



THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis
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Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club Raffles Off 1961 Vintage VW Bug



SALLY HOGARTY

Raffle winner **Steve Falk** and his wife **Nancy** stand with their big prize, a beautifully restored 1961 VW Beetle, joined by members of the Rotary Club of Lamorinda Sunrise.

By LYNN KALMAR
Assistant Editor

On Dec. 7, at Lafayette's "It's a Wonderful Life" holiday celebration, Rotary Club of Lamorinda Sunrise raffled off a

fully restored 1961 VW Beetle to winner Steve Falk. A fellow Rotarian, Falk recently retired as Lafayette's city manager after 22 years of service. He was one of thousands of people who purchased raffle tickets in hopes of winning the Beetle,

while also helping to raise funds for Lamorinda Sunrise's many community service projects.

After successfully raffling off two wooden canoes and a wooden teardrop trailer, all handcrafted, the club went

in a new direction this year, restoring the vintage car in member Hays Englehart's shop. The club considers this their fourth "We build stuff" project, with funds from the raffle going toward their [SEE ROTARY page 10]

New Facade for Moraga Way Building Approved

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Downtown revitalization, the topic of many local meetings and countless

reams of paper, took a small step forward on Dec. 18 when the Planning Commission approved a new facade for 37 Moraga Way.

The two-story building, which houses

Orinda Cleaners, Salon Elegante and NuWa Great Body Designer, was purchased in late 2018 by Mo Mashboon. Originally constructed in the 1940s, the building's original facade had been transformed over time from a commercial/industrial appearance to the multi-tenant commercial facade that exists today. That facade includes a large green awning and a mismatch of signage.

The new facade approved by the Planning Commission introduces a more consistent architectural style with a warmer color palette, Tuscan columns with planter boxes and a decorative panel between the first and second stories. The large green awning has been replaced with three smaller awnings

[SEE FACADE page 5]



KATTENBURG ARCHITECTS

Conceptual drawing by Kattenburg Architects of the new facade for 37 Moraga Way.

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Warm Coat Drive Exceeds Expectations

By KEN HOGARTY
Staff Writer

Sponsored by The Orinda Association (OA), the third annual One Warm Coat (OWC) drive concluded with 374 coats donated for this good cause. OWC is a national non-profit organization that works to provide a free, warm coat to any person in need.

“This was an amazing year. The generosity of our local residents and our partnerships with Sleepy Hollow School and Orinda Rotary resulted in this sizable jump from last year’s 165 donated coats,” said Orinda Association member and OWC Drive Coordinator Kate Wiley.

Wiley related how one Orinda resident really stepped up personally. Stephanie Rhoads-Bickham, the senior account manager of Performa Marketing Agency in Walnut Creek, had seen an article about the coat drive in *The Orinda News*. She stopped by The Orinda Association office and donated over 30 new coats from Performa. She also

noted that Dick Burkhalter promoted the drive at weekly Orinda Rotary meetings.

But, one of the biggest local supporters was Sleepy Hollow Elementary School, which asked families to donate new or gently used child-size coats in bins outside the school office. Fifteen fourth and fifth grade student council volunteers at Sleepy Hollow, with Crystal D’Amato coordinating, helped sort, count and bundle coats in the multi-purpose room after classes on Dec. 12. “The kids really took the job seriously,” says OA staff member Cathy Goshorn. “They were very focused on the task and understood who the recipients would be.”

Sleepy Hollow also embarked upon a food collection drive to the Monument Crisis Center benefiting low-income individuals and families in Central and East Contra Costa County.

The coats garnered from this community-wide effort went to White Pony Express (WPX) and some will be distributed to Camp Fire victims and residents of Contra

[SEE COAT page 4]



Sleepy Hollow students (L-R) Back Row: **Haley Hoskins, Eve Copeland, Annarose Smith**; Front row: **Sofia Blore, Emma Stokes** help sort donations for the One Warm Coat Drive. The Orinda Association, in partnership with Sleepy Hollow Elementary and Rotary Club Orinda, collected 374 coats this year for those in need.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lots of Joy at SAT Luncheon



Lucia and Anthony Steger not only enjoyed the SAT luncheon but also the attentions of therapy dog **George**, owned by Bill and Marie Waterman.

SALLY HOGARTY

By LYNN KALMAR
Assistant Editor

On Dec. 11, Seniors Around Town (SAT) held their annual holiday luncheon at the Orinda Library’s Garden Room. A program of The Orinda Association, SAT provides free rides to Orinda

residents utilizing volunteer drivers from the community. Both drivers and riders as well as Orinda Association board members enjoyed the event which began with welcoming words from emcee Steve Harwood. While enjoying lavish sandwiches and sweet treats, attendees had the opportunity

[SEE SENIORS page 14]



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Nominations for Citizen of Year and Mott Environmental Awards

The Orinda Community Foundation and The Orinda Association (OA) are looking for local residents or organizations that have contributed substantially to the Orinda community for consideration as the 2018 Citizen of the Year or the 2018 William Penn Mott Jr. Environmental Award winner. The winners will be feted at a gala dinner on March 10 at the Orinda Country Club.

If you know of such worthy individuals or group, send your nomination to the OA at oa@orindaassociation.org or by mail to P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563. For more information, call the OA office at 925-254-0800.



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THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
Wishing You a Healthy
Happy 2019!



Cindy Powell

Let's start off the year on Jan. 1 with **Polar Bear Swim Day**. We have so many swimmers in our town that surely someone is starting the year off with a freezing swim. A less traumatic way to start the year would be to make a New Year resolution to continue helping others, yourself and your community. The **Camino Pablo Medians Landscape project** finishes in the beginning of January, and we are thankful for the Orinda Garden Club's major financing and that organization's plant and design help. And welcome to **Inga Miller, our new mayor**. She is also a driver for the Seniors Around Town program.

The **Golden Globe Awards** are on Jan. 6, when the Hollywood Foreign Press Association recognizes the best of film and television, both domestic and foreign. On Jan. 9, the movie **A Star Is Born** will play at the Rheem Theatre – not the current version, or the 2013, or the 1976, or the 1954 version – but the original 1937 version. The free movie at the Orinda Theatre is Jan. 10, the same as **Bittersweet Chocolate Day**, so eat some at the movie to celebrate because you can never get enough dark chocolate says our editor, Sally.

Dress Up Your Pet Day on Jan. 14, gives your pets a bit more attention if they

enjoy costumes. And if they stay in costume overnight, add a hat the following day for **National Hat Day**. And put on your hat. Make a fashion statement, protect your noggin from sun or rain, or protect your head with a helmet if you ride your bike – always!

Remember a few weeks ago you made some resolutions that were a bit far reaching? Jan. 17 is **Ditch New Year's Resolutions Day**, when most people give up on their resolutions. Almost 80 percent of all people who make New Year's resolutions abandon them some time during the year, but how did the folks in the know decide this date?

Jan. 19 is **Popcorn Day**. Popcorn makes a healthy treat with light butter and salt and a fun treat as sticky popcorn balls. Or you can string kernels together on garlands for your local birds. Pop some corn and enjoy your Saturday night!

Fun At Work Day, on Jan. 25, is all about enjoying yourself: Dress up silly, partake in an office-based contest, or just crank the music up loud while you work. You're lucky if you can get work done and have fun doing it while loving your job.

Humans have been swapping seeds [SEE PRESIDENT page 4]

Orinda Association's New Board of Directors Takes the Reins



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New OA President **Carlos Baltodano**.

At its Dec. 10 meeting, The Orinda Association elected Carlos Baltodano as its new president. Baltodano will be joined by returning Vice President Joe Garvey, Secretary Sally Hogarty and returning Treasurer Bill Waterman. The Events Committee, which oversees such activities as the annual Fourth of July parade and the Classic Car Show among others, is comprised of Diane Lautz and Bill Waterman.

"It is an honor and a privilege to be the OA's new president," says Baltodano. "I joined the board three years ago, and it has been a wonderful experience. I just love the work and the people involved. We had a great year with the most successful ever Fourth of July celebration and Classic Car Show and *The Orinda News* is a gem for the city. I look forward to continuing to work on these OA programs to ensure their success for our community."

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.

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www.OrindaAssociation.org

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Secretary Sally Hogarty
Treasurer Bill Waterman
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Diane Lautz
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The Orinda Association

thanks our donors for their support in 2018.

With financial and time contributions, we were able to provide wonderful events and services for Orinda.

Your dollars directly supported the following programs:



- ✓ Community Forums
- ✓ 35th annual 4th of July Parade and Celebration
- ✓ Seniors Around Town provided 1,200 rides in 2018
- ✓ One Warm Coat drive yielded 374 coats in 2018
- ✓ Citizen of the Year and William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award winners
- ✓ Orinda Classic Car Show
- ✓ Volunteer Center
- ✓ The Orinda News published monthly and delivered free to Orinda businesses and residents



What's
On Deck
With
Parks &
Rec!

- Jan. 1 - Happy New Year! City Offices Closed. OYS Spring Baseball/Softball registration opens!
- Jan. 2-4 - Wide Variety of Holiday Break Camps for Children – Carpentry, Comic Books, Cooking, Hip Hop Dance, Musical Theater, Tennis, Basketball - Sign-up Now!
- Jan. 15 - Now Accepting Applications for Summer Camp Counselor positions.
- Jan. 21 - M.L. King, Jr. Day; City Offices Closed
- Jan. 22 - Premier World Presentation (Extended Travel Program); 10:30 a.m.; FREE; Register Now!

Jan.30- Senior Trip - California Academy of Sciences; 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; \$71/person; Register Now!
Wisdom Workshop – USS Potomac Presentation; 10:30 a.m.; FREE; Register Now!



Orinda Parks and Recreation Department
925-254-2445
www.OrindaParksandRec.org
OrindaParksandRec@CityOfOrinda.org
28 Orinda Way – Orinda Community Center
Administrative Office Hours – Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

Editorial...

Make Being Prepared Your New Year's Resolution

In a rather ironic coincidence, Orinda residents started 2018 by taking donations to the North Bay to help the victims of the Tubb's fires in Santa Rosa, and we started 2019 by doing the same for the victims of the Camp fire. Unfortunately, these horrific fires are no longer an infrequent event as our weather becomes warmer and the fuel in our forests increases.

Living in a Redwood forest myself (Canyon), I'm constantly aware of how vulnerable we are and the many precautions that need to be taken should the hills around Canyon, Moraga and Orinda turn to a wall of flames. I still remember packing up what I could, grabbing the animals and dealing with frightened teenagers, one with smoke inhalation, as the 1991 Oakland Hills Fire jumped to Canyon.

From that experience, I learned to scan photos and important papers and put them on the Cloud and put other items in a safety deposit box at my bank. Here in Canyon, we also have a phone tree and sirens to help alert people and have practiced evacuation procedures, with mixed results.

On Dec. 15, the Moraga Police Department with the cooperation of the Orinda

Police Department staged the first-ever evacuation drill in the East Bay (not counting Canyon's much smaller exercise). Moraga Way was closed for an hour in the early morning, so police could learn how to prevent the traffic nightmare seen on Skyway in Paradise, CA. Orinda's Police Chief Mark Nagel hopes to hold a similar evacuation drill in Orinda sometime in January.

While better maintenance of PG&E equipment and improved forest management by the Department of Forestry would lessen the possibility of a catastrophic fire, they are certainly not the only contributors. We must all do what we can as well. Keeping property clear of brush, cutting back trees, having working smoke alarms, practicing family fire-escape drills and having a pre-determined meeting area are just a few things we can do.

With the various emergency agencies, utilities and community residents working together, let's hope that we won't start 2019 with another plea to help victims of a devastating fire.

– Sally Hogarty, Editor

◆ COAT from page 2

Costa County in need.

White Pony Express is a charitable organization that has, according to its website (www.whiteponyexpress.org), served over 70,000 people and distributed over 500,000 clothing items to needy Contra Costa residents in its five years of existence. WPX has been going daily to deliver food to Camp Fire victims and going door to door

in local motels to determine specific needs. WPX clearly has a great record of service since FEMA and Red Cross allow only sanctioned, viable groups to come to the area to deliver goods.

"We would like to thank all the people who so generously contributed to One Warm Coat," Wiley adds. "They have made a significant impact to many in need."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sleepy Hollow students (L-R) **Ryan Davalos, Rishi Haldar** and **August Hance** help sort donations for the One Warm Coat Drive.

◆ PRESIDENT from page 3

since the beginning of agriculture. On Jan. 26, **Seed Swap Day** is your chance to get together with other gardeners or your neighbors and swap from the best plants to improve the biodiversity in Orinda.

Okay, toward the end of the month it's dark outside with no more holiday parties.

New Year's resolutions are well in the rear-view mirror, and we're bored. Right then, **Blue Monday** pops up on the calendar on Jan. 28. Instead, I'm going to celebrate **Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day** by taking a chunk of bubble wrap and popping every single bubble in the sheet. Poppin' with my friends who need a bit of stress relief by dancing on each sheet, or rolling it in a tube,



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grabbing both ends and twisting as hard as we can to invite a torrent of pops to come forth. Glad I saved some from the holidays.

Jan. 29 is the next **Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Workshop**. Follow Connect-Orinda projects and give your feedback on the City of Orinda website. Ironically, it is also **Puzzle Day**.

This month marks the conclusion of my three years as OA President. I am happy to announce that our board has elected Carlos Baltodano as our new president. He will do an excellent job and will be supported by VP Joe Garvey, and the rest of our energetic board members and office staff.

Do you know someone who is an outstanding volunteer in the Orinda community or who has worked tirelessly to preserve or enhance the environment? If so, nominate that person for the 2018 Citizen of the Year or the 2018 William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award. The event to honor the winners will be held on March 10, 2019.

Our board will continue to work very hard to serve Orinda along with our wonderful OA supporters! Wishing you a Healthy Happy 2019!

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

Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, or email to news@orindaassociation.org.

Letters to Editor for the February issue are due January 8, 2019.

For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 (jill@aspenconsult.net) or Elana O'Loskey at 925-984-1751 (elanao@mac.com). The deadline for the February issue is January 8, 2019.

POLICE / CITY COUNCIL



DAVID DIERKS

City Clerk **Sheri Smith** swears in returning City Councilmember **Amy Worth** and new City Councilmembers **Nick Kosla** and **Dennis Fay** at the Dec. 11 City Council meeting.

New City Councilmembers Take Office

Amy Worth stepped down from her fourth term as mayor of Orinda at the Dec. 11 City Council meeting. Her last official duty as mayor was to present the Mayor's Awards of Excellence to: Maggie Boscoe for her service to the community as volunteer curator of the Orinda Library Art Gallery; Steve Harwood for faithfully providing amplification and serving as master of ceremonies at countless community and school events; and the Friends of the Orinda Library for their sustained volunteer dedication to the Orinda Library for nearly 60 years.

City Councilmember Inga Miller was then sworn in as Orinda's new mayor and Darlene Gee as vice mayor. Also acknowledged were Dean Orr and Eve Phillips for their years of service as city councilmembers. Both received recognition from the Orinda City Council, Supervisor Candace Anderson and Senator Steve Glazer's representative Teresa Gerringer.

Worth, who was reelected to a sixth term in November, joined newly elected City Councilmembers Dennis Fay and Nick Kosla who were sworn into office.

— David Dierks, Assistant Editor

◆ FACADE from page 1

with window boxes.

While there were no public speakers at the Dec. Planning Commission meeting, speakers at the Dec. 4 meeting spoke in favor of the improvements. Spokespersons for Salon Elegante, located on the second floor of the building, however, did express concern about how the renovations might affect customers.

The exterior modifications of 37 Moraga Way are the first phase in a two-phase project. The second phase includes interior, mechanical and electrical modifications as well as outside landscaping and a potential outdoor seating area.



POLICE BLOTTER

November 4 through December 8, 2018

Calls for Service

- 911 Hangup: 20 incidents.
- Abandoned Vehicle: 1 incident.
- Accident Injury: 1 incident.
- Accident Property: 8 incidents.
- Alarm, False: 117 incidents.
- Barking Dog: 1 incident.
- Battery: 3 incidents.
- Burglary, Auto: 2 incidents.
- Burglary, Commercial: 2 incidents.
- Burglary, Residential: 4 incidents.
- Civil Matter: 18 incidents.
- CVC Moving Violation: 105 incidents.
- CVC Non-Moving Violation: 73 incidents.
- Disturbing the Peace: 3 incidents.
- Drunk in Public: 1 incident.
- Fire/EMS Response Info: 1 incident.
- Found Property: 2 incidents.
- Fraud Credit Card: 1 incident.
- Grand Theft: 2 incidents.
- Hazmat: 1 incident.
- Health & Safety Violation: 1 incident.
- Hit & Run Misdemeanor: 10 incidents.
- Identity Theft: 1 incident.
- Juvenile Disturbance: 2 incidents.
- Loud Music: 1 incident.
- Loud Noise: 2 incidents.
- Loud Party: 1 incident.
- Medical Hospital: 5 incidents.
- Medical Police Needed: 1 incident.
- Missing Adult: 2 incidents.
- Motorist Assist: 1 incident.
- Occupied Stalled Vehicle: 2 incidents.
- Ordinance Violation: 7 incidents.
- Outside Assist: 26 incidents.
- Panhandling: 1 incident.
- Parking Detail: 100 incidents.
- Patrol Request: 33 incidents.
- Petty Theft from Vehicle: 1 incident.
- Public Assembly Check: 6 incidents.

- Public Nuisance: 4 incidents.
- Reckless Driving: 18 incidents.
- School Check: 9 incidents.
- Security Check: 25 incidents.
- Service to Citizen: 104 incidents.
- Shots Heard: 2 incidents.
- Suspicious Circumstances: 15 incidents.
- Suspicious Person Stop: 19 incidents.
- Suspicious Subject: 8 incidents.
- Suspicious Vehicle: 9 incidents.
- Suspicious Vehicle Stop: 17 incidents.
- Tow: 5 incidents.
- Traffic Collision/Property Damage: 2 incidents.
- Traffic Hazard: 14 incidents.
- Trespass: 1 incident.
- Uncontrollable Juvenile: 2 incidents.
- Vacation House Check: 51 incidents.
- Vandalism: 3 incidents.
- Vehicle Theft: 1 incident.
- Verbal Dispute: 3 incidents.
- Walk Through: 5 incidents.
- Welfare Check: 17 incidents.

Arrest

- Battery: 3 arrests.
- Burglary, Commercial: 3 arrests.
- Drunk in Public: 2 arrests.
- Marijuana Sale: 1 arrest.
- Possession of Burglary Tools: 1 arrest.
- Warrant Arrest: 6 arrests.

BART Statistics

- Grand Theft: 2 arrests.
- Violation of Probation: 2 arrests.

— Compiled by David Dierks
Assistant Editor

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County Library says Goodbye to Fines

On Jan. 1, the Contra Costa County Library will eliminate overdue fines on all library materials, including books, magazines, DVDs and other materials. The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors voted in favor of the proposal on Dec. 11, with the goal of removing barriers and making access easy, equitable and enjoyable for all patrons.

“Our libraries are open for the entire community to take advantage of all they have to offer,” said Contra Costa County Supervisor Karen Mitchoff. “Saying goodbye to fines gives everyone an opportunity to restart their relationship with the library.” Of more than 650,000 cardholders county wide, 118,450 (18 percent) currently have their cards blocked due to fines and 43 percent of youth accounts currently owe a balance. “Families are staying away from the library because it’s simply too expensive for them,” said County Librarian Melinda Cervantes. “We don’t want people to have to choose between putting food on the table and reading.”

Overdue material fines and material replacement charges make up approximately two percent of the Library’s revenue. Since 2013, revenue from fines and charges has decreased by 31 percent. During this same

period, circulation of e-books and other digital resources has increased 128 percent. These types of electronic resources are already fine-free and benefit those with greater access to technology, an imbalance the Library is hoping to correct with this new policy.

Eliminating overdue fines will also result in more positive customer interactions and allow staff to focus on creativity and exceptional service. “We have so many outstanding and enthusiastic staff members who would much rather spend their time helping someone find the next great read or learn how to use one of our online resources,” said Deputy County Librarian Nancy Kreiser. “They can spend more time making people smile.”

The Contra Costa County Library is the first county library in California and the largest in the state to eliminate fines for everyone. Patrons will still be expected to return library materials on time. Checkout periods on materials will remain the same and patrons will incur a replacement charge if materials are not returned 30 days after the due date.

For questions about the policy, contact Library Administration at libadmin@ccclib.org or call 925-608-7700.

— Lynn Kalmar, Assistant Editor

CAR TIME

The Driver Is the Key: Advice for When You Have a Young Driver in the Family

By JOHN VANEK



It is common for families to own or acquire a spare vehicle for the new driver of the household to drive. Sometimes the new driver will be able to buy a vehicle or acquire one from a relative or neighbor. Of course, the parental units often take on any financial burden that may arise. As a father of two adult kids, I can say that it was very handy having my kids driving themselves to their activities in this modern busy family world.

So now in your case, your family’s new drivers have a vehicle, and you will handle the cost of maintenance and repairs. What about tracking the needs of the car? Who pays attention to when maintenance is required or when a warning light stays on that won’t go away?

It is normally what I call the driver/owner, but in this case, we will call it the driver/operator. Young individuals should learn to take responsibility for vehicles even if they do not own them. They are lucky enough to have a car to drive and probably are not paying for insurance or gas for that matter. They need to take the time to learn about the vehicle. When is the next oil change due? When is the next major service required? What is a TPMS light? It is always good to understand these fundamental things anyway, but new drivers should learn the responsibility that will last a lifetime.

It is never too early to learn to be a good consumer of auto repair. Encourage new drivers to be involved when you take the car in for repairs or maintenance. They need to understand that cars need to be checked

out even when it seems to be operating fine. Silent failures are often just around the corner. They surely need to learn how to pay attention to the vehicle when driving. Are there warning lights present? Which ones? All dash warning lights are described in the owner’s manual. Does the car make noises? Does it have unusual odors?

As drivers/operators, youngsters need to pay attention to these considerations. If they report a problem, you should take care of it, as that is better than waiting until a breakdown. The whole point of maintaining a car is to stay away from breakdowns. Unexpected car problems upset our schedule and cause chaos. Paying attention to car maintenance and understanding when something is not right will help avoid being towed.

Operation and maintenance is only part of the learning requirement for young drivers. What do they do if the vehicle does break down? Do you have a family breakdown plan? Does your young driver know how to use an insurance card? These are all things teenagers need to learn before they are actual grown-ups taking responsibility for their own family’s vehicles. We want to raise good kids that are good citizens and know how to maintain a car.

By the way, if you are going to buy them a used vehicle, please have it checked out first and get advice before the purchase. Also, don’t forget to be a good consumer of auto repair yourself. I am always available for automotive consultation.

John Vanek can be reached at john@orindamotors.com.



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OBITUARIES

Luca Katalin Gerő Brought Joy to Many During Her Brief Life

(Dec. 13, 2001 –
Nov. 18, 2018)

Luca Katalin Gerő was born December 13, 2001, at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital in New York, overlooking the smoldering rubble of Ground Zero – the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9-11. She was born a survivor: her mother, Réka Pigniczky, was six months pregnant with Luca as she covered the attacks for the Associated Press. Dodging the crashing WTC towers, it was a miracle that Luca and her mother survived.

That rough beginning and the war-like aftermath of living in New York did nothing to dim the light Luca emanated from the day she was born. Her very name: Luca, an archaic Hungarian version of Lucia, means light. And her light shone from the day she blessed this world to the day it was extinguished all too soon in a horrendous fire that destroyed her family's home on Nov. 18.

Luca was the beloved first child of Barnabás Gerő and Réka Pigniczky. When Luca was six months old, the family moved to Budapest, Hungary (her father's childhood home and her mother's ancestral home). For her doting grandparents there, Luca was the first of 11 grandchildren, including Luca's siblings Jolán and Lukács.

The Gerő household was always bursting with children and activity, with Luca the ringleader. She was an impetuous and joyful child who met the world head-on. Even as a toddler, Luca befriended everyone she met and climbed every tree she saw. Together with her sister Jolán, Luca attended the Zoltán Kodály Music School and sang in the Hungarian Radio Children's

Choir. She also sang in the children's choir of the Church of St. Anthony of Padua, where she received her First Holy Communion.

In 2012, Luca moved with her family to Orinda (her mother's childhood home). Within months, Luca had made herself comfortable with a brand new circle of friends at Del Rey Elementary School. Before she even spoke English properly, she captivated the school talent show with a song about Hungary and the friends she'd left behind.

Luca enjoyed rock climbing, read voraciously in both English and Hungarian, and liked to write. She played volleyball competitively until her sophomore year. She loved to travel, hike and ski with her family; she was planning a trip to Bhutan with her mother as a high school graduation gift in 2020.

As she became a teenager, her childhood chattiness sharpened into a sophisticated verbal ability she deployed to defend her opinion on any issue at hand. Her mother's suggestion that she join the Debate Team at Miramonte High School was inspired. Debate was not an academic exercise for Luca; it was how she made sense of the chaotic post-terror world into which she was born. She learned to use analysis and criticism to take a stand and defend it, with eloquence and wit. She planned to become a lawyer.

She had an incredible sense of humor, empathy toward those in trouble, and fierce loyalty to her friends. Even in her teenage years, she was open and honest with her parents, much more likely to spill the beans than to tell a lie.

Since childhood, Luca was an enthusiastic member of the Hungarian Scout Troop

of the San Francisco Bay Area. She was a natural leader of the younger scouts in her charge. Among her scout peers, it was often Luca who set the tone, came up with the skits, wrote the songs, and rattled off zany ideas in her signature mile-a-minute chatter.

Luca's natural magnetism drew many friends from her many communities, but she knew her essential home was her family. Only a few weeks ago, Luca defied her parents' wishes and got herself a small tattoo. Just four discreet letters on the inside of one finger: rblj—representing her mother, father, brother and sister, whom she loved indelibly and permanently.

Luca lived life as it was meant to be lived, full of love and inquiry and the yearning for justice. Love is what drove her and gave her the ability to not fall prey to pettiness, insecurity, or hatred. Even as she argued and sought the truth, she remained respectful and tolerant.

Now, that powerful love is all we have left of Luca. Though her loss and our grief are infinite, we can still cling to that love. As we return to our everyday lives in a world marked by brutality, intolerance and injustice, we honor Luca best by following her example, by radiating love and forgive-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

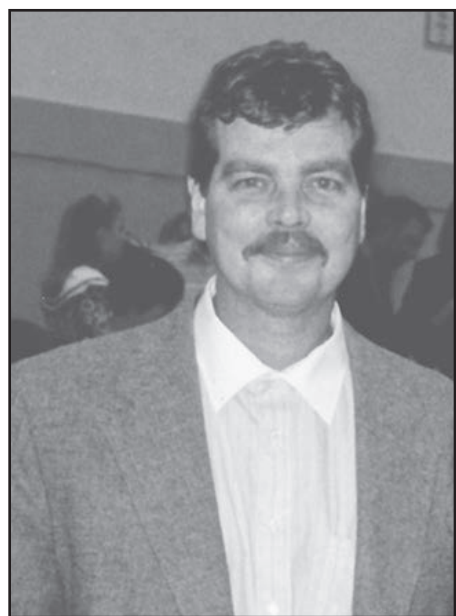
Orinda teen **Luca Katalin Gerő** was a bright light to those who knew and loved her.

ness to our families and communities.

Those left to cherish Luca's memory include: parents Réka Pigniczky and Barn-

[SEE LUCA page 10]

Gary John McCosker Will Be Missed by Family and Friends



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gary John McCosker

Gary John McCosker passed away Dec. 9 from a heart attack. Gary was born on Nov. 28, 1946 in Albany, CA, and was raised in Orinda. Athletic in his youth, he participated in track and field at Miramonte High School, graduating in 1964. Gary went on to U.C. Berkeley where he enjoyed chemistry and mathematics.

He loved to travel the country and had a particular love for New Orleans where he often went to spend time with family and friends. He also loved the John McCosker family ranch in Canyon, CA, where he had many lifelong friends. After the sale of the ranch in 2014, Gary moved to Vista in Southern California to be closer to his two sons.

Gary is survived by his sons, John and Kirk McCosker, his sister Vicki Saputo and brother Roger McCosker. He will be truly missed.



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UC Berkeley Botanical Gardens Exhibit: *Celebrating Ethnobotany* Features Orinda Artists

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

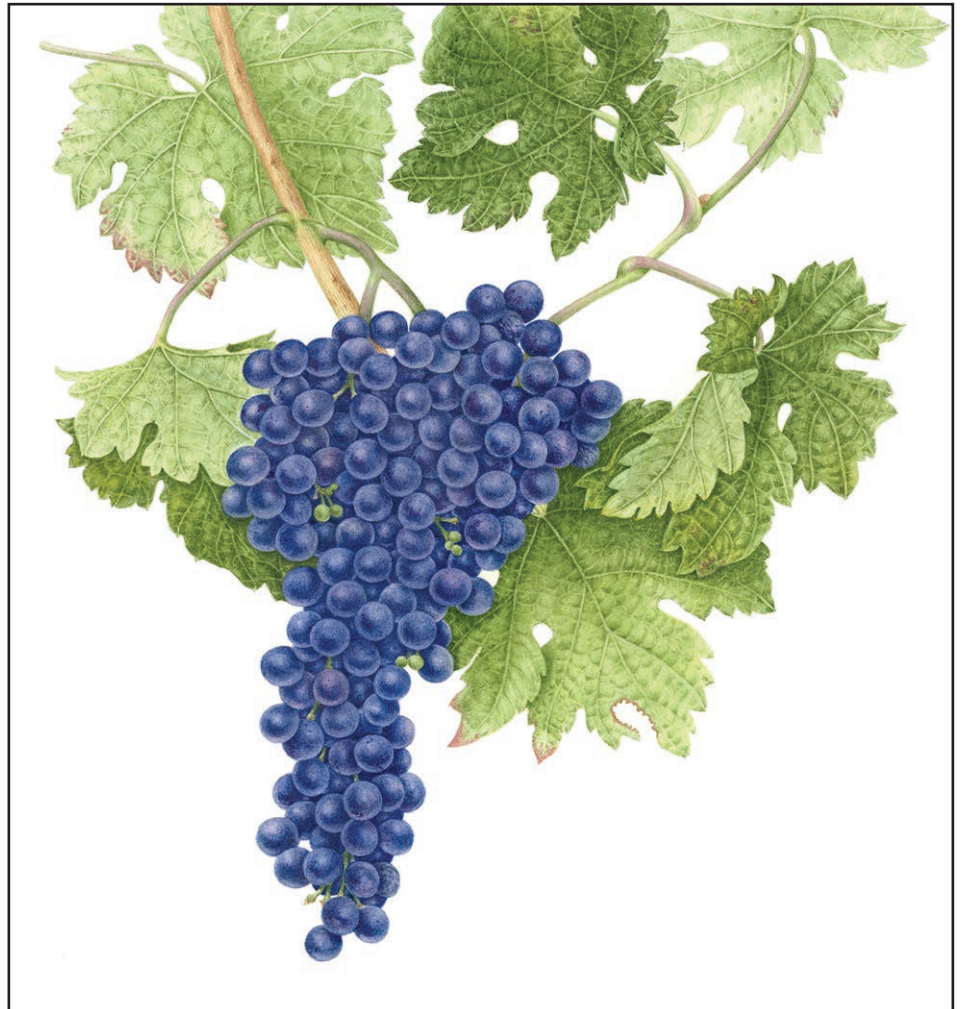
Orindans Catherine Watters and co-chair Laura Sawczuk invite you to attend the 10th Annual Plants Illustrated Exhibit: *Celebrating Ethnobotany* showcasing botanical art by members of the Northern California Society of Botanical Artists (NCalsBA). Held in the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden's (Garden) lovely Julia Morgan Hall, it runs Jan. 18 to Feb. 6. Admission to the exhibit is free with Garden admission. Watters promises, "The Exhibition will be stimulating, both visually and educationally."

Deepa Natarajan, program and event coordinator at the Garden suggested the theme, "Plants + People" to the members of NCalsBA. "Deepa gave us a list of the plants growing in the Garden that worked with our theme. Some artists chose those

plants while others obtained plants elsewhere. Each illustration will have a description of how the plant is used for food, fiber, medicine, shelter, cultural or religious purposes," explains Watters. To learn more about NCalsBA, visit www.ncalsba.org.

If you are a lover of botanical art, you are in for a few surprises. Several of the 48 paintings in the exhibit are much larger than usual because the chosen subjects are large. For example, Sally Petru of Oakland is showing *Papyrus – Cyperus papyrus*, a 15" x 37" watercolor. Papyrus often grows up to 16 feet in tropical rain forests, its natural habitat. The exacting process of botanical paintings belies the grace and beauty of works such as Orindan Gina Barretta's *Grapes – Vitis vinifera*, a 19" x 20" watercolor. Both paintings concern venerable botanicals whose cultivation and uses reach far back into history – papyrus back

[SEE GARDENS page 16]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Grapes – Vitis vinifera, a 19" x 20" watercolor by Orinda artist **Gina Barretta**, perfectly captures the "Plants + People" theme of this year's Plants Illustrated exhibition.

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Anonymous Donor Matching OCF Funds

By KATHY G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

Orinda Community Foundation Co-founder and Board Member Sue Severson is excited by the generosity of an anonymous donor who will match all donations to the organization through Jan. 15.

"OCF has the unique ability to bring our citizens and local nonprofits together in a synergy to benefit our community and ourselves," says Severson. The group raises donations throughout the year, and then gives every dollar to the community to support a variety of programs.


Severson was Orinda's mayor in 2009 when the city faced severe budget cuts. Asked by the City Council to explore

ways to raise private dollars to sustain community vibrancy through the recession, she joined with fellow Orinda residents Richard Westin, Carol Penskar, Dick Burkhalter and Paula Goodwin to co-found the 501(c)(3) OCF. Mark Roberts, Ted Urban, Richard Stanaro, Sean Sabarese, Annette Linney, Carlos Baltodano and Bob Burt have joined the OCF board over the years as the program expanded.

Severson emphasizes OCF's birth came at a critical time in 2010 when many cherished community events and programs (like the Fourth of July Parade and Celebration) were at risk of being lost. The group stepped up to rescue events, expand community programs and beautify downtown

[SEE OCF page 18]

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OWC Festival of Trees Serves Those in Need in Contra Costa County

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

On Nov. 15, event co-chairs Suzanne Murillo and Janet Nelson welcomed 400 guests to the 32nd Annual Orinda Woman's Club (OWC) fundraiser at the



SALLY HOGARTY

OWC member and volunteer model **Sue Farmer** sparkles on the runway and helps to raise funds at the Festival of Trees fashion show.

San Ramon Marriott. The Festival of Trees event benefits many needy causes in Contra Costa County.

Adeline McClatchie introduced the master of ceremonies, Dan Ashley, news anchor of ABC Channel 7, who took the podium after silent auction winners were announced and before lunch was served. Ashley explained the funds raised by the event will benefit the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Contra Costa County, the Contra Costa County Crisis Center and OWC community service committees.

The OWC donates funds to nonprofit groups locally, nationally and internationally, and awards education grants to improve the lives of women and families and those aging out of the foster care system. Members of the Orinda Woman's Club also donated gifts to VESTIA (Volunteer & Emergency Services In Action) as part of the organization's Angel Tree Program for Foster Children in Contra Costa County. Wrapped gifts were delivered on Dec. 3 to the Grace Episcopal Church in Martinez by member Suzanne Murillo.

As the more than 30 wreath, basket, tree and destination raffle winners were announced, whole tables joined in cheering on the winners.

Next, Helen Lyall, of Helen Lyall Clothes for Women at Riverfront in downtown Napa, opened the fashion show. Professional models on the runway were joined by OWC volunteers, including Sue Farmer

[SEE FESTIVAL page 16]

Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony for Hospice



SALLY HOGARTY

Ron Pickett and **Christina Holling** lead the singers from Wagner Ranch, Glorietta and Del Rey Elementary schools at the Hospice Tree Lighting on Dec. 1 in front of Bank of America in Orinda Village. Pickett and Holling referred to one of their songs as "gangster jazz."



SALLY HOGARTY

More than one hundred people braved the cold to enjoy the music, the tree lighting and, of course, to see Santa, who arrived in a big red fire truck. Refreshments courtesy of Orinda Rotary.

◆ ROTARY from page 1

Rotary Home Team program, which provides home maintenance to seniors free of charge, the Garden Park apartments program which provides affordable housing to families in need, Family Harvest Farms and the Contra Costa Food Bank, among others. Englehart sums up the project stating, "Peoples' lives were impacted by the money raised and families are better off. Members of the Rotary Club of Lamorinda Sunrise continue to show that Rotarians' efforts are there to help their communities and make a difference in the world."

The club is already working on a new "We build stuff" project for its next big raffle, a 1964 Glastron cuddy cabin boat, motor and trailer. Englehart promises, "This one is going to be incredible. Keep an eye out for it!" For more information on Rotary Club of Lamorinda Sunrise, go to www.lamorindasunrise.com.

◆ LUCA from page 7

abás Gerő; sister Jolán; brother Lukács; grandparents Katalin Vörös (Wayne Phillips), Dr. László Gerő and Dr. Eszter Jánossy; great-aunt Elizabeth Vörös; aunt Eszti Pigniczky (Endre Szentkirályi); cousins Keve, Bendegúz, Vajk, and Enese; uncle Andrew Udvarnoki; aunt Villő Gerő (Zsolt Andrasek) and cousins Sára, Samu and Emma; aunt Borbála Gerő (Ákos Pogány) and cousins Áron, Emese, and Vera; uncle Dr. Domokos Gerő (Dr. Eszter Simon) and cousins Anna and Blanka; and numerous loving relatives, friends, classmates, scouts, and their parents and teachers in the U.S. and in Hungary.

Luca is preceded in death by her grandfather, László Pigniczky.

A standing room only memorial service for Luca was held at Saint Mary's College Chapel on Dec. 9.

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SCHOOLS

National Charity League Supports Monument Crisis Center



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Over 100 Ticktockers from the **Lamorinda Chapter of National Charity League (NCL)** came together on Sunday, December 2 for their annual Holiday Giving event in support of Monument Crisis Center. The young women assembled 85 large boxes of non-perishable food, 400 toiletry bags for teens and 18 fleece blankets. Members of the Lamorinda NCL chapter graciously donated all of the thousands of items that filled the food box and toiletry bag donations for Monument Crisis Center.

Miramonte Boosters Launch New Sponsorship Program

This year the Miramonte Boosters Club is introducing a new sponsorship program and reaching out to local businesses to invite them to participate. In return for a sponsorship, the Boosters Club will list a business as a key supporter on their website and in all club communications. In addition, a participating business will receive a "Proud Supporter" window cling to display at their storefront. The cost of an annual business sponsorship is \$500.

The Miramonte Boosters Club is a non-profit organization that helps support the needs of every Miramonte sports team by purchasing equipment and large capital items such as sound systems, bleachers, weights and scoreboards. In addition, the club funds an athletic trainer to help ensure the safety of the athletes and a strength coach to develop and monitor workouts.

Club representatives point to the organization's many achievements and the resulting benefit to Miramonte's sports teams, crediting the hard work of their volunteers for those contributions.

Miramonte High School was founded in 1955 and sports have played an important role in the student experience ever since. There are over 25 teams at Miramonte and nearly 800 students play at least one sport each year. Miramonte receives very little funding from the district for their athletic program so the school relies heavily on donations from parents, alumni and community members and the support of organizations like the Booster Club.

For more information on the Booster Club's business sponsorship program, please visit: www.miramonteboostersclub.com/business.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1-4 **All Schools.** No School - Winter Break
- 4 **Holden High School,** New Student Orientation
- 7 **Miramonte High School,** 6 p.m. Sports Boosters' meeting
- 8 **Miramonte High School,** 7:30 p.m. Freshman Parent Group
- 9 **Holden High School,** Alumni Panel - Rejection Day Field Trip
- 11 **Wagner Ranch Elementary School,** PC Executive Board Meeting
- 14 **Miramonte High School,** 1st Semester Finals
Orinda Union School District, 6 p.m. Board Meeting
- 15 **Miramonte High School,** 7:30 p.m. Sophomore Parent Group
- 16 **Orinda Academy,** 6:30 p.m. College Night
Acalanes Union High School District, 7 p.m., Board Meeting, Miramonte High School
- 17 **Miramonte High School,** 7 p.m. Drama Showcase open to the public and free of charge. Come see Miramonte Drama students showcase their final exam projects.
Wagner Ranch Elementary School, Site Council Meeting
- 18 **Miramonte High School,** No School - Staff Development Day
- 21 **All Schools.** No School. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 22 **Miramonte High School,** 7:30 p.m. Junior Parent Group
- 23 **Holden High School,** Graduation
- 24 **Glorietta Elementary School,** Coordinating Council Meetings
Sleepy Hollow Elementary School, School Site Council Meeting
- 29 **Del Rey Elementary School,** 9 a.m. Grades 1-4: Author visit
Miramonte High School, 7:30 p.m. Senior Parent Group

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Reading a great memoir is like listening to a friend share hopes and dreams. At best, we go on a journey, learning about obstacles in life and how they changed the author. At their very best, the second we put the memoir down we tell all our friends they have to read it.

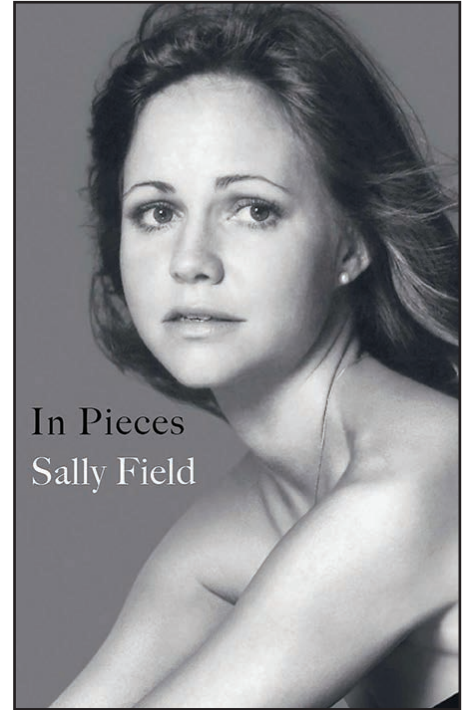
Celebrity memoirs have always been popular, and Sally Field's *In Pieces* pulled me in immediately. Her storytelling is direct, warm and honest. She gives the reader a backstage pass into the world of film and television, where she developed savvy, humility and grace. Just like her famous Academy Award speech, *You like me, right now, you like me*, you will not only like getting to know Field, you'll admire her sharp-witted perseverance even more.

Another memoir set against the backdrop of film and television is Christine S. O'Brien's debut *Crave: A Memoir of Food and Longing*. O'Brien, daughter of high-

profile ABC television executive Ed Scherick, along with her three brothers, survived living in a household teeming with control in which their mother forced a liquid diet regimen upon them. It's a powerful story of survival and transformation, which is not an easy route for O'Brien. She is a gorgeous writer with sentences that light up even the darkest of moments, page after page.

Dani Shapiro is a master memoirist, continually exploring vast themes from the perspective of a grounded observer. Her newest work, *Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity and Love* reads at top speed when Shapiro discovers (through Ancestry.com!), that her origin story is much different than the story her parents told her. *Inheritance* makes you want to jump to the end to see if she's able to get the answers she desperately needs to integrate her new identity.

Senator Kamala Harris' *The Truths We*



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Two memoir suggestions from Orinda Books: Karl Ove Knausgaard's *Winter* and Sally Field's *In Pieces*.

Hold: An American Journey is a hybrid of memoir and current affairs, skillfully blending the Senator's personal story, beginning with her early life in Oakland through her current work in the Senate, all while encouraging us as readers to consider our own opportunities for activism and leadership. We, too, can be vigilant in pursuit of our own truths.

I recently discovered Karl Ove Knausgaard's four-part essay series which begins with *Autumn* and ends with the newly released *Winter*. His short autobiographical essays contemplate the mundane and bat around fanciful abstractions—all in the name of cataloguing the world before his baby's arrival. Knausgaard writes letters addressed to his Unborn Daughter and they are dazzling—simultaneously heartwarming and heartbreaking.

If you're looking for an edgy book (also set against the backdrop of Hollywood), I recommend Jill Soloway's memoir *She Wants It*. When Soloway, a successful television showrunner, learns that her father is transgender, her family must adjust to the new normal. To cope, understand and give voice to the transgender community, Soloway created the award-winning television show *Transparent*. Entertainment mirroring life makes for a gripping read.

Tell Me More And 11 Other Important Things I'm Learning To Say by Kelly Corrigan is a collection of essays that here at

Orinda Books, we keep in the Inspiration section. Corrigan's laugh-out-loud funny when writing about family life and she's candid about her struggles with pain and grief. It's the perfect book for a wide audience and fitting for many occasions.

Noteworthy new paperbacks: *Sticky Fingers: The Life and Times of Jann Wenner and Rolling Stone Magazine* by Joe Hagan (controversial unauthorized biography).

Happiness: A Memoir: The Crooked Little Road to Semi-Ever After by Heather Harpham (beautiful story of parenthood under the harshest of circumstances).

Enjoy a memoir in the new year!

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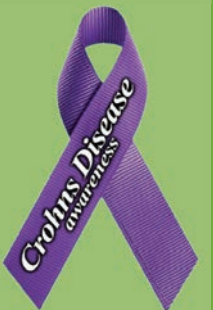


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LIBRARY GALLERY

Three Painters Usher in the New Year at the Orinda Library Gallery

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

The Lamorinda Arts Council is proud to present the paintings of Francesca Saveri, Pam McCauley and Joan Yao during the month of January at the Art Gallery in the Orinda Library. The first three lines of Bei Dao's poem "New Year" read: "a child carrying flowers walks toward the new year / a conductor tattooing darkness / listens to the shortest pause" (1-3).

The exhibiting artists ask you to take these lines as an invitation to treat January with the innocence it deserves by gazing at an entire gallery of their paintings. To encourage your enjoyment of the artwork, light refreshments will be served at their artist reception on Sun., Jan. 6, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Artist Francesca Saveri is a native Californian and divides her time between Studio Wildcat in Berkeley and Salvador, Brazil. She is showing 20 abstract paintings, all done with encaustics which she describes as "a delicious mixture of beeswax, damar resin and raw pigment."

Damar resin is a natural tree resin extracted from the Southeast Asian Damar Pine tree. It is used for hardening beeswax and raising its melting temperature for use in encaustic applications. It allows wax to be buffed to a higher, more translucent sheen and helps prevent blooming (clouding on the surface). *Bay of All Saints* (a 36" x 36" encaustic painting on panel) invites you to dive into a pool of color.

Recently she was interviewed as part of *Voyage LA's* "Thought Provoker Series," and she has exhibited in the SF Bay Area, New York, New Jersey, New Mexico and more. "I don't think we value color enough; it can be nourishment. I threw away all my black clothing and don't use black in my paintings. Color is another tool for well-being," enthuses Saveri. She challenges us to put on a pair of red pants to see if our conversations with people change based on color. Go to www.francescasaveri.com to learn more about her artwork.

Pam McCauley of Lafayette grew up in a home filled with art because both her mom and uncle were painters. A graduate of Occidental College with a BA in Fine Arts, she taught art in the Los Angeles school system before she had children. McCauley is a board member of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance, part owner of Main Street Arts in Martinez and exhibits extensively around the SF Bay Area.

Her theme for the dozen works she is

showing, "Now and Then," is just that – current work mixed in with earlier work. "It's an example of when the 'C' word – change – can be a good thing," quips McCauley. Expect portraiture, still lifes and more. She wants to share the feelings she tries to capture when painting a person or even an orange and wants to convey that feeling to the viewer. This may take a little imagination for viewers. McCauley reminds us about Einstein's endorsement of imagination: "The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination."

The title for her 36" x 36" oil painting on gesso board, *A Thousand Words*, befits the enigmatic expression on the subject's face. Indeed, either too few or too many words come to mind when viewing it. She always paints from actual scenes and people. Visit www.pammccauley.com for more of her artwork. To find out more about Main Street Art, go to www.mainstreetarts.net.

Joan Yao of Moraga, a native of Shanghai, came to America in 1980. As a young artist in Shanghai, she studied calligraphy and Chinese brush painting with several prestigious masters. After arriving in America, she built a life with her husband TJ and their son Andrew. "I feel called to show Chinese culture and traditional art to people in America. Traditional Chinese Brush Painting (TCBP) uses techniques and principles that are not part of Western art," explains Yao.

A TCBP teacher at the Contra Costa Chinese School at Diablo Valley College (DVC) for the last 19 years, she feels that her own work displays techniques she learned from Master Chang Dai-Chien (1899-1983) and others. Master Chien was reputed to be the most renowned Chinese brush painter and calligrapher in five generations.

The 40 artworks on display are all related to nature and exemplify the grace and power she imbues in the genre. This unique Chinese tradition challenges the painter to work from the inside out – always painting the 'spirit' of the subject first – never a photograph. Viewing these lyrical works becomes a meditative experience, drawing the viewer into the heart of the paintings.

Nature's Harmony, an 11.5" x 17.5"

[SEE GALLERY page 16]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Artist Francesca Saveri used a mixture of beeswax, resin and pigment to create vivid colors in her encaustic painting on panel *Bay of All Saints*, on display in the Library Gallery.

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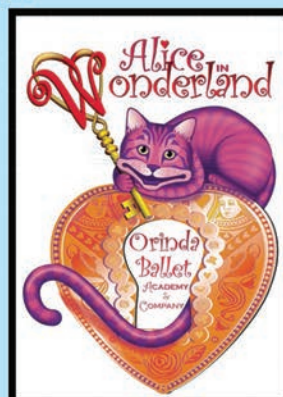
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Cal Shakes Selected as Recipient of Prestigious Hewlett 50 Arts Commission

California Shakespeare Theater (Cal Shakes) announced it has been selected as a recipient of a Hewlett 50 Arts Commission, a program of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Cal Shakes is among a group of 10 Bay Area-based non-profit organizations that will receive \$150,000 to create important and unique work that facilitates discussions around the most pressing local issues.

"We are thrilled to have been selected for this significant and meaningful commission," commented Cal Shakes Artistic

Director Eric Ting. "Since the launch of Cal Shakes' New Classics Initiative (NCI) with Marcus Gardley's *black odyssey* in 2017, we've sought to elevate classic works through the voices of writers living."

The money will be used to commission Gardley to write *A Thousand Ships*, based on the women of the Richmond Shipyards.

"To have the opportunity to create another play with Cal Shakes and to tell another Bay Area story is truly an incredible gift," says Gardley. "I do not take it lightly."

With *A Thousand Ships*, Gardley returns to a subject he first explored more than a decade ago in *This World in a Woman's Hands*, the lives of the women like his two great-grandmothers who came to the Bay Area during World War II to work in the Richmond Shipyards. Eager to revisit these "Rosie the Riveters" and their stories, he plans to integrate their friendships, tragedies, loves and enduring spirit into a larger narrative of the region's history, fused with Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.


A Thousand Ships will explore themes of migration, community and the notion of making home and family among strangers in a new land. Along with choreography, media design and special effects, the music of the period such as Ella Fitzgerald, the Andrew Sisters, and blues and folk songs

[SEE CAL SHAKES page 15]


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THE REEL LESS TRAVELED



FIRST IN A SERIES (COLLECT 'EM ALL!)

Tom Westlake

I am writing this column very softly so as not to exacerbate the hangover you might be feeling this beginning of the New Year. There's a paucity of news on the film front, but what we have is all good.

I am delighted that The Moraga Movers is back! For too long, this organization has been absent from the cinematic landscape. Its selection of films has always been top-notch and, for me at least, informative. In an age where only the newest and latest get attention, it is gratifying indeed to see older films get screen time. After all, where do you think some of that which we now take for granted comes from, more often than not in a purer form?

This month, in particular, you will have the opportunity to see an original that you might not have known even existed. I speak of *A Star is Born* – the 1937 version! Starring Janet Gaynor and Fredric March. This is the one that started it all. In viewing it, you have a chance to watch history. You think you know this show-biz story? Think again. The later versions may have more notable music and flashier production values, but here you'll be able to see something closer to the source. This is the one that you should compare with all others. Also featuring such luminaries as Adolphe Menjou and Andy Devine, it will show at the Rheem on Jan. 9 at 4 p.m. For updated information, be sure to go to <http://lamorindatheatres.com/>.

Another welcome staple of the Lamorinda community is the International Film Showcase (IFS). This time Jo Alice and Efi

are making absolutely sure you don't miss what they have to offer this month. In an unprecedented move, their chosen film will have a one week run in both the Orinda and Rheem theatres. Though solid dates are not yet available, I cannot stress how important it will be to keep tabs on what is going on with the IFS by checking in frequently at <http://internationalshowcase.org/>.

This month, they will be featuring *Becoming Astrid*, the true story of Astrid Lindgren, the author of such famous children's classics as *The Children of Noisy Village*, *The Brothers Lionheart* and, most famously, *Pippi Longstocking*. Represented here as a wild free spirit, Lindgren gets depicted as someone whose very unconventionality places her at the heart of a personal scandal that throws her life into a chaotic holding pattern of sorts. Forced to make a heart-rending decision, she finds herself shamed and filled with self-loathing. What follows calls to mind the concept of what to do when given a bunch of lemons. The lemonade that results is quenching. The one to watch here in this 2018 Swedish film would be Alba August. In the title role, she dominates the film and fully fleshes out the character she plays. It will be here in the Lamorinda community for two weeks: one week at the Orinda and the next at the Rheem. Check out the IFS website and/or the Lamorinda theatre website mentioned above for details as the showing gets near.

January is, of course, a dark month. Fitting then that I suggest you stay in the dark for that's where the reel magic lies.

◆ SENIORS from page 2

to learn more about the program and how it has grown in recent years – in 2018, the program's staff coordinated over 1,200 rides for Orinda's seniors.

SAT staff member Pamela Manning handed out "Christmas crackers" with help from the Mindful Littles. The cardboard tubes were wrapped in festive paper to look like large candies and are a popular tradition in the UK where Manning grew up. She instructed guests on how to work together to pull them open and make them pop, revealing a prize and paper

crown. With the guests now properly adorned, Harwood led a sing-along of old favorites like "Five Foot Two, Eyes Of Blue" and "Ain't She Sweet."

As the event came to a close, SAT riders and drivers were able to rest their voices and enjoy a holiday concert by the Miramonte Choir. The vocal group impressed the crowd with acapella versions of holiday classics, including "Hark The Herald Angels Sing" and a delightful rendition of "The Grinch" featuring Miramonte student Aaron Collins that was memorably faithful to the original. A merry time was had by all!

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Local Author Chronicles Experiences in Medical Services in Iraq in New Book

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

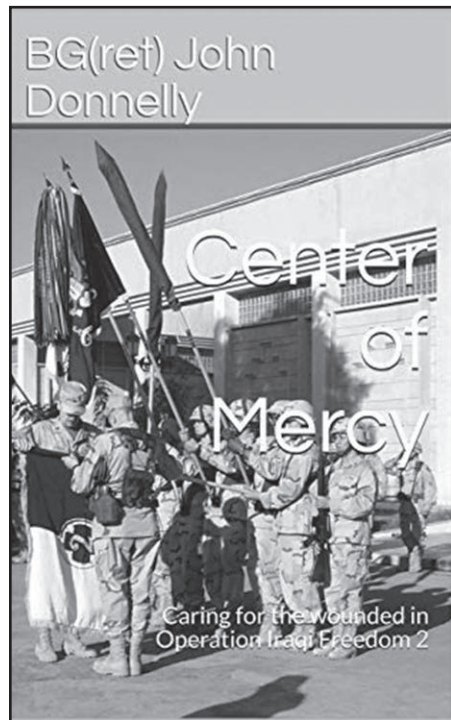
Orinda Rotary Club President John Donnelly, Ph.D., has led many missions in life. Donnelly is president of Global Healing, a Berkeley nonprofit that works to improve standards of medical care in low resource countries. He has more than 25 years experience in vaccine research and development. He served as interim director of the Vaccine Development Global Program at a leading NGO specializing in global health innovation.

A retired U.S. Army Reserve Brigadier General, Donnelly began his military career in 1984 when he was commissioned as First Lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps. In 1987, he served as Commander of the 379th Medical Detachment which was mobilized for Operation Desert Shield and deployed to Saudi Arabia in December 1990.

He served for 30 years as an officer, with deployments to Saudi Arabia and Iraq and has written a book about his Iraq experiences *Center of Mercy: Caring for the Wounded in Operation Iraqi Freedom*. The proceeds from its sales will benefit the USO.

Donnelly says the experience of writing the book stirred up a lot of emotions, both happy and sad. "When I was writing, I had the feeling of actually being back there again. Sometimes, it took me a while to complete the journey back to the present day after a writing session."

He had never shared some of the stories



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
John Donnelly's new book, *Center of Mercy*, recounts his experiences in Iraq.

with anyone before. "It felt good to be able to shape them into a coherent narrative," he adds.

In writing the book, Donnelly enjoyed recognizing the contributions of his fellow soldiers. "Everyone there worked hard, every day, to take care of our soldiers and reduce the pain of war. Sometimes they got official recognition, but a lot of their work just faded into the background."

After his yearlong tour of duty in Iraq, Donnelly found himself amazed at the per-

ceptions people had of the war and wanted to write about the experience. The book was "something that nobody, not even I, really wanted to read, and I abandoned that effort very quickly."

"Everyone there worked hard, every day, to take care of our soldiers and reduce the pain of war. Sometimes they got official recognition, but a lot of their work just faded into the background," says John Donnelly.

Donnelly did not return to his story until 10 years later when he realized his own recollections were fading. Donnelly's hope is that his book demonstrates the challenges and rewards of life in a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, while documenting the efforts of some of the 3,600 people in the

2nd Medical Brigade and subordinate units who cared for the injured in the Iraqi War.

While researching his book, Donnelly discovered different perspectives others in his unit had. Some experiences were new to even him. "I feel like I have told a story that nobody would have heard about otherwise."

Center of Mercy: Caring for the Wounded in Operation Iraqi is available in both paperback and kindle form on Amazon.

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OUSD Kinder/TK Registration in February

Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten registration for children entering an Orinda public school in August 2019 will be open Feb. 4 – 7. On those dates, parents can register their child online at www.orindaschools.org or can register in person at their child's school site between 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Kindergarten students must be at least five years of age on or before September 1, 2019. A child is eligible for Transitional Kindergarten if their fifth birthday is between Sept. 2, 2019 and Dec. 2, 2019.

Additional information regarding registration is available at the district website: www.orindaschools.org.

◆ CAL SHAKES from page 14

will be integral to evoking the world of the shipyards. The play will also spotlight the Bay Area's role in gospel music. The project reunites key artistic collaborators from both *black odyssey* and *This World in a Woman's Hands*, Linda Tillery and Molly Holm, to create a vocal score that weaves this musical heritage into the story's telling. *A Thousand Ships* is slated to premiere at Cal Shakes' Bruns Amphitheater as part of the 2021 season.

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

– Sally Hogarty, Editor

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Open houses are for adults only, and start at 6:30 p.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

FESTIVAL from page 10

and Patti Camras. The upbeat playlist reverberated throughout the banquet room as Junoesque models sashayed up and down the catwalk in the latest fashions.

NAMI Contra Costa is the first beneficiary named for this fundraiser. NAMI's mission statement views its goal as providing support, outreach, education and advocacy to individuals living with and families affected by mental illness.

She continues, "Since all our services are offered free of charge and NAMI CC's mission is to support, educate and advocate, any funds we receive will be used to implement a NAMI Signature educational program, 'Ending the Silence.'

Tom Tamura, the executive director of the Contra Costa Crisis Center, the second beneficiary designated by OWC, painted the broad strokes of his organization's mission: "The mission of the Contra Costa Crisis Center is to keep people alive and safe, help them through crises, and provide or connect them with culturally relevant resources in the community.

Tamura also spoke directly to how funding from this event will make a difference: "With the generous donation from the Orinda Woman's Club, we will expand our outreach and training in the community, while also strengthening our grief and postvention programs which mobilize a team of our staff and volunteers to any school in the county in response to suicide and other unexpected, traumatic loss of life."

OWC President Caroline Callaway expressed her gratitude for the many volunteers who made the afternoon so enjoyable and for the generosity of all the guests who attended. For more information about the Orinda Woman's Club, go to www.orinda-womansclub.org.

AAUW-Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Hosts Talk on STEM for Girls

On Jan. 15, the Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW-OML) will host Bunmi Esho, California executive director of Techbridge Girls, who will speak on how to prepare girls for a career in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics).

Techbridge Girls is a nonprofit launched in 2000 with the goal of educating and equipping girls from low-income communities with high-quality STEM programs that empower them to achieve economic freedom.

Representatives for Techbridge Girls note that, "It is hard to overestimate the need for programs that help girls foster a love for science and technology. Given the barriers and challenges, it is critical to provide support to girls in the steps they need to reach a STEM career."

The event will also give attendees the

opportunity to learn about other AAUW programs geared toward the next generation of innovators.

The STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics) Conference for middle school girls is March 23 at Saint Mary's College and AAUW's Tech Trek Camp for seventh grade girls will be held in Summer 2019 at Stanford University.

Young women graduating from Lamorinda public high schools can apply for AAUW-OML college scholarships and Saint Mary's College undergraduates can apply for scholarships to attend AAUW's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders in May of this year.

Admission to the speaking event is free and open to the public. Parents and teachers of girls interested in a STEM career are encouraged to attend.

AAUW is a nonprofit organization of more than 170,000 members nation-wide seeking to empower women and girls through research, education and advocacy.

For more information, visit AAUW-OML's website at: https://oml-ca.aauw.net/ or email Marty Schimbor at mgschimbor@comcast.net.

- Lynn Kalmar, Assistant Editor

GALLERY from page 13

traditional Chinese watercolor on rice paper, depicts the synergistic relationship between the avian world, flora and other creatures. To explore Yao's classes at Contra Costa Chinese School, part of DVC in Pleasant Hill, go to www.cococs.org.

As to the importance of art in the community, Saveri says, "I love exhibiting in this community because when I read The Orinda News I can see how youth and art are supported. This allows people to grow and change."

classified ads

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The Senior Bridge Group is looking for players! Games take place on Thursday afternoons in the Community Center. Call Gretchen Dabel for details at 925-254-5532.

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

you can get people to stop for just a moment to look at art, it transports them to somewhere else." Yao explains what she is contributing as a teacher of Chinese brush painting: "There must be a thirst in the Chinese-American community to learn the techniques I was taught from prestigious artists in China. Otherwise, I wouldn't have multiple classes with 80 students, aged 5 to 94. Along with this kind of teaching comes tranquility and peacefulness of spirit."

Visit the gallery at 26 Orinda Way during normal library hours - Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The library is closed on Jan. 1, New Year's Day and Jan. 21, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Call 925-254-2184 for more information or visit http://ccclib.org.

GARDENS from page 8

to ancient Egypt and the common grape vine (Vitis vinifera) to the Neolithic period.

The Julia Morgan Hall (Hall), part of the Julia Morgan Building (circa 1911) was moved to the site in 2014. It is a Berkeley Landmark, listed on the National Historical Registry, and also recently received a 2015 "Preservation Award" from the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.

The UC Berkeley Botanical Garden is located at 200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley. Go to www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu for more information. The Garden is closed Mon., Jan. 21 and Tues., Feb. 5.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO Sally Petru's Papyrus - Cyperus papyrus, a 15" x 37" watercolor, features the reed-like plant used for paper-making by ancient civilizations.

2019 Publication Schedule

Table with 2 columns: Issue, Deadline. February 2019, January 8, 2019; March 2019, February 8, 2019

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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 3 **Orinda Books**, 10 - 11 a.m. Story Time with Cathy G. Join Cathy for a lively hour of books and fun for kids of all ages. Also, Jan. 10, 17, 24 and 31.*
- 4 **First Friday Forum**, 1:30 p.m. "The Future of Hospitals," in the Sanctuary of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. See article p. 19.
- 6 **Art Gallery at the Orinda Library**, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Three Painters Usher in the New Year. Light refreshments will be served at their artist reception. See article p. 13.
- 7 **Orinda Books**, 2 p.m. The Poetry Circle will read and discuss *Eye Level* by Jennie Xie. They meet monthly at Orinda Books and welcome anyone interested in poetry.
- 8 **Mindful Littles**, 1:30 p.m. Team up with our Special Friends at Las Trampas to help prepare around 200 blankets for Trevor's Eagle Project Foundation. These blankets will be finished by local Scouts and donated to Children's Hospitals to help keep their patients warm this winter. Las Trampas, 3460 Lana Lane, Lafayette. Register at www.flipcause.com/secure/event_step2/NDYyNjg=/37314.
- 9 **Moraga Movers Classic Movie Day**, 4 p.m. *A Star is Born* (1937) starring Janet Gaynor and Frederic March, Rheem Theatre.
Orinda Books, 3 p.m. The 2nd Wednesday Book Group will read and discuss *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee. They meet monthly at Orinda Books and welcome new members.*
- 10 **Orinda Books**, 6 p.m. Katya Cengel will introduce and discuss her timely book, *Exiled: From the Killing Fields of Cambodia to California and Back*—a book that confronts resettlement in the U.S. and subsequent possible deportation.*
Orinda Theatre, 6:30 p.m. Free Movie Night, Orinda Theatre, lamorindatheatres.com.
- 12 **Mindful Littles**, 10:30 a.m. Kindness Book Club. Orinda Library (Garden Room), 26 Orinda Way. Register at www.flipcause.com/secure/cause_pdetails/NDMwMDU=.
- 18 **UC Berkeley Botanical Garden's** 10th Annual Plants Illustrated Exhibit: *Celebrating Ethnobotany* showcasing botanical art featuring Orinda artists. Through Feb. 6. 200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley. For more information www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu. See article p. 8.
- 15 **The World Affairs Book Group**, 3 p.m. will discuss *TROPIC OF CHAOS, Climate Change and the New Geography of Violence*, by Christian Parenti. The discussion will be led by Rob Strong. Orinda Books.*
- 23 **Orinda Books**, 2 p.m. The Random Readers will read and discuss *Beneath a Scarlet Sky* by Mark Sullivan. They meet monthly at Orinda Books and welcome new members.*
- 24 **Orinda Books**, 11 a.m. Maria's Book Group will read and discuss *Edgar and Lucy* by Victor Lodato. They meet monthly at Orinda Books and welcome new members.*
- 25 **Women of Spirit Gathering**, 7 p.m. Women seeking connection, shared learning and growth with other women of diverse faith traditions. Inspiring speakers, discussion at table groups. We are not affiliated with any religious institution, and are open to all. For more information, see www.facebook.com/womenofspiritlamorinda.
- 26 **Orinda Books**, 4 p.m. YARC (Young Adult Reading Critic meeting)*
- 27 **Live Poets Society**, 1-3 p.m. Monthly Readers Series with Poet Laureate Amy Glynn, featuring Dani Gabriel, Jeremy Jensen and Lisa Rosenberg. Orinda Books.*
- * **Orinda Books** is located at 276 Village Square, Orinda, info@orindabooks.com, 925-254-7606.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. For more information, call 925-254-2184 or visit www.ccclib.org/locations/Orinda.html. The Library will be closed on Jan. 1 for New Year's and on Jan. 21 for MLK Jr. Day.

- 2 **Toddler Stay and Play**. 10- 11 a.m. Enjoy gentle play in the Gallery Room.
- 3 **Yappy New Year!** A Paws to Read Open House. 3 - 4 p.m. in the Gallery Room. Unwind from holiday stress with our certified therapy dogs. You can read a story to them or make a craft. Geared for ages 5 to 12. No reservations necessary. Sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library
- 7 **Maker Monday**. 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Whether it's Legos, a craft, or Minecraft, something is always happening on Monday. Suitable for elementary school children. Also, Jan. 14, and 28.
- 8 **Toddler Storytime**. 10 a.m., repeats at 10:30 a.m. Stories and songs for 1 to 3 year olds and their caregivers. Drop in, but please do not attend more than one storytime a week. Also Jan. 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30.
Baby Storytime. 11:30 a.m. - noon. Lapsit storytime for newborns & pre-walkers (0 to roughly 18 months) and their caregivers. Early literacy advice. Families with older siblings please attend Toddler Storytime. No registration required. In Gallery Room. Also, Jan. 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29 and 30.
- 10 **ESL Conversation Group**. Local volunteer ESL teachers lead group discussions with ESL learners. Free and open to all. Come talk and learn English with us! Library Study Room A 1 - 2:30 p.m. Also Jan. 17, 24, 31.
- 11 **Mindful Littles**. 10:30 a.m. - noon. Join us for a special book-centered event with Mindful Littles. For families with kids ages 4-11. Please register at mindfullittles.org/upcoming events.
- 12 **Introduction to Personal Safety**. 2 - 3 p.m. This 1-hour training introduces students to IMPACT Bay Area's approach to personal safety. For ages 12+. Space limited registration required. Sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library.
- 14 **Introduction to Chinese Brush Painting**. 11a.m. - 12:30 p.m. A four part series for beginners as well as intermediate learners. Art materials will be provided. Registration is required, space is limited.
- 16 **Paws to Read**. 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Children in grades 1- 5 can practice reading skills with a friendly dog. To sign up for a session please call or visit the library. Also Jan. 24 and 30. Sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library.
Celtic Sands: A Fireside Performance. 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. A mix of traditional Irish reels and jigs, airs and ballads, Scottish strathspeys, and even a little Celtic rock.
- 18 **Mystery Book Club**. 3 - 4:30 p.m. Join the Orinda Mystery Book Club to discuss this month's choice: *Someone Always Knows* by Marcia Muller. Library Study Room A.

CLUB MEETINGS

American Association of University Women (AAUW). General meetings third Tues., <http://oml-ca.aauw.net> or email Marty Schimbor at mgschimbor@comcast.net. Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way. Jan. 14, 6:30-8 p.m. AAUW will host Bunmi Esho, Calif.

Executive Director of Techbridge Girls, who will speak on how to prepare girls for a career in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics). Lafayette Library Community Hall. See article p. 16.

- Diablo Star Chapter #214**. Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m. 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda Masonic Center, Karen Seaborn, 925-689-0995.
- Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe**. Third Monday, 7:30 p.m., Garden Room, Orinda Library, www.moragaadobe.org.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks**. Fourth Wednesday, 5 p.m., May Room, Orinda Library, 510-919-4765.
- Guided Meditation**. Wednesdays, 9 a.m. St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way, Orinda, focuses on health, harmony and wholeness, 925-254-5965.
- Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition**. Third Wednesday, 10 a.m., Orinda City Hall, Sarge Littlehale Room, 925-687-8844, ext. 227.
- Lamorinda Meditation Community**. Mondays and Thursdays, 10:30 a.m., Career Wisdom's Institute, 1036 Country Club Drive, Moraga. All levels and philosophies welcome! \$5 donation for the use of our beautiful space. Contact Gaby for more details: gmozee@gmail.com.
- Lamorinda Nature Walk and Bird Watching** for seniors. Wednesdays, 9 a.m., free. Call 925-254-2445 for weekly meeting place.
- Lamorinda Republican Women Federated**. Third Thursday every month. For more information www.facebook.com/Lamorinda-Republican-Women-Federated-136134033113066 or www.lamorindarepublicanwomen.org. Contact Elsie Euing at ejewing@comcast.net or 925-254-8614.
- Lamorinda Sirs** for retired men. Second Wednesday, 11 a.m. Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga, Pete Giers, 925-254-4667.
- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary**. Breakfast, Fridays, 7 a.m. at The Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa, 328 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, www.lamorindasunrise.com or lamorindasunrise@gmail.com.
- Lamorinda Toastmasters**. Every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Temple Isaiah, 945 Risa Road, Lafayette. <http://lamorinda.toastmastersclubs.org>.
- Meditative Gentle Yoga**. Mondays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way. All levels are welcome! Also Tuesday and Friday 6 p.m. \$5 donation. For more details, contact gmozee@gmail.com.
- Montelindo Garden Club** Third Friday, 9:30 a.m., September through May. The Lafayette Library and Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. www.montelindogarden.com. Jan. 18, Presentation: Pruning Tips, Speaker: Scott Paris owner of Maple Rock Gardens, a landscaping gem and year-round farm which is opened to the public a few times a year.
- Orinda Association**. Second Monday, 7 p.m., Orinda Library, May Room, 925-254-0800.
- Orinda Garden Club**, 315 Camino Sobrante, Orinda 925-257-0668, www.orindagc.org.
- Orinda Hiking Club**. Every weekend and first Wednesday, www.orindahiking.org or Ian at 925-254-1465.
- Orinda Historical Society**. Call 925-254-1353 for times and location of meetings.
- Orinda Job's Daughters**. First and third Monday, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 925-283-7176.
- Orinda Junior Women's Club** Community service group. First Tuesday, September through June, 7 p.m., www.orindajuniors.org.
- Orinda Masonic Lodge #122 F&AM**. First Thursday every month, except holidays. Family Dinner at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 8 p.m., at 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda Masonic Center. 925-254-5211, www.orindalodge.org.
- Orinda Rotary**. Every Wednesday, noon, Orinda Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, 925-254-2222, www.orindarotary.org.
- Orinda Satellite Rotary Club**. Second Wed. of month. Call Sylvia at 510-224-8548.
- Orinda/Tábor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation**. Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m., social, 7:30 p.m., meeting. For more information 925-254-8260.
- Orinda Teen Advisory Council**. Second Wednesday, 4 p.m., Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, email orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com.
- Orinda Woman's Club**. Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m., call Jean Barnhart, 925-254-3881, or www.orindawomansclub.org.
- Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 174**. Second Wednesday, 11 a.m. lunch. Holy Trinity Culture Center 1700 School Street, Moraga. We are a social organization of retired and semi-retired men who enjoy our leisure time with friends and activities. For info., call Tyler at 925-963-5741, www.branch174.sirinc2.org.

CITY/FIRE/MEETING SCHEDULE

- City Council**. First and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.
- Historic Landmarks Committee**. Fourth Tuesday, 3 - 5 p.m., Library Garden Room. Call 925-788-7323.
- Moraga-Orinda Fire District**. First and third Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m. Visit www.mofd.org/board/meetings; meeting location will be posted on the agenda.
- Planning Commission**. Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Orinda Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.

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



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Chamber of Commerce Holiday Mixer



ELANA O'LOSKEY

(L-R) **Ally Fattore** of Mechanics Bank, Chamber Executive Director **Cindy Powell**, Chamber City Liaison **Holly Henkel**, outgoing Chamber President **Roy Hodgkinson**, and **Barbara Hodgkinson** are all smiles at the Orinda Chamber of Commerce Holiday Mixer at Hilton House on Dec. 6.

Local Veterans Pay Tribute to Those Who Made the Ultimate Sacrifice

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

On Dec. 15, a group of veterans from Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8063 placed a wreath at the monument to fallen soldiers located at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., in Lafayette. The monument lists by name and town each service man and woman who has

wreath on the monument while Ted Parker played the bugle. The ceremony ended with the Pledge of Allegiance and the playing of taps.

"Today at more than 1,000 cemeteries both military and non-military, tens of thousands of wreaths are being placed on the graves of our fallen heroes," said Isely. "We were inspired by this to place a wreath here to honor those from Contra Costa County who



SALLY HOGARTY

VFW Post 8063 members (L-R) **Bill Lew** (Lafayette), **Ted Parker** (Orinda), **Bill Charles** (Orinda), **Ed Isely** (Moraga) and **Terry Murphy** (Orinda).

died in the service of their country since Sept. 11, 2001.

The ceremony began with VFW Post 8063 Commander Ed Isely reading each name followed by the tolling of a bell by Bill Charles. After the names were read, Bill Lew and Terry Murphy placed the

wreath on the monument while Ted Parker played the bugle. The ceremony ended with the Pledge of Allegiance and the playing of taps. "Today at more than 1,000 cemeteries both military and non-military, tens of thousands of wreaths are being placed on the graves of our fallen heroes," said Isely. "We were inspired by this to place a wreath here to honor those from Contra Costa County who

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◆ OCF from page 8

Orinda.

According to Severson, events sponsored by OCF affect the community in many ways: "OCF enhances the quality of life in Orinda by promoting community spirit and providing opportunities for all ages to learn, volunteer and serve." The Foundation partners with many organizations to benefit the community. Among other collaborative projects, OCF partners with the City of Orinda for Orinda Action Day of Community Service; the Parks and Recreation Department to provide Concerts and Movies in the Park; Miramonte High School for NorCal Kids Triathlon; Lamorinda Art Council for Lamorinda Idol and The Orinda Association to sponsor Orinda Citizen of

the Year award.

"There is collaboration and synergy among local nonprofits to maximize benefits to our community," Severson enthuses before continuing: "OCF's success depends on the generosity of our citizens. I envision OCF continuing its mission to enhance the quality of life in Orinda by fostering community spirit and citizen engagement, building partnerships, and providing financial assistance to support community activities, beautification and the arts long into the future."

Donations can be made at OrindaFoundation.org, or by mailing a check to P.O. Box 21, Orinda, CA 94563. Other ways to contribute are through www.PayPal.me/orindaFoundation, donations of stock, or designating OCF as your charity partner on Amazon Smile.

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FIRST FRIDAY FORUM / FITNESS

Future of Hospitals Will Be Discussed at First Friday Forum



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Dr. Thomas Rundall kicks off this year's First Friday Forum lecture series.

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

First Friday Forum (FFF) opens the new year on Jan. 4 with Dr. Thomas Rundall, who will discuss "The Future of Hospitals" at 1:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m.

Dr. Rundall will take on the good and the bad of hospitals as he speaks on what lies ahead. "The care provided in United States hospitals saves lives and improves the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of patients every year. But hospitals are expensive to operate, and they expose

◆ BUZZ from page 20

Lamorinda Professional Women's Referral Group (PWRG) Founded by Holly Henkel and Ally Fattore

A year ago Holly Henkel and Ally Fattore were having lunch to discuss how they could help each other build and grow their businesses through referrals. "Holly shared her positive experience with PWRG, which encourages working with 'power partners,'" explains Fattore.

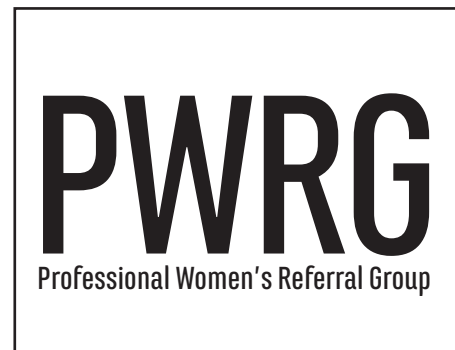
It was a no-brainer for the two to take the next step and approach the PWRG Advisory Board to establish a Lamorinda chapter. As founding members, Henkel serves as president and Fattore as secretary/treasurer. Currently there are 14 members; they are looking for about 10 more.

A power partner is a member of the group whose business is complementary to another woman's business. Henkel says, "For example, a realtor's power partner would be a mortgage broker." Annual dues are affordable at \$50 per year with quarterly dues of \$25. There are chapters in Concord, Danville, Lamorinda, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek. Each chapter has one member represented for each industry. Both agree that if you like working with women, this is the networking group for you.

PWRG holds two annual luncheons for all chapters in June and December. Quarterly mixers are hosted by rotating

chapters. Both events provide an opportunity to meet fellow members. At PWRG's recent holiday luncheon, \$800 was raised for CASA – Court Appointed Special Advocates.

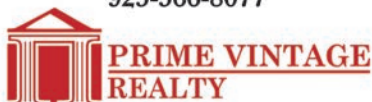
Lamorinda PWRG meets the first and third Thursdays of the month from 9 – 10:15 a.m. at 51 Moraga Way, Suite 6, Orinda. Find out more about Lamorinda PWRG at www.pwrg.net. Contact Holly Henkel at 925-360-2390 or holly@hollyhenkel.com and Ally Fattore at 925-253-2802 or ally_fattore@mechanicsbank.com.



CONTRIBUTED GRAPHIC
Holly Henkel and Ally Fattore founded the Lamorinda Professional Women's Referral Group.



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Fitness Tip of the Month

This Could Be Your Year

Your fitness at the end of each year is the average of what you have done (eating and exercising).

As you work towards your goal, every minus negates a plus.... and the end result can be nothing or negative.

Design a plan at the beginning of the year that you know will work and try to average mostly plus's all year long!

For more information, contact Sheena with Living Lean personal training and eating for elite fitness, at 925-360-7051 or www.livingleanprogram.com.



patients to the risks of hospital acquired infections, medical errors and other types of harm," says Dr. Rundall.

He continues, "Hospitals are facing enormous challenges. Healthcare organizations are increasingly investing in outpatient clinics, same-day surgery centers, free-standing emergency rooms and micro-hospitals. Medicare and other payers are incentivizing hospitals and doctors to keep patients out of hospitals if at all possible and to reduce the length of stay if they are admitted while simultaneously pressuring hospitals to improve patient outcomes."

Dr. Rundall, however, points out that hospitals are an important healthcare resource uniquely suited to care for patients with complex illnesses and injuries. Given this conundrum, Dr. Rundall will address the question: How will hospitals change in the face of this turbulent environment and what are the keys to future success?"

Dr. Rundall is the Henry J. Kaiser Professor of Organized Health Systems Emeri-

tus at the University of California, Berkeley. He received his B.A. and Ph.D. degrees in sociology from Stanford University. A teacher at Cornell University in the Sloan Program of Health Services Administration for four years, he then joined the faculty of the School of Public Health at UC Berkeley in 1980 where he held many positions including executive associate dean of the School of Public Health.

Professor Rundall has published across a broad array of topics and has been awarded the Filerman Prize from the Association of University Programs in Health Administration along with the Berkeley Citation for distinguished achievement and notable service to UC Berkeley. He currently serves on the board of directors, and is past chair of the board for John Muir Health.

"Since health care issues appear to be at the top of the list of the public's concerns, this is a most timely topic," adds Nancy Holtzapple, chair of FFF. "Please come, and bring friends, to this free lecture."

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BUSINESS BUZZ

Business Buzz Putting a Personal Face on Local Business

Elana O’Loskey



To send items for consideration, email O’Loskey at business.orinda@gmail.com.

Ally Fattore, VP/Bank Manager, Mechanics Bank, 77 Moraga Way

To say that Ally Fattore is an experienced banker is an understatement. She has worked at “big box banks” as well as community banks in the areas of private banking, commercial and real estate lending, and retail banking over the last 30 years. Two years ago she had the opportunity to work in Orinda rather than traveling from Alamo through the Caldecott Tunnel to Oakland; she did not hesitate. Fattore says, “The team I work with are seasoned bankers who’ve held managerial positions at their prior postings; I am fortunate to work with them.”

Mechanics Bank (MB) has provided personal and business banking, trust and estate services, brokerage and wealth

management services throughout California since its founding in 1905. Fattore admires its mission, which has always been to enrich the community, cultivate lasting relationships, and provide over-the-top personal service. The Orinda branch opened in 2008.

“We support the communities we serve with time, talent and treasure,” says Fattore. Local activities and organizations MB supports include: Orinda Fourth of July parade; Lamorinda Idol; Orinda Intermediate School activities; Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area; Women Sing, The Orinda Association, Holden High School, Little Leagues, Lamorinda Arts Council, Orinda Rotary, Seniors Around Town and Dancing with the Cars. The list is even longer but suffice it to say the effect of all this support enriches local lives and drives local economic growth.

When not working or doing volunteer



ELANA O’LOSKEY

Ally Fattore is proud of the personal service that she and the other bankers provide at Mechanics Bank, as well as the bank’s support of community events and programs.

work, Fattore applies brush to canvas and paints watercolors. Stop by to meet your hometown banker at Mechanics Bank, 77 Moraga Way in Orinda. Hours are Mon. – Thurs. 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m. – 6 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. You can get in touch by phone at 925-253-2802, 800-797-6324 or email at ally_fattore@mechanicsbank.com. Learn more online at www.mechanicsbank.com.

Holly Henkel, Realtor at Compass, 51 Moraga Way

Holly Henkel has been a realtor for 15 years and has been with Pacific Union since 2012. Compass recently bought Pacific Union to enlarge its presence in California. Pacific Union was the number eight independent real estate company in California. Pacific Union President Mark McLaughlin will remain in charge of its branches for the near future. Compass is a national company working to become international. New branding and signs were recently put in place.

The core of Henkel’s business model is believing people deserve to own a home where they feel comfortable, safe and part of the community. Since she’s experienced that in her life, she works hard to allow others that opportunity. Knowing how to find the best fit for a new home comes naturally to Henkel. In the past she’s lived in New York/New Jersey, Boston, Atlanta, Ft. Lauderdale and Palm Beach, Florida.

Through her commitment to community service, she keeps up on what’s going on

around town on many levels. She is a board member of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, former board member of the Educational Foundation of Orinda and the Miramonte Parents Club and chairperson for Orinda Action Day (recipients of the 2013 William Penn Jr. Mott Environmental award presented by The Orinda Association).

Navigating first-time buyers through the home ownerships process means communicating by email and text messaging. Since these buyers are often close to her adult children’s ages, she’s already developed those skills. As a volunteer for the Seniors Around Town program, she’s learned lots about working at the pace of seniors and helping them adapt to change. No stranger to Rossmore, she’s had many purchases and sales of condos and co-ops in that premier active retirement community in Walnut Creek.

Outside of work and volunteering, Henkel loves spending time several days



STEVEN GREGORY PHOTOGRAPHY

Realtor and community volunteer **Holly Henkel** enjoys helping clients find a home that’s the perfect fit, whether they are first-time home buyers or experienced homeowners starting a new chapter.

a week with her 16-month-old grandson. An inveterate movie-goer, she also belongs to Oscar Chatter, a group that attends red-carpet events in Hollywood.

Contact Henkel at Compass, 51 Moraga Way, #1 in Orinda by phone at 925-360-2390 or via email at holly@hollyhenkel.com and visit her website at www.hollyhenkel.com.

[SEE BUZZ page 19]



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