



THE ORINDA NEWS

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January 2020

Infrastructure, Sales Tax are Top Priorities of Orinda's New Mayor

By KATHY BOHANAN ENZERINK
Staff Writer

A civil engineer for more than three decades, Darlene Gee is naturally focused on infrastructure, drainage issues and long-term maintenance – issues which promise to be on her agenda this year as Orinda's new mayor

The Community Park, at the Brookwood Road and Camino Pablo intersection, is

now visible and accessible. Gee wants plans in place for "an improved gateway to the Village." She says she knows the project won't be completed during her tenure as mayor, but construction should be underway this year.

Other agenda items include asking voters this year to renew the half-cent sales tax increase, which was approved in 2012.

Gee says another priority is to undertake [SEE MAYOR page 14]



Orinda's City Council recognized the work of outgoing mayor **Inga Miller** as she handed the reins to fellow City Council member **Darlene Gee** Dec. 3. (L-R) **Dennis Fay, Amy Worth, Gee, Miller** and **Nick Kosla**.

Planning Commission Postpones Vote on Wilder Memory Care Home

KATHY BOHANAN ENZERINK
Staff Writer

After more than three hours of debate on a proposed memory care project in Wilder, Orinda residents agreed the city's aging population needs such a home – the point of contention is where it should be built.

Despite indicating support for the project, the Planning Commission on Dec. 10 postponed a vote and asked the developer to provide a 3D model, make sure lighting meets Wilder night sky standards, further study evacuation, and do an impact study on emergency services with the Moraga-Orinda Fire Department.

[SEE MEMORY page 6]



PHOTO COURTESY OF CITY OF ORINDA

This project area map shows the location of the proposed CountryHouse Memory Care facility in Wilder.

Chamber Explains What's Next After Going Virtual

By PAUL KILDUFF
Correspondent

Making use of technology and saving money were what led the Orinda Chamber of Commerce to suddenly shutter the group's downtown office in October and go virtual.

Chamber board member and former president Roy Hodgkinson, a retired information technology manager who spearheaded the move to a virtual chamber, says the reason was to keep up with the times.

In the past, the chamber offices were a place where members, those curious about joining or others wanting to know more about the Orinda business climate, could wander in and get answers to their questions.

"Today, people don't wander around – they get on the Internet," says Hodgkinson. "We have to adjust to the influence of the internet."

Publicity and marketing, another key chamber function members don't use as much as before, was also a reason to cut back on staff and office space, he said.

"Our small business members do their own marketing and publicity because it's easy to do online for a minimal cost," says Hodgkinson, noting that he recently sold a house in Ohio without ever going to the

state.

Another consideration was the savings on the salary for former chamber Executive Director Cindy Powell to be in the office one day a week, an amount Hodgkinson would not reveal.

Phone and Internet access, having to pay Powell as a W2 employee, subleasing space [SEE CHAMBER page 6]

Orinda Icon Shares Health Secrets

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor



SALLY HOGARTY

Jeanne Dowell's passion for yoga and teaching is shared with daughter **Dana Dowell** (standing), author of the book *Yoga Girl*.

While bringing joy to many, the holidays, including the beginning of a new year, can bring stress. Whether that results in depression due to a loved one no longer being a part of the holiday celebrations, stress at gaining a few pounds or other concerns, Jeanne Dowell has the answer – yoga!

According to this 90-year-old Orinda icon, yoga not only improves circulation, specific postures can alleviate depression and help one breathe more fully.

"Yoga helps us stretch the stress out of our minds and bodies," Dowell says. "The practice of yoga brings us face to face with

[SEE DOWELL page 5]

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HAPPENINGS

Festival of Trees Gala Raises More than \$41K for Bay Area Nonprofits

By SUSAN DOMINGOS
Contributing Writer

More than 400 people attended the Orinda Woman's Club's Festival of Trees Nov. 21 and helped raise more than \$41,000 for East Bay nonprofit organizations.

The event included lunch at the Marriott Hotel in San Ramon, followed by a fashion show presented by Helen Lyall of Helen Lyall Clothes for Women in Napa. Highlights included Star Wars-inspired winter and formal fashions, as well as stylish and daring men's clothing from Scott Lyall Clothes for Men.

A silent auction offered more than 50 items, with the highest bid reaching \$1,200

for a cooking class donated by Charles Vollmar of Epicurean Exchange. The most popular item, with 14 bids, was brunch at the Limewood Bar & Restaurant in the Claremont Club & Spa.

Locations for destination raffles included a Monterey golf get-away, Christmas week at Lake Tahoe and a two-night stay at the former Chicago Motor Club, now an Art Deco hotel in downtown Chicago. Other raffle prizes included money trees, wreaths,



SALLY HOGARTY
A model strolls the catwalk in evening wear from Helen Lyall at the fundraiser's fashion show.



SALLY HOGARTY
(L-R) **Sondra Landberg, Sheila Casazza, Patti Camras** and **Candy Kattenburg** were among the attendees at Festival of Trees, an annual event hosted by the Orinda Woman's Club.

and baskets filled with gifts ranging from children's art supplies to vintage wines.

Festival of Trees is the major fundraising event presented by the Orinda Woman's Club, with this year's proceeds going toward Monument Crisis Center, Renaissance Scholars of California State University East Bay, and the Community Services Committee of the Orinda Woman's Club. Final

numbers are not yet available, but are expected to exceed the 2018 total of \$41,535.

Monument Crisis Center is a community-based nonprofit family resource center for Central and East Contra Costa County offering nutritious food, quality resources and referrals to low-income individuals and families. Renaissance Scholars of Cal

[SEE FESTIVAL page 4]

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Fitness Tip of the Month

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 pluses all year long!

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

On the Calendar in January

- 2 **Story Time with Cathy G.** Join Cathy for an hour of books and fun for all ages. 10 a.m. Orinda Books*. Also, Jan. 9, 16, 23 and 30.
 - 3 **First Friday Forum** presents Mark Sherry lecture, "About Air Traffic Control," 1:30 p.m. Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette.
 - 5 **Artist Reception** for F-14 Photography Group, Alex Meckes' mathematical origami and Ian Clark's ceramics, 2:30 p.m. Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. See article p. 8.
 - 9 **Pat's Book Group** will read and discuss *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman. 10 a.m. Orinda Books*.
 - Classic Film Showcase** (Free Movie Night) presents *Out of Africa* (1985) with Meryl Streep and Robert Redford, 7 p.m. Orinda Theatre, lamorindatheatres.com. See article p. 15.
 - 11 **ARF Fundraiser:** Photographer Barbara and Ian Clark's ceramics, 2:30 p.m. Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. See article p. 8.
- [SEE CALENDAR page 11]

The Living Lean Weight Loss Program

"Within an eight-week period, I lost 22 lbs and eliminated my type-2 diabetes," says Bill Rudolph.

Bill Rudolph

**Call Sheena at
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Space is limited so call today!**

I am a 52 year old guy that came to Sheena weighing 208 lbs, which is too much for my 5 ft 10 in. height. I had a big gut with a 37 inch waist. I had recently been to the doctor and had been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes based on a triglyceride level of 379 mg/dl and a glucose level of 115 mg/dl. Given this information my wife and I decided to try the Living Lean program.

We began spinning classes two to three times a week, personal training twice a week and riding our road bikes or skiing on the weekends. We changed our entire eating habits in accordance with Sheena's guidance.

Within an 8 week period, I lost 22 lbs and reduced my waist size to 33 inches. My recent blood tests indicate that I have eliminated the type 2 diabetes issues with a triglyceride level of 150 mg/dl and a glucose level of less than 100 mg/dl. I feel better than I can ever remember. I feel strong, energized, and have an overall positive attitude. My wife has had similar positive results, and it has been very reinforcing to do the program together.

Thank you Sheena!

I love this town.

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THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
Changes and Resolutions



Carlos Baltodano

Happy New Year! We hope you've had a wonderful holiday season with family and friends.

We approach the beginning of 2020 with renewed vigor and a list of resolutions and changes. Let's start with the changes in downtown.

The building at 37 Moraga Way has been totally renovated. It includes a new façade with Tuscan columns, planter boxes, a decorative panel between the first and second floor and a large clock.

This is such a major improvement to the entrance to Orinda that on Dec. 3 outgoing Mayor Inga Miller presented the owner of the building, Mo Mashhoon, the Mayor's Excellence Award.

In thanking the City Council, Mashhoon said, "Everything we have done is something I have been doing for many, many years. I'm so glad that I have had the opportunity to do the same in Orinda."

The other change you'll see in the beginning of the year will be that the "R" on the iconic Orinda Theatre sign will be repaired and electrified. It has not been lighted for six months; the damage probably caused by birds. On Jan. 31, a contractor is expected to remove and fix the sign. The symbolic sign soon will be seen from Highway 24 with all the letters of Orinda shining brightly.

Dereck Zembrack, operator of the theater, says, "For 78 years, the Orinda marquee has been the landmark for Orinda and the East Bay. It's time to shine as it did on its birth."

Thanks are in order for these contributions in beautifying our downtown.

As we look to new ventures and resolutions, I would like to acknowledge the current and continuing Orinda Association Board officers: Joe Garvey, Bill Waterman

and Sally Hogarty.

I have the honor of continuing as the president. The OA board would like to thank our donors and members for their continued support in 2019. The contributions and volunteer service have supported valuable events and programs in our community.

Services include the Seniors Around Town program (SAT), the Fourth of July Parade, the Orinda Classic Car Show, *The Orinda News* (which is free and sent to every household) and the Volunteer Center.

We would like to thank the many dedicated volunteers who worked tirelessly to run our programs and events. We would like to especially thank the 70 Orinda drivers that provide free, safe rides for Orinda seniors.

If you are looking for a great New Year's resolution, consider giving one ride per month to an Orinda senior. The SAT program provides transportation to Orinda seniors by Orinda drivers. If you are a senior in Orinda and need a ride to your medical or other appointments, or if you want to drive and help a senior, please call 925-402-4506.

On the topic of helping out, now is the time to nominate someone who you believe has contributed substantially to the community. The Orinda Community Foundation (OCF) and the OA are seeking nominations for the 2019 Citizen of the Year and the 2019 William Penn Mott Jr. Environmental Award. The winners, as in past years, will be feted at a gala dinner in March at the Orinda Country Club.

To nominate an individual or organization, email oa@orindaassociation.org or send a note by mail to P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563. For more information, call the

[SEE PRESIDENT page 4]

The Orinda Association

The Orinda Association is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to:

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

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

The Orinda Association
P.O. Box 97
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Businessman Receives Mayor's Award



DAVID DIERKS

Mo Mashhoon (L) received the 2019 Mayor's Award of Excellence from Inga Miller for his efforts in jumpstarting the renewal of downtown Orinda by remodeling and upgrading 22 Bryant Way and 37 Moraga Way.

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Need a 2020 New Year's Resolution?

- * Give a ride a month through Seniors Around Town
- * Send nomination for Environmental Award or Citizen of the Year
- * Check out www.TheOrindaNews.com
- * View Emergency Evacuation in Orinda video
- * Help us with July 4th Parade
- * Volunteer at Orinda Classic Car Show
- * No time to volunteer? Help fund our programs.
- * **Donate to The Orinda Association**



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Letters to the Editor

Access to the Public Should Make a Street Public

I write to address a letter by Gary Johnson (*The Orinda News* Dec. 2019) who says that he “presumes” the developers and then the purchasers of homes on private streets were trying to save money by building streets that don’t meet the city and county’s standards.

As a resident of the Wilder subdivision, I can assure Mr. Johnson that our beautiful private streets meet the highest standards of both city and county, offering Orindans easy public access to the five playing fields and Arts and Garden Center we have built for the city.

Other subdivisions such as Orinda Oaks, Orinda Downs and Orinda Grove have similar private roads, and all are private because the city of Orinda required them to be private to avoid maintenance.

Regarding the older private streets in the city, the reasons for their being classified as private some 50 years ago are random and unknown in many cases.

Ironically, in 2014, 85 percent of private streets exceeded the city’s goal of the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 50. Only 24 percent of the city’s public streets could meet that standard! Clearly, the “presumption” is incorrect that private roads are of inferior quality.

Like 50 percent of Orindans, Mr. Johnson lives on a residential cul-de-sac used mostly by the households on his street – not an arterial or collector road that most Orindans use. His street had a PCI of 23 in 2014. By 2018, the PCI of his street had increased to 98 due to construction funded by the taxes paid by private and public road residents alike.

Had Mr. Johnson’s street been deemed private by some unknown criteria, he and his 24 neighbors would have paid \$10,000 per household for these repairs. While private road residents helped pay for his repairs, we are barred from receiving any of our tax dollars for our own streets, which we must maintain out of our own pockets.

Private road residents did not choose to live on private streets – they were forced to do so by the city or historic circumstances, and most private streets are not gated or posted and are open to the public.

I single out Mr. Johnson only because he wrote to express his opinion, but he represents many Orindans on public streets who have misconstrued the facts. Surely most Orindans, once armed with the facts, will agree that the streets in our city that offer public access should be maintained by the taxes that we all pay.

We should ask ourselves why all of

Orinda’s roads are not public rather than why some are private.

– Kathleen Finch

Voters Need to Know How Extra Sales Tax Will Be Spent

Orinda plans to poll residents about increasing the city’s sales tax by one-half percentage point or more, perhaps up to one percentage point more (*The Orinda News*, Dec. 2019).

According to the newspaper’s article, “City Council member Amy Worth says city leaders have ‘...no pre-conceived notions on how we should spend the money...’”

City leaders are obligated to state how any extra sales-tax money would be spent. Otherwise, extra money could go for undesirable projects.

In Nov. 2012, Orinda’s voters approved a one-quarter percentage point increase in the city’s sales tax. At the same time, California’s voters passed Proposition 30, which increased the statewide sales tax by another one-quarter percentage point. Thus, the current Orinda sales tax is, according to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, 8.75 percent. Before 2013, the Orinda sales tax was 8.25 percent.

Increasing the city’s sales tax could result in residents going to other cities or counties to avoid the higher Orinda tax.

Alternatively, more Orinda shoppers might go online for their purchases. Shopping online can result in paying a lower sales tax or no sales tax at all. Anyone who shops online extensively will find that some out-of-state firms don’t charge California sales tax despite a U.S. Supreme Court ruling (*South Dakota v. Wayfair*, 2018) stating that out-of state firms must add applicable California tax – and applicable sales taxes in other states – to buyers of merchandise. Most food purchases, in California, remain tax-free.

In California’s Alpine and Modoc counties, the sales tax is 7.25 percent.

Raising Orinda’s sales tax would be regressive, meaning that the tax would hit the city’s low-income residents harder than those enjoying higher incomes. Remember, Orinda has many senior citizens living on fixed incomes.

Orinda’s businesses might lose customers under a higher sales tax.

California already is a high-tax state. California has the nation’s highest taxes in three areas: the sales tax; the gasoline tax; and the top bracket of the personal income tax (13.3 percent).

Orinda’s voters, to date, have been very supportive of meaningful tax increases. For example, in 2018, the voters approved Measures E and I, both of which provided extra funds for the city’s schools.

If Orinda’s sales tax has to increase, demand that the city’s leaders tell voters what



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Orinda would do with any extra funds.

–Richard S. Colman

Correction

In the story *Council Bans Non-hosted Short-term Rentals* in the December 2019 edition, Phil Leitner was incorrectly credited with a quote. The quote should have been credited to Phil White.

◆ FESTIVAL from page 2

State East Bay provides support services to students exiting the foster care system to accomplish their goal of obtaining a college degree.

The Orinda Woman’s Club Community Service Committee donates funds to

nonprofit groups locally, nationally, and internationally and awards education grants to improve the lives of women, families and those aging out of the foster care system.

For more information about the Orinda Woman’s Club, go to <https://orindawomansclub.org>.

◆ PRESIDENT from page 3

OA office at 925-254-0800.

The New Year also is a good time to prepare a family plan for emergencies and possible evacuations. Take a look at the public service videos and other information regarding emergency preparedness at the OA website (orindaassociation.org), LaMorindacert.org and MOFD.org.

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Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, or email to editor@theorindanews.com.

Letters to Editor for the February issue are due **Jan. 8, 2020**.

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, 2020**.

PEOPLE

◆ DOWELL from page 1

ourselves. Before we feel a loss of control, we need to take time out daily to be quiet and experience life more peacefully.”

Dowell certainly practices what she preaches. Although she turned 90 on Dec. 29, she teaches a minimum of three yoga classes a week and takes one to two classes herself. She recently was certified to teach Dr. Baxter Bell’s Yoga for Healthy Aging.

Up until last year, she was also an avid skier until vertigo forced her to stop. She attributes yoga to keeping her strong and physically active. “My knees, hips and shoulders just respond to the yoga postures, and I am so grateful,” Dowell says.

The self-proclaimed “yoga junkie” read her first book on yoga as a 4th grader living in the Midwest. Although enticed by the subject matter, she didn’t take her first class until she was a young mother in Orinda.

“My teacher, Rama Vernon, opened up this new world to me. Going through a divorce, I needed a way to deal with the stress in my mind and body and the pains of being a single mom raising three children. I feel yoga saved my life, and I am so grateful to teach the science of yoga and how it helps us age with grace and health through our senior years,” she explains.

Dowell recalls how she uses yoga to help with everyday chores. “I hate grocery shopping, but if I go after my yoga class, I just glide through the store, totally peaceful and present.”

“Peaceful and present” is not how yoga guru B.K.S. Iyengar would have described Dowell when he met her in the 1960s. Well-known in yoga circles, the native of India had been invited to teach a workshop in Oakland. Dowell recalled she was in the front row when he stopped teaching and spoke to her: “You with the darting eyeballs. If you can’t concentrate, get out, out!” Needless to say, Dowell didn’t get out, and when they met three years later,

she said he acknowledged how far she had come in her practice.

“I remember Mr. Iyengar telling me my sternum was collapsing and he was right, not only my sternum but my whole insides,” says Dowell. “To this day, I think of how much the sternum tells us about what’s going on inside.”

Thanks to the encouragement of her teacher, Dowell taught her first class in her backyard to students from Holden High School, then called Contra Costa Alternative High School, “I didn’t charge, but they had to bring something they made: bread, poems or whatever. I loved them and teaching,” she says.

Dowell went on to teach at the Orinda Community Center, the Moraga Hacienda, Rossmoor, Alta Bates Hospital, Mills College, convalescent homes and so many more. “One of my most exciting yoga experiences was working under the U.S. Olympic Committee at Squaw Valley teaching yoga to the synchronized swim team from Heather Farms in Walnut Creek,” she adds.

Impressed with the value of yoga, Dowell continued to teach and take classes, studying around the world including India, which she describes as her “boot camp in growing up.” She also shared her passion for yoga with her children, Duke, an electrical engineer in Martinez, David, a filmmaker in Glendale, and Dana, a professional actress and visual artist.

Dana, who lives in Moraga, will sometimes teach with her mother and has written her own book “Yoga Girl,” with illustrations by Kevin Coffey. Dowell also has four grandchildren and a stepson who have been exposed to the positive effects of yoga as well.

“My life has changed in a big way through yoga,” Dowell says. “It gave me a meaning and a purpose I didn’t have before. I’m helping people and, knowing that, helps me. Mostly, it’s given me an acceptance and

[SEE DOWELL page 11]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Long-time Orinda resident **Jeanne Dowell** teaches yoga three times a week, attributing her good health and positive outlook to the practice.

Local Couple Brings Warmth and Comfort to Unsheltered Pets

By LYNN KALMAR
Assistant Editor

For the past six years, Orinda residents Pam and Gary Schroeder have been doing their part to help homeless pets have a more comfortable place to rest their paws during the cold winter season.

Their organization, Pads4Pets, collects new and used yoga mats and repurposes them for the companion animals of people living without shelter in San Francisco. The mats are washed, cut and stenciled by Pads4Pets, then passed along to partner organization Veterinary Street Outreach Services (VET SOS) for distribution.

Pam Schroeder said she was inspired to cut her old yoga mat in half and repurpose it for an animal in need after a cold morning walk with her dog Cody in 2013.

She delivered her first pet mat to a homeless person the next day. After getting the word out to neighbors, she soon had 25 additional mats ready for her husband, Gary, to cut and stencil. Now in their seventh

[SEE PETS page 14]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gary and Pam Schroeder have been transforming yoga mats since 2013, offering homeless pets respite from the winter weather.

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STUDENTS

◆ MEMORY from page 1

The issue is housing 38 people with dementia in the 32,000 square-foot CountryHouse Memory Care project. The Westin family purchased the Wilder property 11 years ago. Richard Westin, a resident of Orinda for 48 years, is CEO of Agemark, a privately-held company which operates assisted-living and CountryHouse Memory Care facilities nationwide.

Several residents of Wilder, a 1,600-acre planned community with 245 luxury custom and estate homes, expressed concerns about the home which would be built near the community entrance and Hwy. 24.

Greg Schwartz, vice president of the Wilder Homeowners Association, said a recent poll showed 95 percent of Wilder households are against locating a care facility within the community.

"With a single entrance/exit route, evacuation safety during an earthquake or fire is a major concern," he said. "And, the structure is massive compared to the lot size."

Schwartz pointed out there are 16 parking places for company vans and up to 12 employees, plus large delivery trucks that would partially block the main road.

"We are 100 percent for this type of facility in Orinda as there is a great need for it," he said. "This is just not the right location."

Resident Gary Rafferty said Wilder is "semi-rural and harmonious with its surroundings. A 32,000-square-foot building is as large as a supermarket crammed into 1 acre of land."

Saying, "I am not the enemy," resident Bill Lapcevic acknowledged nobody is against memory care but the project needs a complete traffic study.

There are two emergency-vehicle-only access roads in Wilder and are not for public use. One is at the south side toward Moraga and one leads to/from Brookside and Moraga Way.

Referencing the devastating fire in Paradise (Butte County), resident Madeline Mallory noted an emergency in Wilder would require the evacuation of some 1,000 residents, 800 children at the sports fields and up to 100 people at the Arts Center. "Can you come up with another exit?" she asked.

Eric Egan said he is concerned about light and glare, visible from Hwy. 24, on a 24/7 basis. "This will be similar to a brightly lit hotel," he said.

Others voiced concerns about the already congested "choke" curve near the proposed site and placing the building under a cell tower which could endanger the health of fragile residents.

[SEE MEMORY page 14]

School Events in January

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 1 | Glorietta Elementary , winter break through Jan. 5. | Start Driving, 6 p.m. |
| | Holden High School , winter break through Jan. 7. | Holden High School , Parent Potluck & Orientation, 6:30 p.m. |
| | Orinda Intermediate School , winter break through Jan 5. | Orinda Academy , Juniors: college night, 6:30 p.m. |
| | Miramonte High School , winter break through Jan 5. | AUHSD Governing Board meeting, 7 p.m. |
| 6 | Miramonte High School , Staff Development Day. No school. | 20 All Schools , no school (Martin Luther King Day.) |
| 7 | Miramonte High School , Freshman Parent Discussion Group. 7 p.m. | 21 Miramonte High School , Junior Parent Discussion Group, 7 p.m. |
| 10 | Holden High School , All-School Event: Piece Project. | 22 Miramonte High School , Parents' Club Meeting Parents' Club Meeting, 9:30 a.m. |
| 13 | Miramonte High School , Boosters meeting, 6 p.m. | 26 Miramonte High School , Public Speaking Showcase, noon. |
| | OUSD , 6 p.m. regular board meeting. | 27 Glorietta Elementary , Diverse Abilities Awareness Week. |
| 14 | Glorietta Elementary Parent Club All member meeting, 10 a.m. Glorietta Elementary School - Library. | 28 Miramonte High School , Senior Parent Discussion Group, 7 p.m. |
| | Miramonte High School , Sophomore Parent Discussion Group, 7 p.m. | 29 Holden High School , graduation, 5:30 p.m. |
| | AUHSD Measure G & A Meeting , 6:30 p.m. | 30 Miramonte High School , Open House, 5 p.m. |
| 15 | Miramonte High School , Parent Ed - Smart | |

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

Kinder/TK Registration Set for February

Transitional kindergarten and kindergarten registration for children entering an Orinda public school in August will be open Feb. 3-6. On those dates, parents may register children online at www.orindaschools.org.

Kindergarten students must be at least five years old on or before Sept. 1. Children are eligible for transitional kindergarten if their fifth birthday is between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2. Additional information regarding registration is available at the district website: www.orindaschools.org.

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◆ CHAMBER from page 1

from the Orinda Association and other overhead was "60 percent over salary," said Hodgkinson. To illustrate what this means Hodgkinson said "if we were paying that person a \$100,000 a year it was costing \$160,000."

Powell said it cost about \$1,500 a month, including her salary, to run the chamber out of the OA office. For 14 years, Powell said, the chamber's physical presence in downtown offered a personal contact point for existing and new business owners, out-of-town visitors and entrepreneurs seeking advice. Powell said her part-time responsibilities included in-office, weekend, and evening events.

"The small cost of running the chamber being the sole reason to terminate a physical presence may appear prudent in the short-term, however, I fear the long-term repercussions will make it harder on businesses in Orinda," Powell said. "Our small community supports each other and I regret this loss."

Hodgkinson said the changes will allow the chamber to concentrate on what it does best, including:

- Working with the East Bay chapter of SCORE, a Small Business Administration resource that encourages entrepreneurship through mentoring,

workshops and educational resources. The chamber also partners with a similarly minded organization, Lamorinda Entrepreneurs.

- Cross promoting Lamorinda Presents events on the chamber website.
- Participating in the East Bay Leadership Council by giving input to Orinda's representatives in the California state legislation, Senator Steve Glazer, Assemblywoman Rebecca Bauer Kahan, and other representatives on legislation affecting the city.
- Holding mixers where business people can gather to talk in person.

The chamber also has relaunched its online newsletter and currently has about 600 subscribers.

The Orinda Association President Carlos Baltodano said his organization will "miss having them in our office as fellow tenants, but we are encouraged to see that the chamber is going to a virtual format to reach out to more local businesses."

Baltodano encouraged local businesses to join the chamber as "decisions on downtown parking and revitalizing need the input of local businesses to arrive at an effective solution. Joining the chamber will add a stronger voice from local businesses."

Contact Paul Kilduff at editor@theorindanews.com.

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STUDENTS

Miramonte Students See Gift of Sight on Medical Mission in Africa

By KATHY BOHANAN ENZERINK
Staff Writer

Dr. Yenjean Hwang, an infectious disease specialist and chair of Orinda Rotary's International Vision Volunteers project, notes about 70 percent of blind people in the world could have vision restored with proper treatment.

Four Miramonte High School students – Bella Deanhardt, Ally Petek, Natalia Roman and Phoebe Schmidt – learned first-hand what she means.

The girls were the first students to accompany Hwang, her eye surgeon husband, Ivan, and other medical professionals for a mission to Zambia in south-central Africa to treat residents in the remote village of Zimba.

For two weeks last summer, the group served patients at Zimba Eye Hospital, a nonprofit founded in 1994 by three East Bay ophthalmologists that has been serving people in Zambia and neighboring countries for 25 years. They also volunteered at a community library and helped build mud huts.

"This was the first time I have taken young people other than my children," Hwang said. "They did an amazing job and had a great experience."

As a sophomore, Deanhardt, whose father is a Rotarian, started Miramonte's Interact Club, Rotary International's service club for people ages 12 to 18. As president, she said she quickly learned the task was too big for one student, so she recruited Petek, Roman and Schmidt as her co-presidents.

In its first year, Interact Club, which touts 100 members, raised \$1,000 toward Orinda Rotary's \$140,000 goal to install solar panels and upgraded medical equipment at the eye hospital.

"To raise funds, Interact Club members volunteer to work at Rotary functions," said Deanhardt. "We put out tip jars when we serve and bus tables, for instance. Plus, we get fed!"

Paying their own way, the girls were allowed one carry-on suitcase and a backpack for the excursion. Large, checked bags were reserved for medicine, supplies and equipment. Travel was grueling as there is no direct flight from the Bay Area to Zambia.

The group started from San Francisco with a 10-hour flight to London. After a five-hour layover, they spent 12 hours flying to Johannesburg. Then they waited another five hours before they flew the final leg of the journey to Livingstone, Zambia. From there, it was a 37-mile, two-hour drive on dirt roads to Zimba.

Following a day of rest, the teens split into pairs. One week Petek and Roman traveled to Mwandu to help build mud huts, then switched with Deanhardt and Schmidt to assist at the hospital and library.

During the hospital week, each girl spent time in the operating room.

"I have a strong desire to help people and do something meaningful with my life," says Deanhardt. "Surgery is not in my future, but I sucked it up and did it."

Petek, on the other hand, said, "I was loving it!"

"My dad and brother faint at the sight
[SEE VISION page 10]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miramonte student and Interact Club founder **Bella Deanhardt** assists a patient at the Zimba Eye Hospital.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

(L-R) **Ally Petek, Phoebe Schmidt, Natalia Roman** and **Bella Deanhardt** await their flight from San Francisco to London, the first leg of an over 35-hour journey to Zimba, Zambia where the girls volunteered on a two-week service trip.

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January Gallery: F-14 Photography, Mathematical Origami and Ceramics

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

The Lamorinda Arts Council presents the work of the F-14 Photography Group, Alex Meckes' mathematical origami and ceramics from Ian Clark and friends at the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library to kick off the New Year.

Few would disagree that the new year brings a new freedom of thought. Toni Morrison has an interesting idea about this freedom, "The function of freedom is to free someone else. If you have some power, then your job is to empower somebody else."

All the artists showing work in January have tasted that freedom and created work

that speaks to pursuing their love of art. They invite you to join them at their artist reception 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Jan. 5 to see what they have created; and hope their work might free you to try something creative.

Yoni Mayeri of Orinda curated the photography show for eight members of the F-14 Photography Group. They are a diverse group with a variety of professional backgrounds and experience in photography who share their knowledge and talents in pursuit of fine art photography.

They explore new locations and take regular field trips to places of interest.

F-14 holds a monthly lunchtime meeting where they check in and have critiques, provide advice, discuss projects and help each other find solutions to the business, practical and artistic concerns inherent in being a photographer.

All F-14 members are showing a total of 40 works in this exhibit: Emmy Randol of Oakland; Kirsten Berg, Steve Haimovitz, Celie Placzek, Ron Rothbart and Elizabeth Saucier of Berkeley; Harley Jensen of Emeryville and Yoni Mayeri of Orinda. Photographic genres on exhibit include: travel/people, birds, architectural abstracts, botanicals, abstract nature, landscapes and florals. Mayeri's *Dangerous Beauty*, a 16" x 20" photograph on canvas elevates the beauty of *Brugmansia* or Angel's Trumpet, as it is commonly known, while her title reminds us that it is highly toxic.

Alex Meckes of Orinda is a junior at Miramonte High School and has been creating origami since second grade. While the average person thinks of origami as clever foldings of paper, Meckes has a different understanding. He is guided by MIT professor Erik Demaine as to what folding is all about.

"It's kind of annoying because nature does it so well! We have such a hard time



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Ian Clark's stoneware pot *Fantasy* is completed with the artist's signature glaze, "lan's Grey."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Much of Alex Meckes' origami artwork has a mathematical basis, as seen in his piece *Truncated Octahedron*, shown here with the artist.

doing folding, and nature's doing it all the time, so it's our challenge to reproduce that in an engineered sort of way. But we have that shining example that it can be done," the professor says. Meckes can recite this quote by heart; he finds it to be such a helpful guide in creating origami.

Meckes' trust in Demaine is well placed; Demaine received his Ph.D in Mathematics at the age of 20 and a MacArthur Fellowship award at the age of 22. The award cited him as a "computational geometer tackling and solving difficult problems related to folding and bending – moving readily between the theoretical and the playful, with a keen eye to revealing the former in the latter."

Meckes espouses the natural connections to mathematics origami has in terms of folding. He says folding, in the mathematical sense, is used to explore space, to treat heart disease and to explore the properties of DNA and proteins.

Each shelf of Meckes' origami exhibit has a theme identified by his artist statement explaining the origami artwork. In total he is showing 20 pieces including *Truncated Octahedron*, a 14" x 12" x 12"

origami made of paper folded into intertwining triangles and squares rich in color.

Ian Clark is from England and now lives in Walnut Creek and is a member of the Roosmoor Ceramic Arts Club. He learned about ceramics as a youngster in his early school years but only pursued it once he retired from the world of IT. Recalling his school days, he says the only time a teacher ever visited his parents was his art teacher.

"I centered my working life around intellectual things and pottery is not intellectual. It is a wonder to work with clay; like a meditation or spiritual exercise. I am constantly improving and learning new things but it's something you can't rush," says Clark.

When he travels, mostly to England and France, he visits museums and places where pottery is king. "I visited the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge to see works by Lucie Rie, who I admire tremendously." Other potters he admires include Hans Copa and Jennifer Lee, who does hand-built bowls.

When he visited Old Lee in England he learned an important lesson. "The best pot-

[SEE GALLERY page 9]

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ARTS

◆ GALLERIES from page 8

tery reflects its environment,” he says. In Old Lee, a fishing village, the potters collect shells and sea glass which they use in their pottery – they emboss with the shells and use thin sea glass to make interesting patterns.

Clark’s quest now is coming up with glazes that reflect his environment here in Northern California – the gold of the hills in summer and the blue of the sky unfettered by clouds. He will display some of his glaze materials in the exhibit along with his eponymous glaze, “Ian’s Grey,” which he shares with his fellow potters in Rossmoor. Dian Fontinelli and Angela Lusk from Rossmoor are also showing ceramics in the exhibit. Clark’s 11” stoneware vessel titled *Fantasy* is glazed with Ian’s Grey, toned with Bermuda mason stain and pitted with silicon graphite, nutmeg, and sky blue. The glazing seems to allow the form of the vessel to glow.

To learn more about the Lamorinda Arts Council, go to www.lamorindaarts.org. Visit the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library, 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 January 1 and 20. Call 925-254-2184 for more information or visit <http://ccclib.org/>.

Art Gallery at Wilder: Home is Where Wildlife Flourishes

The Lamorinda Arts Council presents the oil paintings of Marlene Metropolis from Jan. 2 to 31. Meet her at an artist reception in her honor 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Jan. 11. Light refreshments will be served, including “Eureka,” a craft cocktail by Lamorinda Arts Council participating mixologist Barbara Poole.

Marlene Metropolis of Danville picked up her first box camera and started dark



Often inspired by animals and their habitats, **Marlene Metropolis** creates a whimsical home for a sea-horse in her 30” x 40” painting *Wayfarer’s Bouquet*.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

room work at the age of 4 thanks to her father. Her love of photography led to a degree in film and animation so that depicting the world around her became second nature. She switched careers to become a chiropractor for some time, eventually retiring because of a disability. After she retired a friend introduced her to an oil painting class; she hasn’t stopped painting and drawing since.

Metropolis explains her theme, “Home is Where Wildlife Flourishes” thus: “It’s so fun to make a flat surface look like an animal habitat I want to protect. Maybe through my paintings others will want to protect it too.” While painting wildlife and other creatures is her focus, she says allowing the viewer to discover the areas surrounding the animal, meaning their home, is paramount.

When she views a wild animal in its proper environment, “I can’t stand to put it on a piece of white paper, or pose it all by itself,” she says. “Every nook and cranny of the earth is somebody’s home and that is why the habitat and the protection of the habitat is home, with all the comforts of home as well.”

The Art Gallery at Wilder, 20 Orinda Fields Lane, is open for scheduled events such as artist receptions on the first Saturday of every month from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m., on Tues. and Thur. from 6 - 8 p.m. and by appointment. Please contact Lamorinda Arts Council Curator Denise Nomura, at wildergallery@lamorindaarts.org or visit <https://lamorindaarts.org> for more information.

Moving forward, more regular hours will be scheduled. The Orinda Parks and Recreation Dept. is seeking bookings of classes and meetings. Contact them at OrindaParksandRec@cityoforinda.org, visit them at 28 Orinda Way or call 925-254-2445.

Reach Elana O’Loskey at business@theorindanews.com.



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◆ VISION from page 7

of blood,” says Roman. But once in the operating room, she says she was “excited and it was cool.”

“After surgery to remove a cataract, replace a cornea or for reconstruction, we wheeled patients to rooms in the main hospital ward and brought them back to the hospital the next day,” says Schmidt. “Many spoke only their tribal language, but they were all really sweet.”

In Mwandi, termite clay was rolled into balls, both large and small, then smoothed to construct the huts. “One little boy tickled my ear with a feather while I was working on his hut,” says Petek. “He was so cute.”

Deanhardt remembers Ariza, an 8-year-old girl who wore a dirty, Hello Kitty T-shirt for three days. Her Crocs shoes had holes in the bottoms. “She slipped a bracelet on my wrist,” says Deanhardt. “With virtually nothing, she had the capacity to give. It was such a special moment.”

Petek and Roman met Kimberly who was 12 or 13 and dreamed of being a doctor.

They know it is a daunting dream as life in rural Zambia is more a matter of survival than education.

Two weeks in a foreign country. Wearing Crocs for surgery and hiking boots to build huts. Intermittent power outages. Playing board games in the evenings. Limited internet. Quick drying towels which stick to you. A day for river cruising. One day for a safari game ride. And lasting impressions.

Deanhardt says she wants to help as many people as she can. When something is insignificant, “don’t cry over spilled mac and cheese.”

At SFO, Petek announced to her dad she would “never complain about your cooking again!”

They don’t know it, but Roman admitted she missed her two younger brothers.

Phoebe Schmidt just wanted her own bed.

For more information about Zimba Eye Hospital, go to www.IVVUSA.org.

Contact Kathy Enzerink at Kathy.MGT@gmail.com.

New Public Art on Display

Orinda’s Art in Public Places Committee, also known as ArtSpace Orinda, arranged for the installation of five new sculptures, with four on display in Library Plaza and one in front of City Hall. Contributing artists Alan Chin and Hans Miles were on site Nov. 21, along with ArtSpace Orinda members Ted Urban and Rich Thompson and local artists John Toki

and Martin Rickert who assisted with the installation process.

All five sculptures are made from vitrified clay pipe and were created at a facility in the Mission Clay Arts and Industry program in Phoenix, AZ. The pieces are on loan from the artists for two years. To learn more about outdoor art on exhibit in Orinda, go to www.artspaceorinda.org.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Hans Miles’ *Iceberg Slim* is now on display in front of Library Plaza’s Cafe Teatro. Back row (L-R): Artists Hans Miles, Alan Chin and Martin Rickert. Front row (L-R): Artist John Toki and ArtSpace Orinda members Ted Urban and Rich Thompson.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Local artist John Toki operates the forklift as Hans Miles helps install Sandra Jones Campbell’s *The Proposition* in front of City Hall.

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HAPPENINGS

Air Traffic Control to be Demystified at First Friday Forum of the Year

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

With more than 1,000 aircraft flying in and out of San Francisco International Airport daily, how are the airways kept safe?

First Friday Forum's lecture by Mark Sherry titled "About Air Traffic Control" has the answer.

Sherry was the staff specialist at SFO's Air Traffic Control Tower for 32 years. His job description included training, quality assurance, and plan and procedures.

His first three years were in this position at the Oakland Airport. He is also a licensed pilot and was a flight instructor at Buchanan Field Airport in Concord in his early years.

A graduate of De La Salle High School and California State University, East Bay, he has been a Diablo Valley resident for

more than 60 years. He has an Irish sense of humor, gift of gab and good story telling.

"The focus of my talk will be how the air traffic control ensures the safety of the system at San Francisco International Airport," Sherry says. "I will explain the different parts of the Air Traffic Control System and how the aircraft arrive and depart the Bay Area. There will be an explanation of delays and why they occur at SFO in particular."

So what do air traffic controllers do? Sherry says they direct aircraft safely through assigned flight paths, involving a specific sector of airspace. Needed skills are problem solving, communication, decision making, multi-tasking, and the need to be able to concentrate when there are many things happening around them. This can lead to a great amount of stress. Air traffic controllers must pass a rigorous assessment and training program.

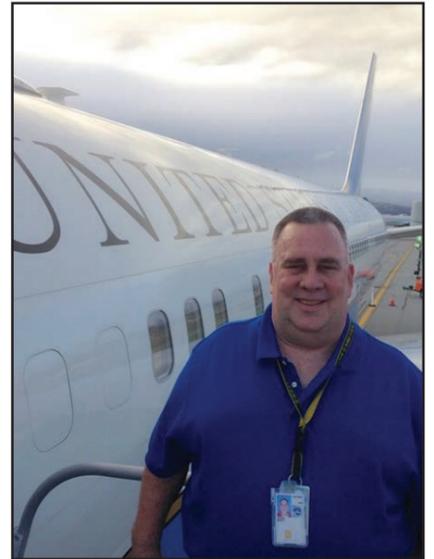
Sherry has worked on such projects as implementing air traffic plans for major construction work, including improvements for runway 28L, training of operational personnel, tracking safety issues and participating in the design and implementation for the new control tower at SFO.

He also conducted research and analysis to determine the root cause of numerous aviation incidents from an air traffic perspective.

SFO has four asphalt runways arranged in two intersecting sets of parallel runways. On them, in 2018, the airport had 470,164 operations with an average of 1,287 a day. Of those, 87 percent were commercial, 10 percent air taxi, 2 percent general and under 1 percent military.

As the seventh busiest airport in North America, SFO is one of the most challenging for air traffic controllers. New technologies and a seismically vulnerable existing tower led to the development of a new air traffic control tower at SFO that exemplifies structural engineering innovation as it provides a safe, stable and best-in-class workspace for controllers, Sherry says.

The lecture takes place at 1:30 p.m. Jan.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mark Sherry will explain air traffic control and how it facilitates Bay Area travel in his Jan.3 lecture.

3 in the sanctuary of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Refreshments will be served starting at 1 p.m.

Reach Bobbie Dodson at bobbiedodson@comcast.net.

◆ CALENDAR from page 2

Brady-Smith introduces *Hug Tails*, stories about the Pet Therapy Team from Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation. A portion of the proceeds from sales of this book will benefit ARF. 11 a.m. Orinda Books*.

Artist Reception for Marlene Metropolis' oil paintings in the theme "Home is Where Wildlife Flourishes," 2:30 p.m. at the Art Gallery at Wilder. See article p. 8.

13 **The Poetry Circle** will meet and discuss the poetry collection, *Distant Mandate* by Ange Mlanko. 11 a.m. Orinda Books*.

15 **Assistance League of Diablo Valley** Prospective Member Coffee, a nonprofit member volunteer organization, that improves lives in our community. To reserve a spot, call 925-934-0901 by Jan. 8. www.assistanceleague.org/diablo-valley.

19 **Daniel Levitin** introduces his new book, *Successful Aging: A Neuroscientist Explores the Power and Potential of Our Lives*. 2 p.m. Orinda Books*.

21 **The World Affairs Book Group** will read and discuss *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping & the New Chinese State* by Elizabeth Economy. 3 p.m. Orinda Books*.

Women of Spirit, Monthly gathering of inclusive, curious women seeking connection, shared learning and growth with other women of diverse faith traditions. The group is not affiliated with any religious institution, and open to all. 7 p.m. Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way. For more info, visit www.womenofspiritlamorinda.org or www.facebook.com/womenofspiritlamorinda.

24 **International Film Showcase** presents *By The Grace of God*, Orinda Theatre, www.INTERNATIONALSHOWCASE.ORG. See article p. 15.

25 **Women Composers & Women Performers**, Ensemble Ari collaborates with SF Opera Soprano, Rhoslyn Jones, featuring 2 world premieres. 7:30 p.m. St. Mary's Col-

lege Chapel: Main, 1928 St. Marys Road, Moraga. www.stmarys-ca.edu/ensembleari.

30 **45th Annual Books on Review**, presented by the Stanford Women's Club of the East Bay. Featuring: Lydia Fitzpatrick, *Lights All Night Long*; Mason Funk, *The Book of Pride*; Ruchika Tomar, *A Prayer for Travelers*; Tom Barbash, *The Dakota Winters*. 9:15 a.m. Shadelands Art Center, 111 N. Wiget Lane at Ygnacio Valley Road, Walnut Creek. \$35, cash or check only, register at <http://alumni.stanford.edu/goto/BOR> or 925-254-1156.

*Orinda Books is at 276 Village Square, info@orindabooks.com, 925-254-7606.

CITY/FIRE MEETING SCHEDULE

City Council. First and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way. www.cityoforinda.org.

Historic Landmarks Committee. Fourth Tuesday, 3 - 5 p.m., Library Garden Room, 26 Orinda Way. Call 925-788-7323.

Moraga-Orinda Fire District. Third Wednesday, 7 p.m. Sarge Littlehale Community Room 22 Orinda Way, Orinda. For agenda www.mofd.org/board/meetings.

Planning Commission. Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Orinda Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way. www.cityoforinda.org.

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

◆ DOWELL from page 5

understanding of life without resistance. I have more yesterdays than tomorrows and that's okay because this is how life moves on. As the American spiritual teacher Ram Dass notes, "We are all just walking each other home."

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



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What's
On
Deck
With
Parks &
Rec!

Jan 1 - Happy New Years! City Offices Closed. OYS Spring Baseball/Softball registration opens!

Jan. 2-3 - Basketball and Carpentry Holiday Break Camps - Sign up now!

Jan. 9 - Wisdom Workshop - Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention; 10:30 a.m.; FREE; Register Now!

Jan. 9 - New! Low Impact Aerobics starts! Register Now!

Jan. 15 - Now Accepting Applications for Summer Camp Counselor positions. Apply today!

Jan. 20 - M.L. King Jr. Day; City Offices Closed

Jan. 22 - Wisdom Workshop - Lamorinda Spirit Van Program; 10:30 a.m.; FREE; Register Now!

Jan. 23 - Senior Trip - Cantor Arts Center, Stanford; 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; \$25/per person

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.

AROUND TOWN

The Orinda Library in January

The Orinda Library and all Contra County libraries will be closed Jan. 1 for New Year's Day and Jan. 20 for MLK Jr. holiday. See the new website at: <https://ccclib.bibliocms.com>.

- 6 **Maker Monday.** Whether it's Legos, crafts, or STEM, something is always happening Mondays. Suitable for ages 5-10. 2:30-3:30 p.m. Also Jan. 13, 27. Sponsored by the Friends of Orinda Library.
- 7 **Baby Storytime.** Rhymes, bounces, and other early literacy fun for infants to pre-walkers (approx. 18 months) and their care-

givers only. Families with older children are welcome at Toddler Storytime. 11:30 a.m. in the Gallery Room. Also Jan. 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29.

Orinda Writers' Group. Get support and feedback with a friendly group of beginning writers. Be prepared to share two pages of your writing. 6:30 p.m. Also Jan. 21.

- 8 **Toddler Storytime.** Songs and stories for one to three year-olds and their caregivers. [SEE LIBRARY page 14]



POLICE BLOTTER

Nov. 29 through Dec. 7

Calls for Service

- 911 Hangup: 8 incidents.
- Abandoned Vehicle: 1 incident.
- Accident Property: 12 incidents.
- Alarm, False: 75 incidents.
- Burglary, Auto: 9 incidents: Camino Sobrante (x3), Moraga Way (x4), and Theatre Square (x2).
- Burglary, Commercial: 1 incidents: Orindawoods Dr.
- Burglary, Residential: 4 incidents: Dos Posos (x2) Underhill Rd., and Charles Hill Rd.
- Civil Disturbance: 4 incidents.
- CVC Moving Violation: 48 incidents.
- CVC Non-Moving Violation: 48 incidents.
- Death Non Criminal: 1 incident.
- Disturbing the Peace: 1 incident.
- Forgery: 1 incident.
- Found Property: 1 incident.
- Grand Theft: 3 incidents.
- Hailed by Citizen: 1 incident.
- Hit & Run Misdemeanor: 3 incidents.
- Identity Theft: 2 incidents.
- Juvenile Disturbance: 1 incident.
- Lost Property: 1 incident.
- Loud Music: 1 incident.
- Loud Noise: 4 incidents.
- Loud Party: 1 incident.
- Medical Hospital: 1 incident.
- Motorist Assist: 1 incident.
- Occupied Stalled Vehicle: 2 incidents.
- Outside Assist: 9 incidents.
- Panhandling: 1 incident.
- Parking Detail: 23 incidents.
- Patrol Request: 29 incidents.
- Petty Theft: 7 incidents.
- Petty Theft from Vehicle: 1 incident.
- Prowler Heard: 1 incident: Moraga Way.
- Public Nuisance: 7 incidents.
- Reckless Driving: 12 incidents: Camino Pablo (x3), Moraga Way (x3),

- Glorietta Blvd. (x2), St. Stephens Dr., Miner Rd., Bates Dr. and Van Ripper Ln.
- Robbery, Strongarm: 2 incidents: Camino Sobrante (x2).
- School Check: 38 incidents.
- Security Check: 26 incidents.
- Service to Citizen: 96 incidents.
- Shoplifting: 3 incidents: Moraga Way Orinda Way and Camino Pablo.
- Suspicious Circumstances: 7 incidents.
- Suspicious Person Stop: 16 incidents.
- Suspicious Subject: 9 incidents.
- Suspicious Vehicle: 8 incidents.
- Suspicious Vehicle Stop: 5 incidents.
- Terrorist Threats: 1 incident.
- Threats: 1 incident.
- Traffic Collision/Property Damage: 4 incidents.
- Traffic Hazard: 8 incidents.
- Trespassing: 2 incidents.
- Vacation House Check: 28 incidents.
- Vandalism: 2 incidents.
- Vehicle Theft: 1 incident: El Gavilan Rd.
- Verbal Dispute: 5 incidents.
- Video Alarm: 1 incident.
- Walk Through: 1 incident.
- Welfare Check: 2 incidents.

Arrest

- DUI Misdemeanor: 2 arrests.
- Warrant Arrest: 2 arrests.

BART Statistics

No incidents reported.

— Compiled by David Dierks
Assistant Editor

For more incidents details, visit www.crimereports.com.

◆ EVERYDAY from page 12

tors. I find myself wishing for more juicy details to color in the total portrait of their personality.

My habits make me wonder what our great great grandchildren will think when they research us. If they are able to access our social media accounts, little, if anything, will be left to their imagination. Perhaps directing a keen eye to the future, and picturing how we will be perceived by our descendants in the year 2150 will help us course-correct for the new year ahead; help us to implement all of our good intentions.

Let's literally have 20-20 in 2020. Let's look to the past as well as the future. Let this be the year we truly act upon what sort of legacy we leave to those of us who, I feel certain, will be curious about us. Someday.

Email Mimi Bommarito at mimi.bommarito@theorindanews.com.

◆ CLUBS from page 12

Foundation. Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m., social, 7:30 p.m. meeting. For more information 925-254-8260.

Orinda Teen Advisory Council – First Tuesday at 4 p.m. Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, email Recreation Coordinator Matt Delmartini at mdelmartini@cityoforinda.org.

Orinda Woman's Club. Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m.. Call Jean Barnhart at 925-254-3881 or go to www.orindawomansclub.org.

Sons in Retirement (SIRS) Lamorinda Branch 174. Second Wednesday, 11 a.m. lunch. Holy Trinity Culture Center 1700 School St., Moraga. A social organization of retired and semi-retired men who enjoy leisure time with friends and activities. For info., call Tyler at 925-963-5741, www.branch174.sirinc2.org.

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



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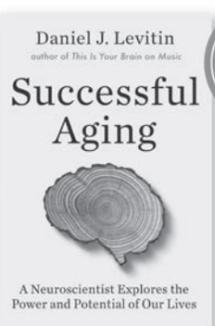
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After his bestsellers, *This Is Your Brain on Music* and *The Organized Mind*, Orinda's own Daniel Levitin turns his keen insights on what happens in our brains as we age, why we should think about health span, not life span, and what we can do to make the most of our seventies, eighties, and nineties today.

Successful Aging inspires a powerful new approach to how we think about our final decades. It will revolutionize the way we plan for old age as individuals, family members, and citizens within a society where the average life expectancy continues to rise.

Daniel Levitin
introduces his new book, *Successful Aging: A Neuroscientist Explores the Power and Potential of Our Lives* (Dutton, \$30).

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AROUND TOWN

◆ **MAYOR** from page 1

the “updated developmental standards and general plan for downtown.”

Keeping development near the BART station under local, rather than state control, is also on her radar.

Gee said “exploring the possibility of becoming a charter city is going to be under consideration.” There are pros and cons. On the plus side, it would give Orinda more control in an era where the state is trying to take that away from local governments, and being able to invoke greater penalties when city ordinances are violated.

Some notable charter cities include Oakland, Alameda, Palo Alto, San Francisco and Sacramento. El Cerrito voters approved the move to become a charter city in November 2018.

“The charter city possibility needs to be seriously explored,” said Gee. It would require voter approval.

Gee, who was sworn in as mayor Dec. 3, is not new to public service. She spent four years as a member of the Orinda Citizens’ Infrastructure Oversight Commission and has been on the City Council since 2015.

“Darlene brings tremendous perspective and experience and will be a superb mayor,” said Vice Mayor Amy Worth.

“As a councilmember, Gee focused on providing extensive and ongoing leadership planning for fixing Orinda roads and drains in addition to helping maintain a fiscally responsible approach to local operations and capital programs,” Worth said.

“I care about balance and giving a voice to all in our community,” said Gee. “I am sensitive to listening to all issues and to be the best community we can.”

Gee said she excelled in math and science throughout her education and won scholarships. One was for engineering. Another took her to the University of Illinois where she was one of six women in a class of 600 engineering students. There, she received a degree in civil engineering followed by a Masters of Business Administration and Management from UC Berkeley.

Moving to Orinda in 1989, Gee and her husband Dennis raised their two sons, Brian and Eric, here. “This is a community with family focus and great schools,” she says.

Gee is a senior vice president and part of national sales for HNTB, an engineering consulting firm. She has worked on major projects around the Bay Area, including Levi’s Stadium, the air traffic control tower at the San Francisco International Airport, the Golden Gate Bridge seismic retrofit and the recent Richmond/San Rafael Access Mobility for bicycles and pedestrians. Her firm has contracts with Caltrans and BART, but does not conduct business with Orinda, according to Gee.

Email Kathy Enzerink at kathy.mgt@gmail.com.

City Reorganization

On Dec. 3, the City Council reorganized as follows:

- Darlene Gee, mayor. Council and mayor term expires in December.
- Amy Worth, vice mayor. Council and vice mayor term expires in December
- Dennis Fay, councilmember. Term expires December 2022.
- Inga Miller, councilmember. Term expires in December.
- Nick Kosla, councilmember. Term expires December 2022.

City Council meetings are 7 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of each month in the Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way. City Hall is at 22 Orinda Way.

◆ **MEMORY** from page 6

The proposal, however, had its share of supporters.

Steve Harwood, a local resident since 1973, said the closest memory care facilities are in Moraga, Lafayette and Ross-moor. “This is a positive addition to our community,” he said.

“We need a facility now,” said Dick Burkhalter, a 50-year resident whose wife lives in a memory care facility. “Someday you’ll be my age and will be looking for this type of facility.”

Former mayor Sue Severson said one-third of Orindans are 65 and older. “CountryHouse will add value for our seniors and for our home values,” she said.

Speaking on behalf of the Westin family, Emanuel Ursu noted the facility is 2,000 feet from the nearest home and doesn’t obstruct views. Traffic and other impacts have been addressed in an environmental impact report, Ursu said.

Planning Commission Chair Brandyn Iverson said “this facility doesn’t really move the needle” with regards to emergency evacuations. “This location makes a lot of sense.”

Commission Vice Chair John Lynn Smith requested a safety evacuation study and asked how visible the structure is from Hwy. 24.

Commissioner Robert Hubner said “some issues are inherent to Wilder, not caused by this project,” and “it is a good use for this piece of property.”

Commissioner David Parnigoni said the facility will create jobs and increase tax revenue for Orinda. He said he does not believe the project “exacerbates the current traffic problems. My opinion for the

project has not changed and I can’t think of a reason to deny it.”

Commissioner Willy Mautner said there is an “extreme need for a memory care facility. Concerning traffic issues, Mautner said, “the big question is, did Wilder have a problem before this project?”

“I think this was a fair process with an honest result,” said Richard Westin.

Email Kathy Enzerink at kathy.mgt@gmail.com.

◆ **PETS** from page 5

winter season, Pads4Pets has produced more than 1,000 mats for pets living on the streets.

“Gary and I are both dog lovers,” says Pam Schroeder. “And it’s such a simple thing we can do to potentially make the life of a dog and its caregiver on the streets a little bit more comfortable.”

Gary Schroeder says he has witnessed firsthand the important role a pet can play for a person living without shelter, particularly for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and other ailments.

“People deserve to be loved regardless of their living situation, and their pets provide them, in many cases the only love that they get,” he says. “Our goal at Pads4Pets is simple – to help the unsheltered care for their pets, because every pet deserves a warm, dry place to be.”

To learn more about Pads4Pets, including how to donate a new or used yoga mat, go to www.pads4pets.org.

Reach Lynn Kalmar at assistanteditor@TheOrindaNews.com.



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◆ **LIBRARY** from page 13

10:30 a.m. in Community Center Room 6. Also Jan. 15, 22, 29

- 9 **Computer Help.** Get one-on-one help from a knowledgeable volunteer. Focus is on beginner users. Register online or call the library at 925-254-2184. Sessions at noon and 1 p.m. Also Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30.
- 11 **Digitally Connect to the Library.** E-books, genealogy, language learning, the

New York Times and more. Find out what online services the library offers. 11 a.m. in the Gallery room.

- 18 **Lion Dance for the New Year.** The Concord Kung Fu Academy will chase away the bad spirits. 2 p.m. in the Garden Room. Sponsored by the Eng family and the Friends of the Orinda Library.

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

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OUT AND ABOUT



THE REEL LESS TRAVELED

SAVE THE DATE



Tom Westlake

Though I'm sure you've heard it all far too often already, I would like to extend a warm Happy New Year to one and all. I would also like to jump on the "clever pun" bandwagon and declare this the year of the cinema.

After all, the year itself lends itself quite handily to this most visual of mediums, for would not the acuity of vision be a necessary requirement for viewing all the films I'll be talking about in the months to come?

With that said, I would also like to urge everyone to check out www.internationalshowcase.org and www.orindamovies.com. Frequent check-ins with these sites will insure you won't miss a thing – and that includes the many live events the Orinda Theatre has to offer.

So let's lead with the Classic Film Showcase, which always shows on the second Thursday of the month. This month, it's *Out of Africa*, starring Meryl Streep and Robert Redford. This 1985 film, directed by Sydney Pollack, has everything going for it and it shows in its seven Oscar wins, including Best Picture. Oddly enough, Streep was not one of the recipients.

Never has Africa looked lovelier and never has there been such a stirring musical score to go along with the images. Indeed, this is one of those movies that you don't

ever want to end and you could hardly be blamed for staying all through the credits, if for no other reason than to savor every last minute of it. This is movie making at its finest with romance to spare. It screens at the Orinda Theatre at 7 p.m. Jan. 9. Admission is free.

Never one to shy away from controversy, the International Film Showcase starts out the New Year with *By the Grace of God*. Originally, planned as a documentary, the director, Francois Ozon, decided he would take his research and turn it into a thinly veiled fictional narrative about religion and abuse.

This is an extremely sensitive yet prevalent subject and our current world cinema has not been silent about it. From *Doubt* to *Spotlight* (and innumerable films before and between), this subject is far reaching and if there were anything good to say about it, it would be that many victims are coming forward in greater numbers. Films like the aforementioned movies are encouraging this. This film will have a one-week run at the Orinda starting Jan. 24. Make sure to make time for this one.

As ever, remember to stay in the dark for that's where the reel magic lies.

Reach Tom Westlake at poppinjay@earthlink.net.

OIS Concert Spreads Cheer at SAT Holiday Luncheon



SALLY HOGARTY

Seniors Around Town (SAT) riders and drivers came together with SAT staff members and Orinda Association board members to celebrate the season at the ride service's annual holiday luncheon on Dec. 10. Attendees were treated to lunch in the Orinda Library's Garden Room, as well as a performance by the **Orinda Intermediate School choir** (above). Steve Harwood

served as emcee, welcoming the guests and leading the group in a festive sing-along.

Seniors Around Town links Orinda volunteer drivers to Orinda residents who need rides. More than 1,350 rides were coordinated in 2019. To learn more about the service, go to <https://orindaassociation.org/seniors-around-town> or call 925-402-4506 to volunteer as a driver.

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It's Village. Of Course.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Raffle Winner



THOMAS BLACK

Raffle winner **Matthew Morrow** stands with friend **James Andrade** and Rotarians **Gary Fulcher, Leander Hauri** and **Steve Zuk** after claiming his prize from the Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, a completely rebuilt 1963 Glasspar motorboat with an estimated value of \$25,000, including a \$2500 trailer. The Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary was founded in 1987 and meets weekly over breakfast at the Lafayette Park Hotel. Guests are always welcome. For more information, go to www.lamorindasunrise.org.

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Seniors Around Town, the gift of a ride.



Happy Holidays, Kate, Cathy, Marie, Cindy, Pamela



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Business Buzz Putting a Personal Face on Local Business

Elana O’Loskey



Travel Adventures Unlimited

Valerie and Colleen O’Connell are a dynamic mother-daughter team. They developed their Travel Adventures Unlimited (TAU) Locust Street location in Walnut Creek to the point where they were bursting at the seams. Their new offices at 1515 Oakland Blvd. in Walnut Creek are light filled and spacious.

The main floor is punctuated by comfy bright purple chairs in front of each travel advisors’ station except for the two rocking chairs for those who prefer to rock. Framed photos from every corner of the globe shot by clients beckon one to Egypt, Africa, Russia, France, Australia, Japan, China, Antarctica and Switzerland.

Success breeds expansion and the O’Connells say their success, 35 years in the making, is largely due to returning clients and word-of-mouth referrals. But they say it’s the network of 50 TAU Bay Area travel advisors who make it all real for clients. These advisors journey regularly to every continent to gather information ensuring clients’ travel needs are arranged down to the last detail.

Advisors say the collegial environment means they can work together, develop individual specialties and refer to each other

depending on what the client wants to do.

“We have trusted relationships around the world that are local in destination; this means we can offer unique travel experiences,” says travel advisor Sheena Shastri of Orinda.

Visit Travel Adventures Unlimited at 1515 Oakland Blvd., Suite 100, Walnut Creek, call 925-935-7447 or 800-788-0193, email them at info@traveltau.com or go online to www.traveladventuresunlimited.com for more information.

Ariston Heating and Cooling

Alekos Gailas and his brother, Michael, who grew up and attended schools in Orinda, are now busy installing HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) units in Lamorinda, the Diablo Valley and beyond.

Locals may remember Alekos Café, the previous incarnation of Orinda’s Petra Café. It was owned by Alekos’ father, Alexander Gailas, who now owns AG Realty, also in Orinda.

A Moraga resident, Alekos has been a local, licensed C20 contractor since 1988 and opened Ariston Heating and Cooling (Ariston) in 2016. He and his team work out of a warehouse in Concord.

“There’s no point in opening a local business if you can’t help your neighbors,”



ELANA O’LOSKEY

The staff at Travel Adventures Unlimited welcome the community to their new office at 1515 Oakland Blvd, Suite 100 in Walnut Creek. Back row (L-R): **Sheena Shastri, Randie Lundy, Michael McKay II, Sarah Klein, Valerie O’Connell and Ari Kim.** Front row (L-R): **Jennifer Shindelus, Coleen O’Connell and Allison Conrad.**

says Alekos. He says Ariston is derived from the greek Αριστον meaning the “best, excellence.”

“We offer experience with smart home, integrated high-efficiency heat pump/air handler upgrades, furnaces, hybrid and dual-fuel solar-optimized systems, air conditioners, ducting and indoor air quality,” says Alekos.

As to staying on the leading edge of HVAC equipment, he says it takes constant training and traveling to keep up with industry changes.

According to Michael, figuring out the correct system – and the choices are many

– increases property value, decreases utility bills and elevates comfort. They both say it is only after the right HVAC for their 21st century home is installed that customers experience the reality of these promises. Judging by their Yelp reviews, Ariston keeps its promises.

Contact Ariston at 925-421-0888, email them at alekos@aristonheatingandcooling.com or visit www.aristonheatingandcooling.com to explore more about their services.

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



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ELANA O’LOSKEY

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