking forward to another wonderful four years.”



List of *The Orinda News* Advertisers

	Page		Page
Arts		Professional Property Management	7
Christian Ehrhorn Fine Arts	11	State Farm, Bryan Silveira	6
Automotive		State Farm, Kelly Sopak	15
Mash Gas and Food	1	Wilder Owners Association	2
Orinda Motors	5	Real Estate	
Orinda Shell Auto Care	10	AG Realty	
Beauty and Fitness		The Gailas Team	3
CoreKinetics	16	Coldwell Banker	
Living Lean Exercise & Eating Program	7	Laura Abrams	9
Cleaning Services		Suzanne Toner Geoffrion	16
Kirby Carpet Cleaning	12	Shellie Kirby	7
Dental		Sotheby's	
Dr. Mary Smith DDS	15	Ann Newton Cane	13
Educational		Village Associates	
Orinda Parks & Rec	14	Shannon Conner	2
Garden/Landscaping		April Matthews	11
Ken's Redwood Fencing	15	Murphy Team - Karen & Hilary Murphy	14
McDonnell Nursery	9	Ann Sharf	8
Tree Sculpture	6	Clark Thompson	12
Medical		Restaurants/Catering	
Dr. Brian Clark, Psy.D.	6	Baan Thai	13
Medicine Shoppe	12	Casa Orinda	8
Nonprofit		Farmers' Market	10
The Orinda Association	3	Siam Orchid	12
Professional Service		Zamboni's Pizza Company	11
5A Rent-A-Space	16	Retail	
Green Sheds	8	McCaulou's	14
Park Place Wealth Advisors	9		

The new Orinda Chamber President, Kristen Southworth, was born and raised in Kalamazoo, MI, and currently resides in Oakland.

“Yes, there really is a Kalamazoo, and I’m a gal from Kalamazoo,” said Southworth, a partner in the law firm of Southworth & Chavez LLP.

“We are a two-person, woman-owned law firm,” she said. “We practice in the area of trusts and estates, which consists of estate planning, trust administration and probate administration. Though each of us has been in practice for 30 years, we have been in partnership for seven years.”

Her firm, which is located at 1 Northwood Dr. in Orinda, has been a chamber member for four years, and she’s excited to take on this new role as president, centering

her attention on certain areas.

“I hope to foster a sense of community among those doing business in Orinda and, in the process, grow the membership,” she said. “Given that COVID-19 will likely continue to impact businesses and our ability to gather for the foreseeable future, we are working to put together a series of educational and fun virtual gatherings.”

Her business philosophy consists of, “competence and compassion,” and her goal in becoming chamber president, is about giving to others.

“I believe you get out of something, what you put into it,” she said. “I really enjoy doing business in Orinda, and I hope to have a positive impact on the community.”

Charleen Earley can be reached at editor@theorindanews.com.

The Orinda News prints 9,000 copies and is published 12 times a year by The Orinda Association. The office is located at 26 Orinda Way (lower level of the Library). All rights reserved. The publication is sent out by direct mail (Permit #4, Orinda Post Office), distributed to key locations throughout the city and online at www.TheOrindaNews.com.

Executive Editor.....Sally Hogarty
 Editor-in-Chief..... Charleen Earley
 Assistant Editors David Dierks, Kathy Bohanan Enzerink
 Editorial Committee..... Jill Gelster, Kathy Enzerink, Cindy Powell, Bill Waterman
 Advertising Representatives.....Kathy Enzerink, Jill Gelster, Elana O’Loskey
 Staff WritersMimi Bommarito, David Born, David Dierks, Bobbie Dodson, Barbara Kobsar, Elana O’Loskey, Bill Waterman, Tom Westlake
 Contributing Writers Rowena Gonden, Hillary Hoppock, Kathryn Ishizu, Ania Keenan, Melanie Light, Melissa Roeder
 Graphics/Layout..... Aspen Consulting: Jill Gelster, David Dierks
 Printing.....Folger Graphics

The Orinda News

A Publication of
 The Orinda Association
 Mailing Address
 P.O. Box 97
 Orinda, California 94563
 Telephone: 925.254.0800

www.theorindanews.com
 Find us on



The OA is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

Opinions of *The Orinda News* are expressed on the editorial page. Views of writers and letters to the editor are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Orinda Association or of *The Orinda News*. Advertisements appearing in *The Orinda News* are not to be construed as endorsements by The Orinda Association or *The Orinda News*.

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

Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, or email to editor@theorindanews.com. Letters to Editor for the March issue are due Feb. 8.

For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925.528.9225 (jill@aspenconsult.net), Elana O’Loskey at 925.984.1751 (elanao@mac.com) or Kathy Enzerink at 252.626.2109 (kathy@theorindanews.com). The deadline for the March issue is Feb. 8.

THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION / POLICE

◆ OA from page 1

organizational skills shown by members during the pandemic in providing grocery pick-ups and reassurance calls, as part of our free door-to-door transportation program, Seniors Around Town.”

In 1985, the OA celebrated its successful drive for incorporation, and the *New Orinda News*, established by Orinda resident Ann O’Connell Nye, published its first issue in spring 1986.

“I thought it was good for our new city to have its own newspaper, dedicated solely to covering Orinda’s news and issues,” said Nye. “Previous local newspapers were sporadically published by volunteers, including the *Hayseed Siftings* (1893), *The Orindan* (1927) and the Orinda Improvement Association’s *Orinda News* (1927-1964). The OA mailed the *New Orinda News* to residents free of charge, and right from the beginning, supplemented the paper’s advertising funds to support a paid newspaper staff.”

The *New Orinda News*’ title was later changed in 1992 to *The Orinda News* and has remained as such, ever since. The newspaper was designed to promote awareness and encourage dialogue about issues of importance to Orinda residents.

Past OA President, Mark Roberts, talks about the newspaper’s success: “What I appreciate most about what the OA provides to residents is *The Orinda News*, which used to be quarterly and is now a monthly, as well as the OA forums informing the public about issues that impact the community.”

Over the years, the OA has sponsored Meet the Candidates gatherings (City Council, School Board, Fire Commission), as well as forums on ensuring fire safety, planning for disaster preparedness and fixing Orinda’s roads.

Since cityhood, the OA has initiated

and sponsored a wide array of service and events in its mission to improve and maintain Orinda’s quality of life, including a Volunteer Center, an annual Volunteer of the Year award, the July 4th Parade and Classic Car Show events.

The OA also sponsored the William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award, established in 1993, to recognize a citizen or group who or which displays outstanding contributions in education or environmental preservation, in honor of the first OA president, Bill Mott, who also served as National Park Director under President Ronald Reagan.

The Volunteer Center opened in 2002, under the Orinda Library. It serves as Orinda’s brick and mortar location. It is open weekdays for local non-profits to share information, advertising and volunteer assistance for non-profit events. It also doubles as *The Orinda News* office and as a center for registering Seniors Around Town (SAT) drivers and riders and non-profit event ticket sales while providing a convenient drop-off location for donations.

OA Past President Kate Wiley initiated the Seniors Around Town (SAT) in 2005. SAT is a free program where volunteers help qualified seniors who are no longer able to drive to reach doctor appointments, accomplish errands and more.

Wiley recently received a 2020 Jefferson Award for SAT’s community program. Wiley added, “It’s a neighbor-helping-neighbor program, which develops friendships, socialization and engagement for seniors with the community and allows them the independence to ‘age in place’ in their own home as long as possible.”

Every year the Orinda Classic Car Show, created in 2005 by Orinda resident Chip Herman and Orinda Motors’ John Vanek, features American and European cars ranging from the 1920s to the ‘50s and ‘60s. It



POLICE BLOTTER

December 1 through January 2

Calls for Service

- 911 Hangup: 7 incidents
- Accident Injury: 3 incidents
- Accident Property: 1 incident
- Alarm False: 41 incidents
- Battery: 1 incident
- Burglary, Commercial: 2 incidents
- COVID Violation: 2 incidents
- Death Non Criminal: 2 incidents
- Disturbing the Peace: 2 incidents
- Drunk in Public: 1 incident
- Failure to Obey: 1 incident
- Fire/EMS Response: 1 incident
- Found Property: 4 incidents
- Fraud False Pretenses: 1 incident
- Grand Theft Vehicle Parts: 1 incident
- Hit and Run Misdemeanor: 1 incident
- Juvenile Disturbance: 2 incidents
- Lost Property: 1 incident
- Loud Noise: 2 incidents
- Loud Party: 1 incident
- Medical Hospital: 6 incidents
- Mentally Ill Commit: 5 incidents
- Ordinance Violation: 1 incident
- Outside Assist: 18 incidents
- Patrol Request: 41 incidents
- Petty Theft: 2 incidents

- Public Assembly Check: 2 incidents
- Public Nuisance: 1 incident
- Reckless Driving: 1 incident
- Robbery: 2 incidents
- Security Check: 24 incidents
- Service to Citizen: 112 incidents
- Shots Heard: 3 incidents
- Tow: 1 incident
- Traffic Hazard: 2 incidents
- Unwanted Guest: 1 incident
- Vandalism: 4 incidents
- Vehicle Theft: 4 incidents
- Verbal Dispute: 1 incident
- Violation of Custody Order: 1 incident
- Walk Through: 12 incidents
- Welfare Check: 11 incidents

Arrest

- Possession of Stolen Property: 1 arrest
- Warrant Arrest: 2 arrests

– Compiled by David Dierks
Assistant Editor

For more incident details, visit www.cityprotect.com.

raises money for local charities, including the OA’s SAT Program.

Steve Harwood shares Orinda’s distinctive volunteer spirit, as he sums up his memories of being involved in Orinda’s Independence Day parade rated the “Best July 4th Parade in the East Bay” by the *Contra Costa Times*.

“I was the overall chairman for two years, the band organizer and ‘a singing Elvis’ one year, and I’ve been the parade

announcer, along with my pals Bill Cosden, Scott Butler and Mark Roberts for at least 25 years,” said Harwood. “As I’ve announced the parade, I’ve been filled with pride by all the wonderful work done for the community by so many organizations and individuals. Plus, it’s been just pure fun.”

Hillary Hoppock can be reached at Hoppock@msn.com.



**Proudly Serving Our Community
Since The 1920s**

63 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563





**Monday - Friday
7:30 am - 4:30 pm**



Your Local Certified Automotive Professionals



Give Us a Call or Book Online

(925) 475 - 8435

orindamotors.com



BLACK HISTORY MONTH / ORINDA ROTARY

District Endeavors to Reach Students With Virtual Equity and Diversity Curriculum

By ANIA KEENAN
Contributing Writer

As protests swept the nation in the weeks following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, a video surfaced on social media platforms of students attending the Acalanes Union High School District using racial slurs, particularly the N-word.

Following the videos' release, Miramonte Principal, Julie Parks, acted quickly.

Parks and her staff sent out an email to

the Miramonte student body, parents and staff addressing the events and sharing the school's strategy to develop a plan to improve campus education about issues of race and diversity.

Over the summer, these plans solidified as board members worked alongside administrators and teachers from across the district to develop an approach to provide students across the district with better access to diversity education.

When students zoomed into their virtual classes for the fall semester, they got their first taste of what the District had worked on.

The District's plan attempted to bolster diversity education by including mandatory diversity and equity lessons, taught by teachers, counselors and members of leadership, within students' scheduled academy periods, which is a study hall-type class.

A total of eight lessons, with titles like "Let's Talk About Race" and "Uncomfortable Conversations," were scheduled throughout the first semester.

Once attendance was taken, a typical session consisted of equal parts slide presentation and discussion.

Usually starting with a review of the guiding values of the program and a review of the principles of respectful discussion, a teacher or counselor presented information about the topic of the day, often a social construct or scenario. Students then grouped into breakout rooms to further the discussion with their peers.

"The breakout rooms were generally

fairly productive," said Andrew Sidlauskas, a junior. "I've definitely had good discussions that lasted the entire time in the breakout room. But there have also been times where it's been difficult to keep the discussion going. In those instances, they weren't as productive."

The curriculum of these lessons received mixed reviews from students, as some longed for a more direct addressing of real-world issues.

"They do a good job of confronting race in general, but they don't really get into real world issues, like police brutality," said Paige Mayes, a junior and also editor of the school newspaper *Miramonte Mirador*. "I think if they could have shown videos of the George Floyd protests and talked about police treatment of protestors while it was happening, it could have been very impactful."

According to Wellness Coordinator, Andrea Nishimi, from the Wellness Center at Miramonte, the source of some students' dissatisfaction with the vigor of the curriculum may have stemmed from the school's attempt to make the course accessible to a wide variety of students.

"The hardest thing about coming up with a lesson for an entire school body is that you have to write a lesson where somebody who has never had this conversation can engage, and people who are really active in the conversation don't feel like the pace is too slow," Nishimi said.

According to data collected by a survey

put out by the Wellness Center mid-semester, 35% of Miramonte's student body agree racism remains a serious problem for the school.

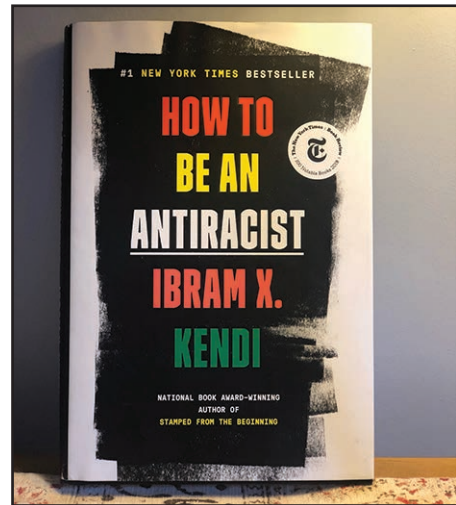
Nishimi urged students who felt this way to seek out the additional services provided by the Miramonte Equity and Leadership class, the monthly diversity and equity conversation and the Social Justice Reading Group put on by the Miramonte Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Parents Group.

According to Miramonte English teacher Steve Poling, another way to meet the needs of students who feel the curriculum may not be as robust as is necessary would incorporate anti-racism education in all aspects of the academic environment.

"As important as diversity is, I think our schools also need to acknowledge and embrace the goal of anti-racism," said Poling. "We need to build anti-racist work into every corner of the learning our students do, in all their classes in high school."


Mayes added, "I don't know how many students have absorbed the information. I think it may have helped some students who were kind of checked out on the issue of race, or who didn't want to talk about it, because it put them in a situation where they had to talk about it. I hope it changes things; all we can do is hope."

Ania Keenan is a junior at Miramonte High School. She can be reached at ania@7keenans.org.



ANIA KEENAN

When the Miramonte Equity, Diversity and Inclusion group was first formed in July, 2020, they launched a quarterly "Racial Justice Reading Group" to provide parents and students in the community the space to discuss topics of race and equity through literature. *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi, was the first book on their list.



Brian Clark, Psy.D.
licensed clinical psychologist
PSY 25198

ADOLESCENTS · ADULTS · FAMILIES

specializing in:
Achievement Pressure
AD/HD
Parenting Support
Anxiety
School Stress
Depression

954 Risa Road · Lafayette
(925) 385-8050
www.brianclarkpsyd.com

Orinda Rotary Club Recognizes Mechanics Bank's Contributions



SALLY HOGARTY

Shown here (L-R) Rotary members **Rodney Lal**, **Dick Burkhalter**, Mechanics Bank VP/Branch Manager **Ally Fattore**, Rotary member **Horst Radmacher**, Mechanics Bank Executive VP **Rauley Butler** and Rotary President **Ken Jew**.

Orinda Rotary Club recognized Mechanics Bank in Orinda Jan. 6 for its donation of \$5,000. The bank has supported the club for many years, primarily helping fund the group's Dancing with the Cars dinner/auction, which kicks-off the annual Orinda Classic Car Show. Although these events were not possible in 2020, the bank continued its support. "Our club would like

to thank Executive VP Rauly Butler, VP/Branch Manager Ally Fattore and the entire Mechanics Bank organization for making this donation possible," said Rotary President Ken Jew. "Their financial contribution will allow us to support local schools, local businesses, those less fortunate and the international community with our events, projects and donations in the future."



I love this town.

Bryan A Silveira, Agent
Insurance Lic#: 0M13551
23 Orinda Way
Orinda, CA 94563
Bus: 925-317-3804
www.silveirainsurance.com

Thanks, Lamorinda.
I love being here to help life go right™ in a community where people are making a difference every day. Thank you for all you do.



1601485 State Farm, Bloomington, IL



TREE SCULPTURE

COMPLETE TREE CARE

Proudly serving the East Bay since 1965!

Fully Insured ❖ Certified Arborists ❖ License #655977

(925) 254-7233 ❖ www.treesculpture.com

WILDER CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

The Evolution of Orinda's Newest Community

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

Originally a working cattle ranch, then a proposed housing development with golf course and hotel and, lastly, a 245-residential development, the Gateway Valley has gone through many variations on its way to becoming the Wilder we know today. And this final variation is one both the City of Orinda, long-time residents and members of this new community welcome.

"We love this place actually," said Rupa Joshi, a four- and one-half-year resident of Wilder. "So many people helping each other. So many young minds."

Carmela Clendening and her husband John Fernandez, who moved to Wilder in March of 2020 with their two young children, completely agree. "The pandemic hit right after we moved, but the community couldn't have been more welcoming. With all our wonderful neighbors and the Sibley Volcanic preserve right behind us, we know we made the right decision," said Clendening, whose son Noah attends kindergarten at Wagner Ranch Elementary School with daughter Isla attending St. Stephens Preschool.

"It's been absolutely wonderful to watch this diverse community develop," said



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sunder and Rupa Joshi on one of the many trails in the Wilder development.

Orinda Mayor Amy Worth. "Such a wide age range of residents from families with young children to older retired couples all enjoying the beauty of Wilder with its miles of open space and easy access to other parts of the Bay Area."

While some Orinda residents know Wilder only from escorting their children to and from the public sports fields on the edge of the development, other long-term residents remember the bitter fight that went on for decades over the various visions proposed by four different developers for the 1,500-acre parcel at the southern end of Orinda.

Two current Wilder residents know the

history of the development well. Lynn and Tom Trowbridge lived in Orinda for 43 years before building a home in Wilder three years ago.

"We had a two-story house on two-and one-half acres and wanted to downsize but stay in Orinda if possible," said Lynn Trowbridge. "Years ago, we had moved into a planned community on the East Coast and knew the excitement attached to that as well as the trials of living with construction. But I do like living here, being able to stay close to my friends and make new ones in Wilder."

Initially, Trowbridge thought she and her husband would be the only older people in Wilder and was pleasantly surprised to count a number of grandparents as her neighbors.

"It's been fun meeting neighbors who moved from across the country to be closer to their grandchildren. The neighborhoods here are very diverse – culturally, racially and age-wise, which adds to the excitement," Trowbridge said, who noted the large, heated swimming pool at Quarry House is a plus for visiting grandchildren.

Rupa and Sunder Joshi also take advantage of the amenities for their grandchildren. The couple moved from Dallas, TX, in 2016 to be closer to their grandchildren in San Carlos. With many friends living in Orinda, they decided to look into Wilder.

"It's so beautiful here, and we love all the trails and enjoy playing with our grandchildren on the sports fields. We even brought them here for the Easter Egg Hunt. So many young people with children live here and having all this youthful activity all around, makes us feel young," Rupa said.

Rupa sites some of the many activities in Wilder such as a social committee, finance committee, book club and movie club as well as pre-COVID progressive dinners as a way to stay active.

"Even the HOA board meetings are well attended," added Sunder Joshi. "which to my experience is rather unique."

While enjoying the many activities at Wilder, the Joshis have also tried to be involved in other aspects of Orinda – attending The Orinda Association events and meetings, supporting Orinda restaurants, making Black Lives Matter signs and donating to The Orinda Theatre's GoFundMe campaign.

"We hope to get more involved in the future but right now we need to support our daughter, who is a cardiac intensivist at Stanford Pediatrics ICU and her husband is a surgeon with Palo Alto Medical Foundation. They are working such long hours and we're over there several times a week to help," said Rupa.

The Trowbridges, have a long history of community involvement in Orinda with Tom one of the founders of Orinda Vision, a proposed plan for revitalizing the down-

town area. Lynn continued their tradition of being involved with community by becoming block captain for her street and also coordinating the other block captains throughout the Wilder development.

"We have a huge welcoming committee, and we present new occupants with lots of information of all sorts of things but especially on emergency preparedness. Many people from the East Coast aren't familiar with earthquakes or wildfires," Lynn said.

When COVID-19 forced shelter-in-place orders, Lynn sent sidewalk chalk to everyone on her street encouraging the children to decorate in front of her house and others if the occupants agreed. "It's nice having young children close by. I love driving home and seeing the kids playing at the sports fields."

Moving in just as the pandemic began, makes the Clendening/Fernandez family happy to have found such a welcoming place. The natural beauty of the Gateway Valley and the excellent school district were major reasons they moved to Wilder but as Noah was about to begin kindergarten at Wagner Ranch Elementary, Clendening began to worry how he would do attending school on Zoom.

"I felt overwhelmed, but our thoughtful neighbors offered their backyard and created an afterschool pod," Clendening explained. "The kids attended Zoom school in the morning and then 8-10 kindergartners had after school play time. Another neighbor set up a gym on one of the sports fields on Fridays. They created these amazing



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Carmela Clendening with her husband John Fernandez and children Noah and Isla in their backyard at Wilder.

opportunities for my son to meet other kids in the neighborhood."

Originally from the East Coast, the couple moved to San Francisco to accept jobs in the tech industry but moved to Oakland when Carmela became pregnant with Noah. Five years and another child later, the couple began looking for a larger home in a good school district and found Wilder.

History of Development

Of course, Wilder wasn't always such a robust community of diverse families who site the plentiful wildlife and open space as major reasons for living in the Gateway Valley. In fact, long-time Orinda residents find it ironic various realtor website's tout its miles of open space and closeness to

[SEE COMMUNITY page 13]

PROFESSIONAL
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

CA BRE 01902148

SPECIAL FULL MGMT only \$125.00
Leasing • Rentals • Management
Residential | Commercial | Retail
LAMORINDA SPECIALIST

925-254-5636 ppm4rent.com

Serving the East Bay Area *Restrictions apply - Ad must be presented at time of signing.

Living Lean

Do You Feel Like...
You Are Always Looking For Food?

We Can Help
Burn More Calories... Never Be Hungry...
Get Into Great Shape!

In Our Gym

- One on one
- 20 feet apart
- Masks
- Sanitized
- & On Zoom

925-360-7051

Facebook@livingleanbysheena
www.livingleanprogram.com

Shellie Abbes Kirby

Lifelong Lamorinda experience you can trust. Utilize Shellie's unique East Bay knowledge, personal attention, guidance and professionalism.

**Proven Results - Experience
Personal Service**

Office: 925-253-6321
Cell: 925-872-4257
email: shellie @shelliekirby.com

COLDWELL
BANKER

ENTERTAINMENT

Local Theater Group Produces St. Valentine's Day Zoom Massacre

By DAVID DIERKS
Assistant Editor

The Orinda Starlight Village Players (OrSVP) return in February with a new St. Valentine's Day themed Zoom experience. The game, *Valentine Mobsters, Molls and Mayhem*, is set on Valentine's Day, San Francisco, 1926, six years after the events of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago.

Unlike most Murder Mystery games in which attendees try to guess the murderer from a colorful cast of characters, this game



CHARLIE JARRETT
Starlight Player, **Teri Gooden**, will be playing Calamity Payne in the OrSVP's **Valentine Mobsters, Molls and Mayhem**.

flips the premise. Attendees infiltrate two rival mobs to get the dirt on the gangsters and create a confrontation to wipe them both out.

Written and directed by Malcolm Cowler, the game, based on a loosely scripted improv event, encourages audience participation and involves problem solving and information gathering.

"We want to encourage and respond to interactions as much as possible," said Cowler.

The shows are free, although donations are encouraged. To reserve links for the Zoom show, email info@orsvp.org. Performances start on Valentine's Day (Feb. 14) at 8 p.m., then run Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. through March 11. Visit www.orsvp.org for dates and times.

The local theater group normally runs three productions over the summer months at the Orinda Community Center Park Amphitheater. When last year's shows needed to be cancelled due to the pandemic, Cowler started experimenting with Zoom to put together interactive murder mystery games.

This marks OrSVP's fourth Zoom production to keep patrons in touch with the theater group and keep people from going stir crazy.

OrSVP's actors – each in their own Zoom window – perform the show while the online audience interacts with the various characters and unravels puzzles to solve the

[SEE STARLIGHT page 14]

THE REEL LESS TRAVELED

THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT

TOM WESTLAKE

The inspiration for this month's column comes, not only from the month itself, but also from finally getting my copy of *Lawrence of Arabia* (Blu-Ray, of course) in the mail last week. It's two discs, and I can't wait to settle in and watch it.

But first, I need to lead with a bit of bad news.

The International Film Showcase (www.internationalshowcase.org), that long running repository of film that brought the world to the Lamorinda area, finds they have no choice but to suspend their program until such time as the theaters they show in – Orinda Theatre, El Campanil Theatre in Antioch and the Jarvis Conservatory in Napa – reopen.

Special commendations should go to Jo Alice Canterbury and Efi Lubliner for keeping the program going for as long as they have, and it's important to keep in mind this is far from permanent. Indeed, such an assurance is prevalent on their website, along with a helpful 10 best list from each of them, recalling the fine films they have shown and those they believe deserve particular notice. Check it out and keep it at hand. If we've learned anything over the last few months, it is things can change at a moment's notice, and I wouldn't want you to miss out on anything.

Okay, so this month, the shortest of the year, leads my non-conformist mind to think about movies that are anything but short.

I've discussed some of these in past columns, but then, it was genre-specific. Generally speaking, there's quite an impressive list of longer films: *Gone With the Wind*, *Dr. Zhivago*, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Barry Lyndon*, the aforementioned, *Lawrence of Arabia*. That's not even counting the really long movies like *Greed* by Erich Von Stroheim, where the original, which will never be seen, clocked-in at just over nine hours and Andy Warhol's *Empire*, which ran just over eight.

I mentioned genre-specific and, if you'll recall, I gave epic comedies a decent write-up last month. So now, my same sense of iconoclasm, I'll let you know about an epic very few people talk about, as relevant today as it was when it was released in 1981.

I'm talking about *Reds*, starring Warren Beatty, who also directed the film, and Diane Keaton. On the surface, it's the story of John Reed, an American journalist who found it no longer tenable to write just about history.

Supplemented by people who actually knew Reed, the film has a documentary

feel, only dispelled by how handsome this film looks. Real life never looks this good! Lensed by the famous Vittorio Storaro, a very color-coordinated aspect to this film emerges. Even the costumes look color-coordinated, but that just serves to make the overall film more pleasing to the eye.

But the weight of history in the film gets conveyed before, during and after the main romantic story line.

Using Reed's and Louise Bryant's relationship as a concurrent through line, the movie provides us a ringside seat to, not only their relationship (warts and all), but the history (in this case, the Bolshevik Revolution) unfolding all around them.

Starting off with an introduction of Reed ("Profits," a famous quote in the film), we follow his progress as a journalist and provocateur, and his initial meeting with Bryant. From there, it's a roller coaster, with lots of fireworks, accompanied along the way by such notables of the time as Emma Goldman (Maureen Stapleton) and Eugene O'Neill (Jack Nicholson).

Reds blends equal parts history lesson – a lesson, by the way, that's all too prescient now – and romance so that this over-three-hour film flies by (and if you choose to take a time out for the intermission, you just might find yourself humming *The Internationale*). Even though the end is telegraphed to a degree, you'll find yourself not wanting the film to end.

All in all, it's an uplifting vital experience, and one that gets all too little attention, especially nowadays. If you watch this film, along with the others mentioned above, that should pretty much take care of the whole of February – a recommended course of action, given this month's reputation.

So now, onto *Lawrence*. I'll let you know how that worked out next month, but until then, keep veering towards those wonderful flickering images made of light, for that's where the "reel" magic lies.

Tom Westlake can be reached at poppinjay@earthlink.net.

Back Yard Office or Guest House

- Studio/Gym
- Site-Built with Deck
- No Permit Required
- Ready in 3 Weeks!

www.GreenSheds.net 925-872-3187

CASA ORINDA

RESTAURANT

OPEN FOR TO GO!

Limited menu.

Call to order between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m.
Wednesday through Sunday

On-line ordering not currently available.

Beer, Wine, cocktails and Lucas Margaritas available to go!

SO EXCITED TO SEE EVERYONE!

925.254.2981 ■ 20 Bryant Way ■ Orinda, CA 94563

OUSD Kinder/TK Registration

Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten registration for children entering an Orinda public school in August 2021 will be open Feb. 1 – 4. Register your child at www.orindaschools.org.

Ann Sharf

Top Producer. Strong Negotiator. Proven Results.

#1 Agent 2019 Lamorinda Sales

Be certain your largest asset is in the hands of a professional who represents both buyers and sellers.

Let me help you navigate through this ever changing real estate market.

(925)253-2525
ann@annsharf.com
www.annsharf.com

CalBRE# 01156966

93 Moraga Way, Orinda

EVERYDAY ORINDA / FIREWISE

Everyday  Orinda

I DROPPED MY DOLLY IN THE DIRT

MIMI BOMMARITO



MIMI BOMMARITO

Paris oozes with artistic expression, even when unintentional. This image, captured years ago while waiting in line to visit Sainte-Chapelle, illustrates the parental struggle with “letting go.”

Based on the photo above, this is what it feels like to send your child off to college.

No, I didn’t Google “images of creepy things.” I snapped this one myself in Paris, spring break 2011. (See August 2020 *Everyday Orinda*, regarding the futility of worldwide travel with young children — as in, take lots of photos because they won’t remember anything.) This was no staged, artsy French exhibition. Some child had literally dropped a baby doll into a filthy window well.

Our family was waiting in line to see the magnificent stained glass windows of Sainte-Chapelle. I can’t revisit this memory without recalling how my three adolescent daughters refused to be properly subdued by this glorious display. They struck goofy “Thinker” poses and asked every parent’s most triggering vacation question, “What’s next?” Whoever coined the adage “You can lead the horse to water, but you cannot make him drink,” definitely had experience introducing children to anything culturally enlightening.

My girls were still a long way from college when I captured this unfortunate little baby doll, unaware that it would later portray my parental sentiments. Back then, I presumed my girls would remain my spirited little colts, forever grazing alongside my watchful eye. I was casually aware of them inching toward each new stage of development, but no transition was as distinct and jarring as senior year of high school. No more state-mandated educational path to follow and corresponding extracurriculars.

The Yellow Brick Road stopped here. Time to start making their own decisions about their future.

Having lived through this thrice, four times if I count my own pioneer upbringing, life choices are perplexing enough under “normal” circumstances. Imagine tackling this during a pandemic. Just, yikes.

At present, many current seniors and their parent cheerleaders nervously thumb outdated *People* magazines in life’s dreariest waiting room, stuck in the elongated time span between collegiate applications and responses. At the end of the insufferable waiting period is either the Holy Grail (an acceptance), a popped balloon (resembling their wilted self-esteem after a you-know-what) or, possibly the worst scenario, a spot on a wait list. Deferrals and wait lists irk me, taking me back to the frustrating helplessness of childhood, when my mother’s substitute for “No” became the dreaded words “We’ll see.” And deferrals? How about your heartthrob stating, “So, it’s very possible we’ll go to prom. But I’m making it quite clear, you were not my first choice.”

This grueling admissions process is why “Participation Trophy World” for older children can come back to bite you. Kids need parents’ support, praise and attention, not an overpriced, cheaply manufactured pieces of junk that some hapless parent volunteer spent precious hours procuring (Is it too obvious I have been this very volunteer, and clearly held onto some hostilities?).

I’m not a total witch; trophies before kindergarten are fine. My youngest was fiercely proud of her swim team “Heat Winner” ribbons, often acquired as the lone contestant. Sad indeed was the day when her older sisters brought that to her attention. But it happens, and it’s why third kids are resilient.

If you don’t believe me about the trophies, go check the dust on your current collection. Not only are these clunky relics bad for the environment, even if college is not their chosen path, eventually your kid will meet a gatekeeper offering no soft landing and no consolation prize. Some heartless person, institution or corporation will discard your innocent baby doll. And there will be no phone call, no email, no

[SEE EVERYDAY page 16]

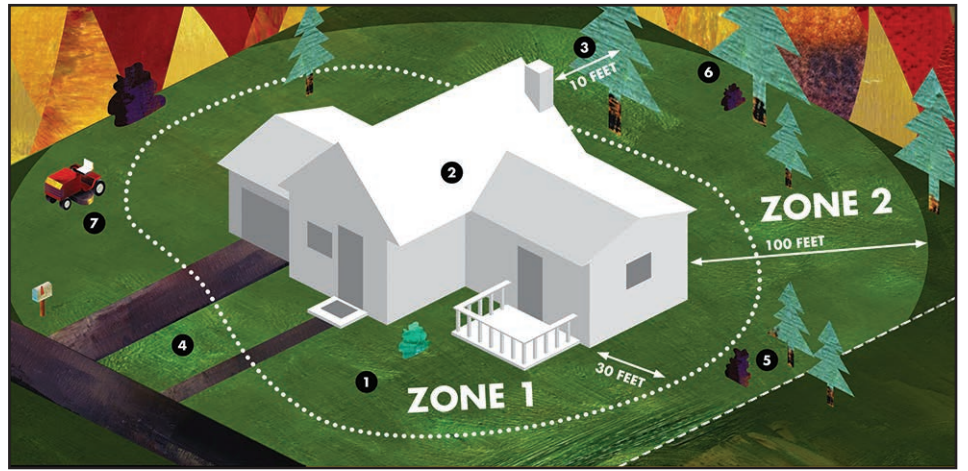


ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF CAL FIRE

More information about creating a defensible space can be found on the Cal Fire website at www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/ready-set-go.

Defensible Space Clean-up Really Will Help Save Homes

By MELANIE LIGHT
Contributing Writer

Just how effective is the time and money spent to create a defensible space against wildfire? There is no absolute answer, but fire science and the aftermath of fires tell us that hardened homes are safer.

Chris Thompson, president of the Board of Directors of the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation, lives in Deer Park and on the day of the Glass fire he looked out his door and saw 100-foot flames about a quarter of a mile away.

He said he took his family, including his 87-year-old mom and two kids, to a hotel and then returned to fight the fire as a vol-

unteer fire fighter. Of the six homes next to his, only his and his neighbor’s home survived because they were the only two owners who had created a defensible space around their homes.

It’s best to invest the time and money to clear your property properly. You can start at www.readyforwildfire.org or join or start a Firewise group in your neighborhood. To find out more about Firewise in Orinda, contact Joyce Arnon at jarnon@aol.com.

No one should start a fire inadvertently with efforts to prevent one. Thompson wrote great tips on the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation website. Each year CAL FIRE responds to more than 1,600

[SEE FIREWISE page 15]

Park Place 
WEALTH ADVISORS, INC.
 A Registered Investment Advisor
 Retirement & Income Planning • Estate Planning • Charitable Planning • Educational Funding
 401K Rollover Specialists
 18 Orinda Way, Orinda • 925-254-7766
 Registered Principals with and securities offered through Securities America, Inc.
 Member FINRA, SIPC. Park Place Wealth Advisors Inc. and Securities America are separate entities.

Preparing for Spring

With the passage of Proposition 19 last year there are more opportunities for those 55 and older to move their property tax basis to any community in California.

Let’s meet and discuss strategies!.

“Laura recently sold our home in Orinda where we achieved our target asking price in a tricky market. Laura proved herself to be one of those consummate professionals that goes far above and beyond to help her client optimize their sale. Her perception and expert advice guided us in improvements, repairs and staging that delivered great value for money. Throughout the process, she provided us great professional services, support that was affordable and expert.” - Richard



“Our experience was unique. The buyer faced challenges that Laura helped them navigate to bring the sale to an efficient close – all with the eye to helping us and ensuring we were satisfied. I cannot say enough about her dedication, knowledge and experience. You will be in great hands with Laura – the difference between just another realtor and a hard-working, caring, advocate and professional adviser.” - Jeff

Celebrating 21 years with Coldwell Banker, Orinda.
 A Trusted Partnership Local Expertise with Global Connections.

Recently Sold...

115 Bacon Court, Lafayette	1653 Skycrest Drive, Walnut Creek
91 Silverwood Drive, Lafayette	737 Miner Road, Orinda
57 Davis Road, Orinda	1583 Geary Road, Walnut Creek
312 Village View Court, Orinda	19 Vallecito Lane, Orinda
212 El Toyonal, Orinda	605 Chives Way, Walnut Creek
8 Moraga Court, Orinda	34 El Toyonal, Orinda
1021 Stimel Drive, Concord	3885 Los Arabis Drive, Lafayette

LAURA ABRAMS
laura@lauraabrams.com
www.lauraabrams.com
 510.697.3225

Coldwell Banker Orinda
 Top 100 Coldwell Banker Bay Area
 International Presidents Elite
 DRE#01272382



McDonnell  **Nursery**

Outdoor pottery sale 25% off

family owned since 1933

Flowers - Trees - Succulents - Pottery & Fountains
 Benches - Garden Decor - House Plants
 Gifts - Garden Consultations

www.mcdonnellnursery.com
 196 Moraga Way • Orinda • (925) 254-3713 • Open Wed. - Sun.

SEASONED SHOPPER / CLUB CALENDAR



Seasoned Shopper

Fun with Fennel



BARBARA KOBSAR

Take a look at fennel this month. It's in-season, fresh, and full of versatility. Both types of fennel, common and Florence, offer a distinctive licorice flavor in varying degrees.

Common green fennel stands impressive in the garden, three to five feet high with feathery fronds and a large, flat cluster of yellow flowers. The flowers produce the oval, greenish brown fennel seed used in curries, cakes, seafood and pork sausage, while the feathery leaves taste delicious used in pasta, soups, salads and basting sauces.

Like common fennel, Florence fennel (also called finocchio) has edible, bright green feathery leaves and pale green celery-like stems or stalks, but cooks and diners prize it for the bulbous white base. The broad, ribbed leafstalks overlap each other at the base to form the firm bulb. The three



BARBARA KOBSAR
Fresh Florence fennel is in season at the Orinda Farmer's Market.

to four inch wide, whitish bulb grows above ground and may be enjoyed raw or cooked.

To prepare, rinse fennel well and trim stalks to the area where they meet the top of the bulb. Cut off the base, leaving about 1/8 inch near the root to hold the fennel together during cooking. Remove any dry outer leaves. Slice in half lengthwise to boil, or cut into julienne strips or dice to add to soups or salads.

To appreciate the full robust flavor of raw fennel, serve it with a squeeze of lime and a sprinkle of salt as an appetizer. Thinly shave the fennel bulb on a mandoline if desired or cut into long slivers before marinating in a mixture of juice of half a lime, two tablespoons olive oil and a half-teaspoon salt. Pair with a nice chunk of fresh Parmesan cheese and serve.

Roast wedges of fennel to serve as a side dish. Cut each bulb into four or five sections before placing the cut side down on a baking sheet. Drizzle and toss with olive oil, salt and pepper. Roast at 400 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes, until the wedges become silky and caramelized around the edges.

Fennel vs. anise? The seeds, stalks and flowers of both plants do look similar, but that's as far as it goes. The only real edible part of the anise plant is its seeds. The entire fennel plant is edible. Anise is an annual, and fennel is a perennial. Anise is typically the more pungent of the two, while fennel tends to be sweeter and less intense. Remember, now is the time to enjoy fresh fennel and the Orinda Farmers' Market.

The convenience of pre-ordering and [SEE SHOPPER page 12]

Club Meetings in February

While most clubs are not meeting during shelter-in-place, others offer Zoom meetings. Use contact info to find out.

American Association of University Women - Orinda Moraga Lafayette Branch (AAU2W-OML). General meeting Feb. 16, 9:30 a.m. social, 10 a.m. program via Zoom, with Beverly Lane, "Woman Suffrage Warriors." For Zoom link, visit oml-ca.aauw.net.

Birding with Ben. The group meets at a different birding location every Wednesday at 9 a.m., masks and social distancing rules are practiced and enforced. FREE. Email: berntp988@gmail.com.

Diablo Star Chapter #214. Order of the Eastern Star. No meetings at this time. Contact Karen Seaborn, 925.689.0995 for information.

Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe. Third Monday, 7:30 p.m. Contact Kent Long for Zoom link at kentlong@moragaadobe.org. For more info., www.moragaadobe.org.

Friends of the Orinda Creeks. Fourth Wednesday, 5 p.m. 510.919.4765. www.orindacreeks.org.

Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition. Third Wednesday, 10 a.m. 925.687.8844, ext. 227. www.facebook.com/lamorindaalcoholpolicycoalition.

Lamorinda Meditation Community. Mondays and Thursdays, 10:30 - 11:25 a.m., through Zoom. All levels and philosophies welcome. Contact Gaby for more details: gcmoozee@gmail.com.

Lamorinda Nature Walk and Bird Watching for seniors. Wednesdays, 9 a.m., free. Call 925.254.2445 for meeting information.

Lamorinda Republican Women Federated. Third Thursday. For more information, search Facebook for Lamorinda Republican Women Federated or go to: lamorindarepublicanwomenfederated.org. Contact Elsie Euing at 925.254.8617 orejeuing@comcast.net.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary. Until further notice, all weekly meetings will be conducted via Zoom video conferencing. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/826094982057> - 8:15 a.m. Regular meetings will resume at the Lafayette Park Hotel when conditions permit. www.lamorindasunrise.com or lamorindasunrise@gmail.com. Meetings: Feb. 5: Patrick Thelen, Beirut Tragedy; Feb. 19: Club Assembly; Feb. 26: Member Magazine on Wine, Mark Lewis.

Montelindo Garden Club. Third Fri. through May. montelindogarden@aol.com. Meeting: Feb. 19, 10 a.m.

on Zoom. Everyone is welcome. Edible Landscaping with Patricia St. John, instructor in the Landscape Horticulture department at Merritt College in Oakland for the past 14 years. For Zoom link to attend, email montelindogarden@aol.com.

Orinda Association. Date change: First Wednesday, 7 p.m., Zoom meeting. 925.254.0800, www.orindaassociation.org.

Orinda Garden Club, PO Box 34, Orinda, www.orindagc.org, 925.257.0668.

Orinda Hiking Club. Every weekend and first Wednesday, Ian at 925.254.1465 or www.orindahiking.org.

Orinda Historical Society. Call 925.254.1353 for times and location of meetings and appointments.

Orinda Junior Women's Club. Second Tuesday, via Zoom, 7 p.m., through June. www.orindajuniors.org.

Orinda Job's Daughters. For information, call 925.283.7176.

Orinda Masonic Lodge #122 F&AM. 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda Masonic Center. For information, call 925.254.5211.

Orinda Rotary. Virtual meeting Wednesday, 12:30 p.m., 925.254.2222 go to www.orindarotary.org for zoom link.

Orinda Satellite Rotary Club. Second Wednesday. Call Sylvia at 510.224.8548.

Orinda/Tabor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation. Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m., social, 7:30 p.m. meeting via Zoom. Call 925.254.8260.

Orinda Woman's Club. Meets virtually Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. Email Jean Barnhart at jeanr.barnhart@gmail.com or go to www.orindawomansclub.org.

Reservoir Walk for Seniors meets Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at the center bench. Walk begins at 9 a.m. Email jascala2@comcast.net.

Road Runners. Runners meet 5:45 a.m. Tuesday at Papilion (67 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette), Wednesday (Gepetto's 87 Orinda Way, Orinda), Thursday (SiSI, 910 Country Club Drive, Moraga) and Friday (Starbucks, 470 Moraga Road, Rheem). For more information, contact John Fazel, runmnts@prodigy.net.

Sons in Retirement (SIR) Lamorinda Branch 174 hosts, via Zoom, a speaker and discussion on the second Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. For info, call Tyler at 925.963.5741 or Bill at 925.963.0442 or go to www.branch174.sirinc2.org.

Send calendar items to Jill Gelster at calendar@aspenconsult.com.



Orinda Shell Auto Care

- Complete Auto Care -
Scheduled Maintenance - Smog -
Air Conditioning - Electrical Repairs -
Brakes and Suspension - Warranty
Repair - Wheel Alignments -
Free Shuttle Service
Walking Distance from BART

Celebrating Over 19 Years in Business
Thank You Orinda!





925 254-1486 • fax 925 254-3427
9 Orinda Way
e-mail orindashell@sbcglobal.net



Orinda

SATURDAY

Farmers' Market

At Orinda Village

SATURDAYS
9AM-1PM



Pre-order for Good to Go,
Curbside Service with

Tap4Markets

in your App Store!

NOW OPEN YEAR ROUND

VISUAL ARTS



MAGGIE BOSCOE

Can you find the 16 birds, animals and pollinators in Orinda artist **Judith Feins'** painting? *Sunrise from Rim Trail* was installed on the front of CVS at 50 Moraga Way as part of the Lamorinda Arts Council's Artify Orinda program.

Artify Orinda Installs Painting at CVS

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

As you pass CVS at 50 Moraga Way, look for a serene landscape painting on the front of the building. Orinda artist Judith Feins completed the 20" x 50" artwork entitled *Sunrise from the Rim Trail* as part of the Lamorinda Arts Council's Artify Orinda program.

The timing of this could not be better. "This is an example of artists creating beauty in challenging times," said Maggie Boscoe, chair of the program. "Judith's painting is the first of four original artworks to be installed at CVS. We can't wait for the others to be finished."

In keeping with Artify Orinda's theme of portraying flora and fauna, there are 16 birds, animals and pollinators in Feins'

painting. See if you can find them next time you are in town.

The Council thanks the Orinda Community Foundation for contributing grant monies, allowing these projects to continue. The City of Orinda, its City Council Members, Planning Dept. and Parks and Recreation Dept., continue to provide strategic guidance and assistance to complete these projects.

If you know of any building owners on either side of downtown Orinda who would welcome this type of artwork, contact Boscoe at artify@lamorindaarts.org or call 925.359.9940.

To learn more about Artify Orinda, visit www.lamorindaarts.org/artify.

Elana O'Loskey can be reached at business.orinda@gmail.com.

Art Gallery at Wilder: Visionary Folk Artist Leon Kennedy

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer



LEON KENNEDY

Leon Kennedy's acrylic painting *Veteran James* introduces a former Navy man, whom Kennedy met on his walks around hometown Oakland.

The Lamorinda Arts Council will display a virtual exhibit of Leon Kennedy's paintings during February as part of celebrating Black History Month. Curator Aniston Breslin organized this solo show.

All Council art exhibits remain virtual until COVID-19 restrictions change. View Kennedy's virtual exhibit entitled *The Twelve Apostles* through images and a video at www.lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries.

The title refers to a metaphor about Kennedy's habits. He loves the church he attends – outdoors during COVID-19 – and loves painting the people he meets as he walks around Oakland.

Sometimes he paints on the surface of found objects.

"My dream is to connect to all people's
[SEE WILDER page 16]

Library Gallery: Honoring Educators who Mentor Artists

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Currently, the Lamorinda Arts Council is celebrating art teachers who have mentored student artists to participate in Arts Ambassadors (AA) programs. AA artwork fills the entire Art Gallery at the Orinda Library every spring.

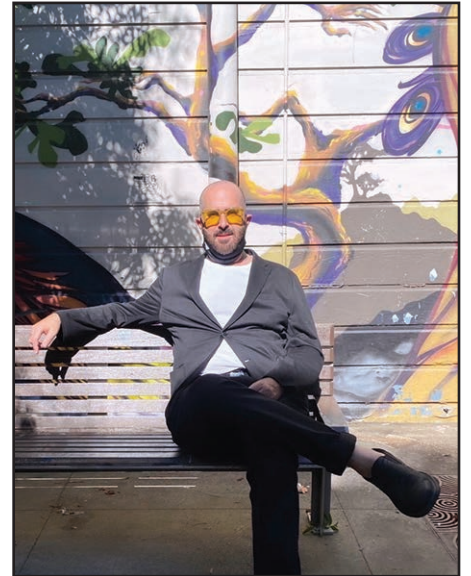
Because all Council art exhibits will continue as virtual until COVID-19 restrictions change, an actual or virtual art exhibit in 2021 seemed impractical. Instead, the Council has taken the opportunity to celebrate the art educators who in other years make the student artwork happen.

This article features one art teacher from Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. On the Council's website, information about many educators who nurture young artists of all ages and abilities is accessible from Feb. 1 - 28.

Educational organizations such as Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE), Moraga Educational Foundation (MEF) and Orinda Network for Education (ONE, formerly Education Foundation of Orinda) also have an important role in AA exhibits. Volunteers from each organization work with teachers, students and parents to provide an enjoyable experience for young art exhibitors.

Kirsten Jensen-Horne is a kindergarten art instructor in Lafayette schools through Lafayette Partners in Education. Jensen-Horne said, "At its best, art teaches everyone practicing it to be creative problem solvers in the moment, turning their frustration into something positive by thinking outside the box."

David Morrirt teaches sculpture at Orinda Intermediate School. "The most valuable lesson I try to teach my students



COURTESY DAVID MORRITT

David Morrirt, sculptor instructor at Orinda Intermediate School, built a curriculum by creating a series of projects around hand-building with clay to promote expressiveness and creativity.

at OIS is how to think like artists," said Morrirt. Learn more about his work at www.davidmorrirt.com.

Moose Wesler has been teaching art classes in Moraga schools for 11 years, both at the elementary and middle school levels. A practicing artist, she specializes in drawing and printmaking. "What I love most about teaching is seeing what students come up with – a single assignment for 25 students brings 25 individual responses. That's so exciting to me," said Wesler.

To learn more about Lamorinda's talented educators and artists, visit the Lamorinda Arts Council's virtual gallery page at www.lamorindaarts.org/student-exhibits/.

Elana O'Loskey can be reached at business.orinda@gmail.com.

CHRISTIAN EHRHORN FINE ARTS

PAINTINGS
By Aaron Webb

BASKETRY
By Peeta Tinay

Also on display are paintings by Christian Ehrhorn and Karen Frey

39 Moraga Way • Orinda
Gallery Hours: Wed - Sat 12 - 4pm

Please visit our website at christianehrhornfineart.com

Zamboni's
PIZZA COMPANY

1 Camino Sobrante, Ste 4
We're right across from
Orinda Safeway!

**Thin Crust & Deep
Dish Pizza**

Delicious pizza, calzones, salads and drinks. Eat in or order out, we're open everyday.

Remember we always offer
FREE local delivery! (\$15 min)

Open Daily

M-Th	11a - 9:00p
Fri - Sat	11a - 9:30p
Sundays	11a - 8:30p

- ✓ 23 Years of Local Sales
- ✓ Hundreds of Homes Sold
- ✓ Winning Strategies

**Low Inventory + Low Mortgage Rates
+ Abundant Buyers
= It's a Great Time to Sell!**

It's **April** in Lamorinda for Real Estate

April Matthews
925.200.0773
l.april.matthews@gmail.com
DRE# 01221153

Village
ASSOCIATES
It's Village. Of Course.

CONTINUATIONS

◆ **SCHOOLS** from page 1

moved the County to the Purple Tier, making District reopening impossible. Only schools already open were allowed to continue in-person instruction.

The District applied for a waiver, setting Jan. 19 as the day in-person learning would begin. Governor Newsom's "California's Safe Schools for All Plan," however, announced Dec. 30, eliminated waivers.

The District again pivoted and asked the county if the special education classes at Wagner Ranch and OIS designated them as "open," thus permitting those schools to allow additional students to attend hybrid model classes. Although initial responses from the County were unclear, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued new reopening regulations on Jan. 14, clearly stating school sites offering such specialized instruction were not considered "open." The document was updated Jan. 19. Additional updates are still expected.

"Time and time again, we've put in hours of work on something just to find



SALLY HOGARTY
This classroom at **Wagner Ranch Elementary School** is ready to go. All that is missing are the students.

out the sands had shifted, and it was no longer available," said a clearly frustrated Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carolyn Seaton, who hopes to expand specialized small group instruction to get more students back on campus.

According to the latest information from CDPH, TK-6th grade schools may now open in the Purple Tier, but only when Contra Costa County reaches a COVID-19 case rate below 25 per 100,000 population for five consecutive days. Schools can only reopen grades 7-8 when the county has been in the Red Tier for five consecutive days. As of Jan. 12, Contra Costa County's COVID-19 case rate was 46.1 per 100,000.

The Board expressed frustration with the state and county mandates, noting public schools in other counties were open despite much higher COVID rates than Contra Costa County.

◆ **HISTORY** from page 1

fifth grade students will listen to one of his speeches and write one of their own in his honor. Discussions on the topic of equality and reading a picture book about black leaders are also planned.

In addition, music lessons for children in transitional kindergarten through second grade, at all four of Orinda Union School District's elementary schools, will include an activity in remembrance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day later this month.

The study of black history and culture "touches every aspect of a child's education in elementary school, from art and music classes, to their core classroom discussions," said Shauna Simmonds, Sleepy Hollow's front office assistant manager.

Black History Month also has captured the attention of a broad spectrum of American society, from marketing agencies to

the military. That includes bookstores and libraries, repositories of culture and history. Although COVID-19 will prevent Contra Costa County's library in Orinda from holding lectures and presentations next month, Branch Manager Michael Beller continues mulling over ways to acquaint readers with books by and about blacks.

Those who drop by the library to collect or drop-off books might see a display of book covers at the entrance with that theme, and Beller says cardholders can watch documentaries about black culture and the works of black filmmakers through Kanopy, a free video streaming service.

Whether it's developing an appreciation for your neighbors' background or learning about one's own roots, libraries are the go-to source for such information, Beller said.

"This is a place where people needing to know more about a topic, can find out more," he said.

Others like David Schrag are promoting education of another kind.

As the director of curriculum and instruction for Orinda Union School District, he organized the first of what will be several training sessions by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to combat racial bias.

The first 90-minute online presentation held in early December encouraged the approximately five dozen parents who attended to examine and discuss their own biases.

The ensuing conversations were intended to help participants better understand how biases can affect minority students whose

families are moving to a predominantly white town, Schrag said.

Are young people only reading classic literature written by "old white men"? he asked rhetorically. Do they see teachers who look like them? If the curriculum includes the contributions of blacks and is taught by a staff that is not entirely white, Schrag said students are more likely to feel as if they belong on campus.

And when that happens, kids tend to work harder at their studies, he said.

"We want every kid, whether they are different in any kind of way, to feel comfortable when they step foot on campus," Schrag said. "If they can see themselves in their classmates and literature and the school's culture, that makes the biggest difference in being successful learners."

Three more trainings are planned during the next few months, two for parents and a third for district and city leaders.

Orinda Union School District first engaged the ADL to train principals and their staff at the beginning of the 2019-20 school year, during which the organization held a handful of sessions.

An international leader in the fight against bigotry of all kinds, the ADL is teaching local educators how to address bias head-on when they encounter it in the classroom, whether it's blatant or subtle, deliberate or unintended, Schrag said.

Rowena Gonden can be reached at rowenagonden@gmail.com.

At the Jan. 21 meeting, School Board Members Jason Kaune and Carol Brown proposed a plan to open schools Feb. 8, using a new interpretation of the CDPH definition of what constitutes an already open school. Three of the five board members, however, felt the proposal would not be allowed by the CDPH and would harm relationships with teachers and their union.

"We all want our kids back in school but I'm not comfortable with this proposal which tries to circumvent the rules," said OUSD President Liz Daoust.

While the proposal failed, the Board decided to write a protest letter to the CDPH stressing how prepared the District is to begin safe in-person learning now.

Newsom's Safe Schools for All plan includes approximately \$450 per student to districts offering in-person instruction beginning in February. It also requires

Sally Hogarty can be reached at sally@theorindanews.com.

the market hotline at 925.431.8361.

Barbara Kobsar sells her Cottage Kitchen jams and jellies at the JAM STAND at the Saturday Orinda market and the Sunday Walnut Creek market. She is also president of CCCFM (Contra Costa Certified Farmers Market) Association Board of Directors.

Barbara Kobsar can be reached at Barbara@cotkitchen.com.

SIAM ORCHID
Esquisite Thai Cuisine

Authentic Cuisine of Thailand

- Family Owned
- 3 Generations of Thai cooking experience
- All sauces made fresh
- Full Bar

Lunch: Mon.-Fri. 11-2
Dinner: Mon.-Sun. 4:30-9:00

23 F Orinda Way, Orinda
(925) 253-1975

The Medicine Shoppe
100% Pure PharmacySM

Keep your loved ones healthy this season. Come to The Medicine Shoppe[®] for all your winter health needs!

Happy Valentine's Day

Naomi Yuen, Pharm D.
Now offering FREE Deliveries
282 Orinda Village Sq. • 254-1211
http://orindamedicineshoppe.com

◆ **SHOPPER** from page 10

curbside pick-up from the Orinda Farmers' Market is available by downloading Tap4Markets from your mobile app store.

The Orinda market is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Orinda Way in Orinda Village. More information is available at www.cccfm.org, facebook.com/OrindaFarmersMarket and Instagram at OrindaFarmersMarket, or call

Barbara Kobsar can be reached at Barbara@cotkitchen.com.

Barbara Kobsar can be reached at Barbara@cotkitchen.com.

SERVING LAMORINDA SINCE 1979

KIRBY
CERTIFIED CARPET INSURED CLEANING

Area Rug Cleaning Specialist

Area Rug Free Pick Up & Delivery

(925) 254-2866
www.kirbycarpetcleaning.com

Services include

- Carpets
- Tile & Grout
- Upholstery
- Outdoor Cushions

36 Years of Experience
No individual broker has **SOLD** more homes.

CLARK THOMPSON
REAL ESTATE BROKER
VILLAGE ASSOCIATES

Office: 925.254.8585 Cell: 925.998.7898
ct@clarkthompson.com
clarkthompson.com

Luxury REAL ESTATE
Village ASSOCIATES
It's Village. Of Course.

License# 00903367

FINANCIAL NEWS / CLASSIFIEDS

FINANCIAL NEWS

SPAC DEALS BOOST LOCAL COMPANIES AND WORKERS

DAVID BORN, CFA, CFP



A never-growing pot of Bay Area venture capital money increasingly spills into public markets in a new way – the Special Purpose Acquisition Company (SPAC).

The Bay Area has seen its share of blockbuster Initial Public Offerings (IPO) over the last two years: Airbnb, Snowflake, Uber, Lyft, DoorDash and Pinterest, to name a few. Now, SPAC is used by less known companies in a process sometimes referred to as a “backdoor IPO.” These backdoor IPOs happen in two main steps.

First, a SPAC raises its own money and does its own public listing without any real business activity. At this point a SPAC is often called a “blank check company,” as it is just a corporate shell, capital and a dealmaker looking to invest in a real business. This makes the initial public listing of shares simple on the regulatory front.

The second step is when the SPAC merges with an actual business. This step is what transforms an actual pre-IPO business into a publicly-traded company.

Over the last six months, the SPAC process has already been used by Bay Area companies, including lidar companies (lidar is a detection system that works on the principle of radar, but uses light from a laser instead) such as Ouster, Luminar and Velodyne; biotech start-ups (Nuvation Bio, 5:01 Acquisition Corp); per-mile auto insurance (Metromile); a cannabis company (Left Coast Ventures) and a real estate transaction technology (Opendoor).

The stage is set for even more of these backdoor IPOs – four times as many blank check companies were formed in 2020

compared to 2019, with \$80 billion to invest. That’s \$80 billion that needs to find a real business for a backdoor IPO. Otherwise, it will be returned to investors – often within 24 months or less. These dealmakers are motivated.

Companies use SPACs for a variety of reasons, but some of the most common are avoiding typical IPO regulations and getting a better price for the company. Some investors are excited about broader public participation in younger growth companies, citing the rise of the pre-IPO “unicorn” – a pre-IPO company worth over \$1 billion. If Airbnb had gone public when it was worth \$2 billion instead of \$50 billion, then more of the public could have participated in profit-making – or so the argument goes.

Others are more cautious. There is a large body of evidence showing that IPOs in the aggregate under perform the broader market. For every Amazon, there are many more like Webvan, pets.com, and eToys.

Perhaps the hottest company to SPAC in 2020 was Nikola Corporation, a zero-emission automobile company. The share price rose eight times over, with the company reaching a total value of over \$27 billion. The valuation began rolling over when it was revealed a demo video of the

[SEE FINANCIAL page 14]

◆ COMMUNITY from page 7

nature as defining attributes of Wilder. The first proposed development in the valley had very different priorities.

Originally a working cattle ranch, Gateway Valley was purchased by four entrepreneurs in the late 1980s. After years of stalled negotiations with the City of Orinda, they sold to Pacific New Wave in 1991. The Japanese-owned company proposed building on much of the valley’s environmentally sensitive acreage including more than 270 homes, an 18-hole championship golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus, a hotel and conference center and a road connecting it to nearby Moraga. Protecting wildlife and creating open space for residents was not part of the plan. The city agreed to move forward with the development, which resulted in several legal actions.

In 1993, local voters, led by the environmental group Save Open Space-Gateway Valley (SOS) passed a referendum repealing the City-approved plan. In 1994, Pacific New Wave sued the City of Orinda in federal and state courts for not being allowed to develop its land. The federal lawsuit was dismissed with the state court instructing both sides to compromise. In a settlement, the City agreed to review the development plan. With continued scrutiny from SOS, Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Sierra Club, Pacific New Wave opted out of the project in 1996. Southwest Diversified, Inc. took over the project with Pacific New Wave a minority partner. The new entity became Orinda Gateway LLC.

But the new developer also faced many impasses and in 2001 sold to one of the nation’s largest hedge funds, Farallon Capital Management of San Francisco. The new owner kept the name, Orinda Gateway LLC, but installed Brooks Street as the new manager, who under Project Manager

Michael Olson, listened to critics and found ways to compromise. By 2004, a settlement reached between Orinda Gateway LLC, SOS-Gateway Valley, the Golden Gate Audubon Society and the Sierra Club eliminated 80% of the development, including the golf course. Development was restricted to 200 acres with 1,000 acres deeded to East Bay Regional Parks District and the East Bay Municipal Utility District in perpetuity. The City of Orinda and its residents received five public ballfields, a public clubhouse, a public art and garden center and funds to build low-cost housing for seniors on the former Orinda Library site at Orinda Way and Irwin Way.

While dips in the economy helped fuel a slow start to home sales in Wilder, sales began to climb in recent years bringing the total number of lots sold and completed houses to 186 as of December 2020. Like any new development, however, there have been growing pains. For instance, the Art and Garden Center’s parking location has proved difficult to access for both members of the public and Wilder residents. Compared to the difficulties encountered when the development was first proposed in the 1980s, this and other problems seem small indeed.

Clendening expressed her family’s appreciation of all the efforts to bring Wilder to fruition. “We were looking for a fantastic neighborhood for our children to grow up in and Wilder has not disappointed. I really want to thank everyone who worked for over 25 years to make this beautiful development happen. Now my family and many others can live here, enjoy the nature and wildlife all around us and take advantage of the wonderful public schools. Thank you so much.”

Sally Hogarty has been covering the development of the Gateway Valley for 28 years. You can reach her at sally@theorindanews.com.

...classified ads

For Rent

Nice room for rent in Moraga. Clean, spacious home with large backyard. Female preferred, non-smoker. \$1,050. Call: 917-749-9273

Services

Rain Gutter Cleaning. Roof Cleaning. Overhanging branches trimmed. Charles (h) 925-254-5533 or (c) 925-528-9385.

Wanted

I buy Danish Modern & 1950’s Modern furniture, fine art, sterling silver, & estate jewelry. Will buy 1 item or entire estate! Call Rick at 510-219-9644. Courteous house calls. Rick Hudson Estate Liquidation, LLC.

Unwanted Eye Glasses are collected for Lions Club at The Orinda Association office, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda.

Orinda News classified ads

Your ad in The Orinda News reaches 9,000 households and businesses in Orinda!

2021

Publication Schedule

Issue	Deadline
March 2021	Feb. 8, 2021
April 2021	March 8, 2021

Ad rates are \$5 per line - \$10 minimum
Form available at:
<https://bit.ly/3f4gkf6>

Enclose your check payable to *The Orinda Association* and mail to *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563. We reserve the right to reject any ad. Classified ads must be prepaid. *Your cancelled check is your receipt.* Ads can also be paid at bit.ly/3bZsoio.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Thank you to all of the wonderful clients I have been honored to help in 2020.

I appreciate all of your support and wish you and your families a happy, healthy and successful new year.

I look forward to continuing to assist with your real estate needs.

Cheers!



Ann Newton Cane

415.999.0253

a.newtoncane@ggsir.com

Lic.#02084093

Golden Gate

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Each Franchise Is Independently Owned And Operated.



Baan Thai RESTAURANT

Eat Healthy, Live Healthy

ORGANIC SALADS MADE FRESH DAILY. MANY VEGETARIAN OPTIONS.

WE COOK FROM FAMILY RECIPES.

FOOD TO GO, CATERING & GIFT CERTIFICATES ARE AVAILABLE

Offering Curb Side Pick Up
Be safe! Eat at home. Let us take care of your meal.

Call us!

Lunch: Mon. - Sun. 11.30 a.m. - 2.30 p.m.

Dinner: Mon. - Sun. 4.30 - 9.00 p.m.

99 Orinda Way, Orinda

(925) 253-0989



COMMUNITY / ARTS COMPETITION

Propagating Plants in the Pandemic



SALLY HOGARTY

Orinda Garden Club members (L-R) Pam Wiley, Katie Wittmann and Jean Rowe tend plants they have propagated for the club's April plant show.

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Looking for a project to relieve the boredom of staying put in the pandemic? Ladies of the Orinda Garden Club (OGC) have a solution for you — propagate plants. Because the OGC has enjoyed a great success rate propagating plants for months, they plan a plant sale in April.

Things were much different when the pandemic first hit.

Jean Rowe, an OGC organizer of the upcoming event spoke to this: “No nurseries were open. Plus, we had more time on our hands, it was special to try our luck at propagation. Then, we conceived the idea of reviving a plant sale. Historically, the OGC held a plant sale every year in conjunction with the library book sale, but we stopped in 2005 when the library quit having the big sale and did several smaller ones.”

She added, “So, going back to our roots, it seems a great project on which to focus. In this COVID-19 time, we cannot get together for regular meetings, but we can grow the plants for the sale, thus earn-

ing money to donate toward educational projects.”

The club held propagation workshops on *Tomato Seed Saving* by Sue Andersen-Berger and *Succulent Propagation* by Dena Raffel. Further, Joyce Nelson offered workshops on plant division and cutting. Since the organization adhered to the 10-person limit for gatherings, two workshops on each topic were held so participants could safely distance.

Rowe continued, “Members brought cuttings, succulents and bulbs to the workshops from their gardens so they could learn how to propagate them. Then, they took them home to nurture over the winter until our spring sale. Zoom has been an excellent tool. The club holds sessions where members can ask experts questions about their plants while actually showing them what they’ve been nurturing.”

Nelson, a propagation guru, said new cuttings need warmth, light, air and water to be free of pests. Berger, the tomato expert, explained you should only propagate heirloom or open-pollinated tomato seeds, since hybrid varieties are a cross between two or more varieties, and you can never

Registration Open for 18th Annual High School Visual Arts Competition

The Lamorinda Arts Council reminds the area’s students and families that online registration for its 18th Annual High School Visual Arts Competition (HSVAC) will close Friday, Feb. 19, at midnight.

The Artists and Awards show on Zoom will be Thursday, March 11, at 7 p.m. Entries accepted for HSVAC will be on display online for public viewing starting March 1.

The HSVAC showcases and acknowledges art in four categories: 2D, 3D, Photography and the Lamorinda Arts Alliance Digital Art category. All work will be eligible from high school students who live in (including home-schooled students and students who attend school elsewhere) or attend school in Orinda, Lafayette or Moraga, including all schools in the Acalanes Union High School District. The competition features cash awards, merit citations and an online public exhibit of entries on the Lamorinda Arts Council website.

For more information or to register, go to lamorindaarts.org/VAC.

be sure what the outcome will be. She has propagated hundreds of tomato seeds and promised to have difficult to find tomato plants that are very tasty for sale at the OGC event.

“We are carrying on a tradition in our sale, delving into the past,” said Rowe. “We have cuttings from former OGC members like a *Pelargonium Citronellum*, an evergreen lemon-scented shrub owned by Dorothy Lamb, a club founder in 1934; rhizomes from Pat Connolly, a member from 1982 to 2010 and camellias from Shirley Meneice, a nationally recognized propagator from Carmel.”

Current OGC President Jane Wiser said the club has a wide mission: “The purpose of the Orinda Garden Club shall be to

stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to cooperate in the protection and conservation of our national heritage and to encourage and assist in the beautification of the community.”

The plant sale helps the OGC carry out its endeavors, primarily beautifying the community by offering many new plants to be placed in Orinda gardens.

Bobbie Dodson can be reached at bobbiedodson@comcast.net.

◆ STARLIGHT from page 8

mystery, or, in this case, incite a conflict.

Last year would have marked OrSVP’s 37th year producing shows in the Orinda Community Center Park.

“None of us have been able to experience all the joys of theater in the park,” said Marketing Director Suzan Lorraine. “As a result, no money is coming in to pay for storage of set pieces, costumes and props and the rights or set supplies for the planned 2021 shows.”

In addition to the Zoom games, Lorraine set up a GoFundMe page to help raise needed monies to support the little theater company through the year. Visit www.gofundme.com/f/Orinda-Starlight-Village-Players for more information.

At this point, the group is uncertain whether they will be able to produce plays in the park this summer or will have to hibernate for another year. “It’s financially touch and go as to whether we’ll be able to return,” said Lorraine.

For more information and to make reservations for *Valentine Mobsters*, *Molls and Mayhem*, visit www.orsvp.org or email info@orsvp.org.

David Dierks can be reached at david@theorindanews.com.

◆ FINANCIAL from page 13

Nikola One showed a prototype that could not actually propel itself – it was just rolling downhill. The founder and CEO resigned.

It doesn’t take a lot of imagination to see that some people are about to make a lot of money, while others are going to get burned. When you hear your friend’s son quintupled his Robinhood account, don’t be inspired to bet the farm on a cannabis SPAC.

And if it’s your company that goes SPAC, you may have a better sense of the prospects and vision for the company. Even if you are confident in the company’s future, keep in mind that Webvan and pets.com visions came true – for Amazon and Chewy.

Whether you are on the outside or the inside, you may want to limit your SPAC exposure to what you can afford to see roll downhill. Picture: Nikola One rolling downhill to oblivion.

David Born can be reached at david.born@brightonjones.com.

McCaulou’s
and
Hollyhock
always
FREE Gift Wrap!
on items 15.00
or more.

Orinda Village Square

Propagation Tips from OGC Members

Take a 3-5” cutting from a mother plant, just below a node, which is where leaves are coming out.

Remove leaves at the lowest node. Cut off any blossoms.

Using a root hormone is optional; but, it usually helps.

Use a mix of potting soil and perlite (30-50%). Water thoroughly. Keep watering as roots develop, which should begin in 5-8 weeks.

To determine if roots are developing, give a delicate tug. If you find resistance, it’s working.

What’s On Deck With Parks & Rec!

Working with selected contractors, Orinda Parks and Rec is providing all-day care for grades K-5, providing distance learning support and enrichment.

Also, in an effort to serve as many community needs as possible, additional youth and adult enrichment programs are also being offered. In all cases, we are committed to providing programming that meets or exceeds the latest county and CDC health and safety guidelines and protocol.

Please stay tuned to our website for all the program details and latest information.

www.OrindaParksandRec.org

We Will Get Through This Together



Orinda Parks and Recreation Department
925-254-2445
www.OrindaParksandRec.org
OrindaParksandRec@CityofOrinda.org
28 Orinda Way – Orinda Community Center
Administrative Office Hours – **Currently Closed**

The Murphy Team

Leaders in Lamorinda Real Estate



www.MurphyTeamRE.com

Karen Murphy
(925)788-6322
karen.villageassociates@gmail.com
License #00699318

Hillary Murphy
(415)309-5061
hillary@murphyteamRE.com
License#01967218

FIRST FRIDAY FORUM / ROTARY FUNDRAISER / FITNESS TIP

Speaker Addresses Housing and Homeless at First Friday Forum

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

If you thought the homeless crisis in the U.S. was already dire, think about what impact the pandemic has had on Americans – even in our own backyard.

Executive Director of Hope Solutions, Deanne Pearn, is the guest speaker for the First Friday Forum (FFF) Feb. 5 at 10 a.m. via Zoom. Her topic is called “Housing and Homelessness in Contra Costa County - Responding in the Context of COVID.”

Many Americans have lost housing due to the pandemic.

“Prior to COVID-19, the housing shortage and homelessness crisis in California was acute,” Pearn said, “One in nine Americans live in California, and one in four homeless Americans live in California. The health and economic crisis brought on by the pandemic is only exacerbating this situation.”



COURTESY OF DEANNE PEARNS

Deanne Pearn is co-founder of Hope Solutions and First Place for Youth, and is the First Friday Forum guest speaker, slated for Feb. 5 at 10 a.m. via Zoom. Her topic is “Housing and Homelessness in Contra Costa County - Responding in the Context of COVID.”

Pearn is also co-founder of Hope Solutions, whose mission is to provide permanent housing solutions for the homeless.

“Hope Solutions has worked to blunt the impact of the pandemic,” she said. “We emptied the shelters and moved people into safer spaces in hotels and are being creative in how we create permanent housing solutions.”

Pearn will discuss the successes and challenges we have in ending homelessness in our community and detail how other partners can continue to be part of the solution.

Hope Solutions’ mission, according to its website, aims to “heal the effects of poverty and homelessness by providing permanent housing solutions and vital support services to homeless and poverty impacted families and individuals.”

Hope Solutions was founded in 1997 as a partnership among Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, Temple Isaiah and many more faith communities.

It has grown into an \$8.5 million organization, with over 60 staff members, offering a range of critical services to over 1,800 clients per year.

Prior to coming to Hope Solutions, Pearn co-founded First Place for Youth, a nationally recognized organization dedicated to ending poverty and homelessness among transition age youth.

Pearn holds a Master’s Degree in public policy from the University of California, Berkeley’s Goldman School after receiving an undergraduate degree in human biology from Stanford University. She lives in Central Contra Costa County with her husband and three children.

For this FFF, guests are required to register at lopc.org/first-friday-forum. Click on the link and fill out the webinar registration form with your name and email address. The Zoom link required for the presentation will be sent to your email Feb. 5.

Bobbie Dodson can be reached at bobbiedodson@comcast.net.



RODNEY LAL

Orinda Rotary and Casa Orinda partnered in a take-out dinner fundraiser event Dec. 9, 2020, to support local restaurants and feed needy groups in Contra Costa. Together they sold 168 fried chicken dinners. (L-R) Orinda Mayor Amy Worth, Rotarian Melissa Roeder, Rotarian Sue Farmer and Casa Orinda Manager Claudia Tata.

Orinda Rotary Fundraiser Success

By MELISSA ROEDER
Contributing Writer

lot and had meals brought to their car by volunteers wearing masks.

The Rotary Club of Orinda and Casa Orinda partnered for a terrific take-out dinner fundraiser on Dec. 9, 2020.

Orinda Rotary sold out the event, selling 168 dinners featuring Casa Orinda’s renowned fried chicken. Each meal came with homemade cookies baked by Rotarian Sue Farmer and wine donated by Diablo Foods, Rotary club members and restaurateur Jose Guillen-Avelar.

The meal price of \$35 included a modest donation to the Orinda Rotary Endowment, which in turn funds Rotary’s community service. Casa Orinda provided exceptional food and service, as well as a welcoming tent to shelter the volunteers and staff on a cold evening.

Customers who prepaid for their dinners drove through Casa Orinda’s parking

By all accounts, diners and Rotarians enjoyed their meals and the community spirit. This dinner event aligned with Club President Ken Jew’s double mission this year, to support local restaurants and to fundraise to feed the needy in Contra Costa County.

Orinda Rotary is grateful to the Moraga Rotary Club for generously sharing its take-out dinner format.

Orinda Rotary has more “drive-through” dining events in store, including its Annual Crab and Pasta Feed on Wednesday, Feb. 10. This take-out dinner will feature fresh cracked crab supplied by Mike Lucas of Costa Norte, Inc. and hot pasta from Orinda’s own, La Piazza.

Ordering is now open until Feb. 2 at www.orindarotaryfundraiser.com.

Orinda Rotary meets weekly via Zoom at 12:30 p.m. every Wednesday. In addition to supporting important local and international causes, the club enjoys stimulating lectures each week on many topics.

Guests and prospective new members are welcome to participate. For more information, visit www.orindarotary.org.

Melissa Roeder can be reached at Editor@theorindanews.com.

◆ FIREWISE from page 9

fires started by Californians using equipment the wrong way.

Below are some tips to help you take care of your property the right way:

- Do all yard maintenance that requires a gas or electric motor before 10 a.m. and not in the heat of the day or when the wind is blowing.
- Lawnmowers are designed to mow lawns. Never use lawn mowers on dry vegetation.
- Remove rocks in the area before you begin operating any equipment. A rock hidden in grass or weeds is enough to start a fire when struck by a metal blade.
- Keep a cell phone nearby and call 911 immediately in case of a fire.

For more tips and information, visit www.napafirewise.org.

Fitness Tip of the Month

Ultimate Fitness Goal

Reaching your ultimate fitness goal is about setting up one small milestone at a time and actually reaching it. Success breeds success.



For more information, contact Sheena with Living Lean personal training and eating for elite fitness at 925.360.7051 or www.thelivingleanprogram.com.

KEN'S

REDWOOD FENCING

925.938.9836

Custom Quality Fencing
Good Neighbor Fence
Deer Fencing
Picket/Split Rail
Arbors and Trellises
Retaining Walls
Insurance/Storm Repairs

Licensed, Bonded & Insured.
CA #667491

YOUR SMILE IS EVERYTHING

MARY H. SMITH, D.D.S.
A Professional Corporation
Family & Cosmetic Dentistry

We are celebrating our 25th anniversary of making and maintaining beautiful smiles.

We always welcome new patients.

Our office delivers the highest quality and service.

Consults are always complimentary.

NEW ADDRESS:
1 Bates Blvd. Suite 210, Orinda, 925.254.0824

Combine and get in on the surprise.

Kelly Sopak, Agent
Insurance Lic#: 0D03981
1 Northwood Drive Suite 1
Orinda, CA 94563
Bus: 925-253-7700
Cell: 925-726-4444
Mon-Thurs 9:00am to 5:00pm
Fridays 9:00am to 4:30pm
Evenings & Weekends by Appt

Here's the deal, our Home and Auto rates are already great. But when you combine with State Farm®, you can save even more. Call me to discover your surprisingly great rates on Home and Auto today.

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®

Individual premiums will vary by customer. All applicants subject to State Farm underwriting requirements.

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company
State Farm Indemnity Company
State Farm Fire and Casualty Company
State Farm General Insurance Company, Bloomington, IL
State Farm County Mutual Insurance Company of Texas
State Farm Lloyds, Richardson, TX
State Farm Florida Insurance Company
Winter Haven, FL
2001863

BUSINESS BUZZ

Business Buzz

PUTTING A PERSONAL FACE ON LOCAL BUSINESS

ELANA O'LOSKEY



Kirby Carpet Cleaning (KCC) is a family-owned business operated by Dave and Michelle Steely with sons Brandon and Anthony. Dave has been in the industry 25 years, Brandon, his oldest son, 10 years, Anthony, his youngest son, five years, while Michelle runs the office.

John Kirby, a third generation Orinda native, started the business in 1979 in Lamorinda, and it must be noted, he had no affiliation or association with the Kirby Vacuum Company.

At KCC, personalized service comes with every call. Expect Dave, Brandon or Anthony greeting you at your door.

While regular vacuum cleaning is part of normal housekeeping, professional carpet cleaning is a different animal.

Multiple certifications are required to stay up-to-date on industry practices. The Institute of Inspection Cleaning Restoration Certification, a non-profit certifying body for the cleaning and restoration industry, certifies KCC, which is also insured for your further protection.

KCC workers hold a host of additional cleaning certifications including carpet, upholstery, area rugs, natural stone, leather and odor control. Each requires college-level courses and compulsory, continued education to remain certified.

Between the pandemic and wildfires, 2020 has been a stressful year. Many homes now have a new look: office, gym, school,

movie theater, restaurant and play area. These activities probably meant extra wear and tear on furniture and floors.

Brandon said carpets, upholstery and area rugs in homes can act as indoor, cleanable air filters. "They can trap and hold things such as pollen, pet dander, mold spores, dust and a variety of other allergens and pollutants," he said.

While regular vacuuming removes most of these irritants, routine professional cleaning provides deep cleaning. KCC's training gives its employees the tools to deal with most situations, including damage caused by improper maintenance or previous cleanings, residue removal, recurring spots and browning.

Anthony said deep cleaning not only extends the life of carpets and upholstery and keeps them out of landfills, it also helps improve indoor air quality.

COVID-19 precautions include daily pre-work temperature checks, hand sanitizer applied before entering every home and masks worn inside clients' homes. Any equipment used gets wiped down after each use with EPA-approved hospital-grade disinfectant.

Carpet diem.

When not seizing the day with working on carpeting, the Steely family enjoys cooking, spending time with friends and taking trips in their motorhome. KCC has supported Orinda schools by offering gift certificates and services. From Feb. 1 to 28,



COURTESY DAVE STEELY

Better known as your 'Carpet diem team' (L-R) Anthony, Dave and Brandon Steely, have their masks out and are ready to deep clean carpets, area rugs and furniture in Lamorinda.

KCC offers a 10% discount on all services, if you mention *The Orinda News*.

For more information, contact Kirby Carpet Cleaning at 925.254.2866, kirbycarpetcleaning1@gmail.com or visit www.kirbycarpetcleaning.com. For in-home services, their COVID-19 hours are Mon.

– Fri. from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Sat. by special request. KCC's area rug shop is located at 3330 Vincent Rd. Unit 1, Pleasant Hill, Mon. – Fri. from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Elana O'Loskey can be reached at business.orinda@gmail.com.

◆ WILDER from page 11

dreams," he said.

Since the Council had 12 slots for his portraits in its virtual gallery, Breslin suggested naming his exhibit *The Twelve Apostles*. Visit www.lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries.

Born in Houston, but an Oakland resident for some time, Kennedy is a self-taught artist. His uplifting portraits seem to dip into the core of those he paints.

John Hildenbrand, Kennedy's agent said, "Once you are familiar with Leon Kennedy's paintings, you'll recognize his work anywhere."

One look at *Thank God for Giving Me My Heart*, an 18" x 24" acrylic on canvas, draws the viewer into the deep pools of the woman's eyes, brilliant with the light shining from her heart.

Jan and Chuck Rosenak's iconic 1996 book, *Contemporary American Folk Art*, features Kennedy's artwork. The Smithsonian purchased 200 works from the Rosenak's collection in 1997 for its groundbreaking American Art Museum exhibit. Kennedy's *Untitled* (large wall hanging with numerous figures) 1995, mixed media on bed sheet, was in that collection.

An article about the Smithsonian's acquisition of Kennedy's work noted this was the first American collection exhibited at the Collection de l'Art Brut in Switzerland, which "testifies to its quality and uniqueness."

Kennedy has frequent shows and workshops at Oakland Public Library branches. St. Mary's Center hosts Kennedy, in a virtual Zoom meeting on Thursday, Feb. 18, from 11 a.m. to noon, honoring Black History Month and celebrating the music and art of Oakland. The meeting ID is 857 0496 8720, passcode 472245; RSVP to jcastillo@stmaryscenter.org.

Kennedy's fire for painting is unwavering. From his initial recognition in 1996 to present, he has "walked what he talks" by reaching out to "... connect to all the people's dreams" through his paintings. For more information about his work, visit www.leonkennedy.com.

The Art Gallery at Wilder, closed to the public, remains virtual due to COVID-19 restrictions. Contact Curators Denise Nomura and Aniston Breslin at wildergallery@lamorindaarts.org.

Elana O'Loskey can be reached at business.orinda@gmail.com.

◆ EVERYDAY from page 9

respectable intervention any parent can provide.

Perhaps that's what the iron bars around the doll in the picture above represent: the barriers our seniors build to deflect parents, to de-activate any nascent Lori Loughlin tendencies, as they struggle to think and act for themselves for possibly the first time ever. And the trash and cobwebs? Despite your best efforts to teach them good housekeeping habits, this will totally be

their dorm or apartment on move-out day.

Best wishes to our Miramonte and Campolindo seniors. May 2021 yield a few salvaged "old school" moments, where proper campus homage to the Top Dog is rendered. This time next year, you will have burst through those iron bars surrounding your bedroom-classroom, one step closer to becoming your future amazing selves.

Mimi Bommarito can be reached at editor@theorindanews.com.

P
I
L
A
T
E
S

*Nationally Certified, experienced teachers.
*Innovative Classes and Private sessions
*We work with every BODY and All ages

Visit our website for great offers.

CoreKinetics Take control of your health.
www.CoreKinetics.com

The Well Balanced Workout

925-708-3279
Please call for an appointment
50 Vashell Way, #120, Orinda, CA 94563

50
YEAR ANNIVERSARY

THIS FEBRUARY ONLY!

GET A

"COUPLE"

OF STORAGE SPACES

FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

FREE MONTH GOOD FOR ONE MONTH. OFFER APPLIES TO SELECT UNITS 9X10 AND SMALLER. WHILE THEY LAST.

GOOD THROUGH 2/1/2021 - 2/28/2021

Hours of operation
Mon-Sat 9am -6pm
Office and Yard.
Or call for an appointment.

455 Moraga Rd. Ste. F
(925) 643-2060
www.5Aspace.com

Time to buy or sell? Let me help you.

See what my clients say at www.myagentsuzanne.com

Clients Are Always First

Suzanne Toner Geoffrion
925-699-4832
CalBRE# 01878803
International Diamond Society
Top 100 Sales Coldwell Banker SF Bay Area

©2021 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01908304.