



# THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis  
Volume 38, Number 10

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Delivered to 9,000 Households and Businesses in Orinda

12 Issues Annually  
October 2023

## Land Yachts Sail into Orinda's Annual Classic Car Show



LISA BURLINI

The Orinda Classic Car Show attracted its largest crowd ever. This year, the show featured "Land Yachts," 15 of which were lined up in a nautical-themed "dock area." Join us next year when we celebrate our 20th Annual Car Show. See more photos on page 5.

## MOFD Pays \$97,500 Settlement to Job Applicant in Fair Chance Act Violation

By CHARLEEN EARLEY  
Editor-in-Chief

In one of the largest settlements in state history under the Fair Chance Act, Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) paid \$97,500 to an applicant whose job offer was rescinded due to her criminal record.

"The settlement is the result of an investigation and mediation initiated by California Civil Rights Department (CRD) as the result of a complaint filed earlier this year

by an individual who had sought employment at the Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District," as stated in the CRD's Aug. 29 press release.

Last year, the plaintiff, whose name is withheld, applied for the fire inspector/plans organizer position with MOFD. Selected from a field of 22 candidates, she received the job offer Sept. 8, 2022. It was rescinded 30 days later, because part of the job encompasses "peace officer" duties, [SEE MOFD page 7]



TRACY RANDOLPH

Stella Swenson, Skylar Vandeweg, Jada Geronimo, Annika Arvik, and Matthew Randolph.

## Cal Shakes Hosts Young Filmmakers' Premiere of *A Midsummer Night's D&D*

By AMY MOELLERING  
Staff Writer

How do 400-year-old Shakespeare plays stay relevant in times of declining theater attendance and avid interest in Tik

Tok videos? Ask the next generation.

Tracy Randolph, artist and founder of Movie Makers, a production company for kids 8-18, asked. The result is an original adaptation, *A Midsummer Night's D&D*, [SEE MIDSUMMER page 18]

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FRIENDS OF ORINDA NATURE AREA / CARTOON

# Storm-Battered Nature Area Making Progress Toward Reopening



ERICA BAINS

The roots of a fallen tree were exposed in the Friends of the Orinda Nature Area in January. The preserve is undergoing a reopening in three phases. The first is complete and the Wagner Ranch Elementary School Garden is now open.

By ANDREA MADISON  
Staff Writer

The wind and rain storms which battered the Bay Area late 2022 into early 2023, led to what Friends of the Orinda Nature Area (FONA) President Erica Bains called “a perfect storm.” They created safety con-

cerns for the nearly 19-acre, district-owned nature preserve, which forced FONA and the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) to close the area last spring.

“Until March, the Friends secured and safely mitigated these risks with volunteer help,” said Bains.

With fallen trees, downed branches,



swollen creeks, erosion, destroyed trails and other dangers, the conditions “made it beyond doubt that there was a way to ensure anyone’s safety in the nature area,” said Bains. “The closure was necessary.”

With San Pablo Creek bordering one side, the preserve’s meadows, forest, ponds and streams are the stage for student crafts, hikes, nature studies, games and projects.

The school district has also been looking to expand use of the nature area to middle school students and students from other districts.

Although falling trees are not an unusual occurrence, Bains recalls the harrowing experience of a tree coming down last spring within minutes of volunteers’ departure, and while she and colleague, FONA naturalist Toris Jaeger, were closing the area. The FONA board concluded the danger posed and the work required was significant enough to warrant the cancellation of summer programs.

Discussions on reopening the nature area,

which has hosted activities and summer camps for elementary school students for the past 45 years, began after the grounds dried up in June.

The reopening is a process of ongoing phases developed by OUSD and FONA. The Wagner Ranch Elementary School Garden was cleared of debris in the first phase and is open for student use, thanks to \$3,000 donated by the school’s Parents’ Club. Bains said a 50-foot perimeter around the area was also secured for safety concerns.

The biodiversity garden area is strewn with tree debris and the severely damaged greenhouse needs to be replaced. Boys Team Charity, longtime garden area volunteers, have secured funding to work with FONA on restoration and East Bay Trees will handle tree-cutting.

Superintendent Aida Glimme confirmed the charity has selected two weekends, to be announced, for clean-up efforts in the garden area.

[SEE FONA page 6]

## Exceeding My Clients' Expectations



4 Mariposa Lane, Orinda  
4MariposaLane.com | \$1,570,000



16 Evergreen Drive, Orinda  
16Evergreen.com | \$1,620,000



308 Rheem Boulevard, Moraga  
308RheemBlvd.com | \$1,745,000



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1907LakeshoreDr.com | \$2,550,000



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48CaminoDonMiguel.com | \$1,900,000



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THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA Board  
40/20 Campaign

CINDY POWELL



I am a long-time Orinda resident and have enjoyed being a member of The Orinda Association (OA) board for 19 years. Since 1946, the OA has fostered community involvement through its events and programs. Our Seniors Around Town (SAT) program arranges for Orinda residents to drive their senior neighbors to doctors' and other important appointments and we host the two largest community events in Orinda – the July 4th Parade and the Orinda Classic Car Show. We encourage community members to work and celebrate together.

Your financial support helps! Every donation, no matter the size, has a meaningful impact on our programs and events. Join the 40/20 Campaign by using the envelope enclosed in this issue's paper or by scanning our QR code on this page.

Coming up on 20 years with the OA board, I realize I am not pining for days gone by, but appreciating Orinda just as it is, a small town with a big heart.

Cindy Powell can be reached at [cindy@orindaassociation.org](mailto:cindy@orindaassociation.org).

When an organization has been around as long as the OA, there are some pretty impressive milestones to celebrate. Next year, we will host the 40th July 4th Parade and the 20th Classic Car Show. Our 40/20 Campaign is designed to help raise the funds needed to produce these events and to engage community volunteers to mark these special milestones.

This year we revived the tradition of using student artwork for the official Parade and Car Show T-shirts. We had amazing participation from grades K through 12 and the T-shirts sold-out for both events.

Encouraging students and families to participate in community events is another goal of The Orinda Association. Opportunities to volunteer together provide a way to bridge our neighborhood and age gaps, alleviate stress and offer social connections, all making our town an even better place to live. Sign up to help with the Parade or Car Show next year.

**Orinda  
Citizen of the Year  
2023 Celebration**

Sunday, Nov. 5  
6 – 9 p.m.

Orinda Community Center  
Founders Auditorium  
28 Orinda Way  
Orinda, CA 94563

**Orinda Community Foundation**

Join us in celebrating outstanding citizen volunteers who enhance the quality of life in Orinda.

**For tickets, visit:**  
[www.orindafoundation.org](http://www.orindafoundation.org)

**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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Vice President - Kelly Sopak  
Secretary - Eloise Sotelo  
Treasurer - Cindy Powell  
City Council Liaison - Latika Malkani

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Barb Brawner  
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Alex Drexel  
Chris Laszcz-Davis  
Marianne Moser  
Grace Paik  
Bill Waterman  
Kate Wiley



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Orinda, CA 94563  
Phone: 925.254.0800  
[www.OrindaAssociation.org](http://www.OrindaAssociation.org)

**All officers and board members volunteer their time.**

**Awarding 75 Years of Volunteer Service**



JEFF HEYMAN

On behalf of the Orinda City Council, Mayor **Inga Miller** gives Rotary Club of Orinda a Certificate of Commendation, received by past President **Rodney Lal**, in recognition and celebration of their 75th Anniversary and acknowledging their commitment to serve in Orinda's community and beyond. See additional photos on page 5 from Dancing with the Cars event on Sept. 8.

**Thank You to Our Car Show Volunteers**

Carlos Baltodano  
Boys Team Charity,  
Orinda Chapter –  
24 volunteers  
Bill Brobeck  
Jackie Buettner  
Lisa Burlini  
Liza Chooi  
Bill Criswell  
David Dierks  
Xavier Estrada  
Jill Gelster \* Co-Chair  
Cathy Goshorn  
Jeff Goshorn

Jeff Heyman  
Hans Hiller  
Erica Holt  
Chris Laszcz-Davis  
Master Parkers-  
12 volunteers  
Todd Mercer  
Julie Mercer  
Miramonte Auto Club –  
13 volunteers  
National Charity League,  
Acalanes Chapter –  
10 volunteers  
Cindy Powell



Jon Powell  
Pam Schroeder  
Kelly Sopak  
Eloise Sotelo  
Mario Urquilla  
Jay Ward  
Bill Waterman \* Chairman  
Marie Waterman  
Kate Wiley

**40/20  
CAMPAIGN  
THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION**

In 2024 we will be commemorating two special milestones, our 40th July 4th Parade and 20th Classic Car Show.

Join Us!



[www.orindaassociation.org/4020campaign](http://www.orindaassociation.org/4020campaign)



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FLOWER SHOW / MIRAMONTE LAWSUIT UPDATE

## Unique Exhibits at Ikebana Flower Show Display at Community Center

NICOLE LAMISON  
Staff Writer

For centuries artisans seeking to combine creative expression with the beauty of nature have practiced Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arranging. This month Orindans can view over 90 unique exhibits of this art form at the Expression Unbound Flower Show.

The show is organized by the Soho Study group, students of renowned Sogetsu Ikebana teacher, Soho Sakai, who hosts weekly Japanese flower arranging classes in Orinda. The exhibit honors the 25 anniversary of the group and will be held Saturday, Oct 14 and Sunday, October 15

from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Orinda Community Center. Admission is free.

Introduced in Japan in the 6th century by Chinese Buddhist missionaries, Ikebana uses materials from the outside environment to bring the natural world indoors to harmonize contemporary spaces where people live, work and play. Sogetsu, established in 1927, is a less formal form of traditional Ikebana.

The main qualities in Ikebana are line, mass and color. It allows room for creative expression as any kind of flower, branch, container and other material can be used.

“Ikebana brings this element of beauty into my life and into my home,” said Yoni Mayeri, a group member who has been



YONI MAYERI

Sogetsu Ikebana teacher **Soho Sakai** created this Ikebana arrangement using long stem sparkler pumpkins from Diablo Foods, altered fatsia japonica from her garden and a Sogetsu ceramic container.

studying with Sakai since 1998.

Arrangements with intertwining bamboo shoots, freshly trimmed branches and vibrant living flowers will fill the Community Center as members of the study group and other skilled artists showcase their masterpieces.

The event features the works of over 70 Ikebana artists and a traditional Taiko Drumming performance. Founders Auditorium will be blanketed with arrangements while smaller rooms offer visual aids explaining different components of Ikebana. The library auditorium features demonstrations from talented Ikebana artists, including Soho Sakai, the Sogetsu instructor who teaches weekly classes at the Community Center. She is scheduled on stage at 3 p.m. Sunday.

In 1974, Sakai began teaching Ikebana in her home. After obtaining her adult education teaching credential, she shared her love of Ikebana at colleges and events including Contra Costa College and the Orinda Community Center. She often uses plants from her own garden to create her masterpieces.

Sakai’s students admire her talent and

teaching abilities and the artistic process gleaned through Ikebana as a whole. Passionate about this art form, Sakai and her students formed the Soho Study Group in 1997.

“Sakai is one of the best Sogetsu Ikebana designers in the world, a treasure in our community and a fabulous teacher who had literally thousands of students both locally and nationally during her 60+ years of teaching,” said Mayeri.

Ikebana changed Sakai’s life for the better and it has done so for many of her students. In addition to a career teaching Ikebana, Sakai met her husband through her Ikebana teacher and attributes her good health to working with nature and flowers.

“I’m very healthy ... I think plants and nature give lots of energy,” said Sakai. “Make friends with plants and nature and I guarantee you will live a long life.”

Visit [www.sogetsu-sohostudygroup.org](http://www.sogetsu-sohostudygroup.org) or follow their Instagram page @sohostudygroup to learn more about their history and creation.

Nicole Lamison can be reached at [nlamison34@gmail.com](mailto:nlamison34@gmail.com).

## Miramonte Lawsuit Between Alumni and AUHSD Update

By KATHY CORDOVA  
Executive Editor

On June 13 the court granted a demurrer as to Jane Doe 1 and 2 in the lawsuit filed against Miramonte High School and Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD) alleging sexual abuse by a teacher and negligence by the school and district. Jane Doe 3’s case was unaffected.

According to Jessica Dayton, the plaintiffs’ attorney, “This means the case was effectively dismissed, because the court agreed the statute that created the extended statute of limitations was unconstitutional. We obviously disagree with this ruling and will appeal it.”

The plaintiffs filed a motion for reconsideration in the case of Jane Doe 2 and, on

September 18, the court reconsidered that dismissal. “We will be able to file a first amended complaint and Jane Doe 2’s case will proceed along with Jane Doe 3,” said Dayton. “We can now also move forward with the appeal of the dismissal of Jane Doe 1. We will challenge the court’s ruling that AB 218 was unconstitutional in its application to allegations of abuse prior to 2009.”

Representatives for Miramonte High School and AUHSD declined to comment on advice of their legal counsel.

Visit [www.theorindanews.com](http://www.theorindanews.com) to read the original article published in the February issue. *The Orinda News* will continue to provide updates as significant progress occurs.

Kathy Cordova can be reached at [cordova@theorindanews.com](mailto:cordova@theorindanews.com).

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### CAR SHOW & COMMUNITY SERVICE

#### Orinda Classic Car Show / Dancing with the Cars



JEFF HEYMAN  
Two young attendees wishing they were old enough to drive the vintage cars down the road at the annual Orinda Classic Car Show.



JEFF HEYMAN  
Dancing with the Cars was free this year, hosted by Rotary Club of Orinda, celebrating 75 years of service at the Orinda Community Center on Sept. 8. The theme was Land Yacht Party.



LISA BURLINI  
Orinda's **Peter Read** and fiancée **Lorraine Rominger** shared this 1959 Mercedes 300SL Roadster.



JEFF HEYMAN  
Orinda Mayor **Inga Miller** and **Clay Deanhardt** salute Orinda volunteers at Dancing with the Cars event.



JEFF HEYMAN  
A Car Show attendee examines **Bea Haase's** "Land Yacht," a 1972 Lincoln Continental Mark IV Cartier Edition Coupe.



LISA BURLINI  
Miramonte Automotive Club volunteers enjoying pizza after helping decorate the Orinda Classic Car Show staging area on Sept. 8. Back row (L-R) **Dominic Sorenson**, **Santi Velasquez**, **Brody Schraith**, **Cyrus Jowharchi**, **Caleb Elkind**, middle (L-R) **Tyler Akel**, **Rishi Haldar**, **Aidan Rascher**, **Eli Leal-Schuman**, front row (L-R) **Connor Rudolph**, **Mika Strickler**, **Sammy Ishikawa**, and **Carter Camp**.



JEFF HEYMAN  
The Orinda Classic Car Show is a fun event for the whole family.



JEFF HEYMAN  
Lots of car-talk took place at the annual Dancing with the Cars event, an evening that celebrated years of volunteer service to the Orinda community.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR / POLICE BLOTTER

# Letters to the Editor

## Robust Fire Prevention Needed

Reading your coverage on the allocation of Measure R funds serves as a stark reminder why governments often fail to protect their residents from the most obvious existential threats, as tragically seen in Maui.

The facts are clear. Anyone with a decent memory remembers quite well how Measure R was advertised by its influential supporters. I got more warnings about the dangers of wildfires in the campaign itself than I've received since its passage.

I opposed Measure R because I believed it would lead to little being done to mitigate fire risk in Orinda and the money raised through this general tax increase would be diverted towards areas where the city felt more comfortable.

It appears this is precisely what's happening. Staff and the Council declined to spend money on the most ambitious plan in front of them, the Radke proposal. So, what does your coverage show being done instead? An outreach coordinator has been hired and the city manager "suggested the possibility that some Measure R funding could apply to aspects of the city's safety element."

I hope Orindans demand a more robust fire prevention plan from the city immediately.

– Chuck Brotman

## Fire Prevention is More Important than Road Maintenance

We have seen the devastation in Lahaina. Fast-moving towering flames, multiple ignitions initiated by embers. Downed power

lines which blocked evacuation routes. Fatalities of more than 100, many incinerated in their cars or homes.

It could happen in Orinda.

I have made many fire prevention suggestions to the Orinda City Council including:

Increase the chipper program removal rate tenfold by providing "helping hands" to remove any vegetation, including trees.

Allocate funds for fire prevention planning, modeling and vegetation monitoring.

Create a much more generous grant program.

Underground power lines.

I have made many other suggestions for fire mitigation after a fire starts, such as testing the community warning system without PG&E power, but these are not prevention.

The City and MOFD have large budgets that are not properly prioritized.

Fire is much more important than maintaining road quality. The proposed city budget, created by city staff, allocates five times more funds to road maintenance than fire prevention.

The residents voted to tax themselves for fire prevention. They know the probability of a devastating wildfire has increased greatly. This is expensive and hard, long-term work that needs to start now.

Please stop "educating" us and hiring more staff. Get the real job done.

Fire prevention is about removing thousands of tons, not cubic yards, of vegetation each month. It seems city staff have not heard the residents' priorities. The current programs have not been nearly sufficient.

– Charles Porges

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### ◆ FONA from page 2

The nature area's two gardens are enclosed by a fence, but accessible from Wagner Ranch Elementary. The rest of the nature area remains closed to the public while its hazards await mitigation.

Another phase involves removing hazardous trees throughout the remainder of the nature area, estimated to cost \$250,000.

"We don't have an estimate for additional safety of the pathways and accessibility, and that's crucial," said Glimme. "We have to make them ADA compliant and accessible to all our students.

"We have a lot of necessities just to keep our main infrastructure alive. There has never been an allocation within the general fund to support the 19 acres."

Despite being denied a state grant for the land after applying last year, OUSD has been approved for \$1.5 million in funding, with part of the proposal seeking to designate 15 acres of the preserve as open and protected space with no additional buildings.

The district asked the state for \$4.5 million through the office of Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan before the intense storm season. The funds were intended for a visitor and education center, an on-site restroom and outdoor classroom and kitchen upgrades, among others as outlined

in their 2022 budget request.

With less funding than requested, the district must determine priorities, according to Glimme. She asked the board what they value as priorities and their opinion about the allocation of some of the funding to take care of storm damage.

"If we don't take care of the storm [damage], we can't do the rest of the work, because we can't access the nature area," said Glimme.

OUSD is working with Bauer-Kahan's office staff to determine the finer details of the grant, which the district is expecting to receive by the end of the calendar year. A timeline for spending the funds has not been announced, but they must be spent on area preservation.

"We hope that with this preservation grant, you will do, and we will be here with you to do whatever it takes to make sure the other funds are secured so we can open the remaining areas of the nature area," Bain said to the OUSD Board.

Bauer-Kahan looks forward to future student and community enjoyment of the preserve.

"I have seen the benefit of the nature area for my own children's education and growth in nature," she said. "And hope to see it reopen for all to experience."

Andrea Madison can be reached at [drea.madison.05@gmail.com](mailto:drea.madison.05@gmail.com).



## POLICE BLOTTER

August 16 through September 15

### Calls for Service

- Battery: 1
- Burglary, Auto: 1: Tahos Rd.
- Burglary, Commercial: 2: Davis Rd., Fish Ranch Rd.
- Burglary from Motor Vehicle: 1: Moraga Way
- Civil Disturbance: 1
- CVC Moving Violation: 1
- Death, Non-Criminal: 4
- Failure to Obey Officer: 3
- Medical/Hospital: 1
- Property Found: 3
- Property Lost: 1
- Recovered Stolen Vehicle: 1
- Shoplifting: 2: Orinda Way, Glorietta Blvd.
- Terrorist Threats: 1
- Tow: 2
- Vandalism: 1

- Vandalism, Felony: 1
- Vehicle Theft: 3: Las Vegas Rd., Moraga Via, Brookside Rd.

### Arrests

- Battery on Cop, Felony: 1
- Driving with Revoked/Suspended License: 1
- DUI, Misdemeanor: 2
- Evading Police, Wrong Way Driver: 1
- Possession of Dangerous Drugs: 1
- Possession of Paraphernalia: 1
- Probation Violation: 2
- Property, Receiving Stolen: 1
- Warrant Arrest: 2
- Weapon, Brandishing: 1

– Compiled by David Dierks  
Assistant Editor

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

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 Graphics/Layout.....Aspen Consulting: David Dierks, Jill Gelster  
 Photographer.....Jeff Heyman  
 Printing.....Folger Graphics

## The Orinda News

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

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**The next deadline to receive Letters to the Editor is Oct. 8**

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## MOFD

## ◆ MOFD from page 1

according to MOFD District Counsel Jon Holtzman, and “her crimes made it inappropriate to employ her...”

MOFD Human Resources staff failed to give the plaintiff an opportunity to engage in a procedural element, the interactive process that would enable her to explain or protest their decision.

Holtzman, who has represented MOFD for the last six years, said \$7500 was paid from MOFD’s general fund and the balance was covered by insurance.

The Fair Chance Act, enacted Jan. 1, 2018, generally prohibits employers with five or more employees from asking about one’s conviction history before making a job offer.

Holtzman said the district has no issue with the framework of the Fair Chance Act, but it does take issue with the job applicant’s criminal record in regard to the position for which she was offered.

“Whether an individual with a criminal record is appropriate for a particular position depends on the nature of the position, the nature and seriousness of the crimes and the length of time which has passed,” he said.

There are many duties to the fire inspector/plans organizer job, and “one of them is to conduct inspections and issue citations,” Holtzman said. “It qualifies as a peace officer under state law, but oddly, unlike police peace officers, it is not excluded from the Fair Chance Act.”

“The legislature may not have been aware fire departments have peace officer positions and the same policy reasons that justify the exemption of police officers, justify exempting fire peace officers,” said Holtzman. “The District is considering whether to advance corrective state legislation.”

The plaintiff was sentenced for crimes of negligence, not malice, which arose from an accident almost two decades ago, according to her attorney, Morgan Yang. The Richmond resident served just over five years and participated in the Conservation (Fire) Camp Program while incarcerated.

“MOFD’s position that a person found guilty of two counts of gross vehicular manslaughter, which the state determined is not eligible for expungement, is not an appropriate hire for a peace officer position. It was not challenged by the state nor was it part of the settlement,” said Holtzman.

Yang said her client’s convictions were two counts arising from the same accident.

Regarding the plaintiff’s convictions Yang said, “The obligations on the employer apply regardless of what the underlying

## MOFD/Plaintiff Settlement Timeline

**Jan. 1, 2018**

Fair Chance Act, also known as “Ban the Box” law enacted in California.

**Sept. 8, 2022**

Plaintiff received job offer as fire inspector/plans organizer by MOFD.

**Sept. 28, 2022**

MOFD HR department gives plaintiff the green light to give notice to her current job stating, “everything looks good.” Plaintiff gives her current job notice to leave employment.

**Oct. 7, 2022 | Friday**

Plaintiff’s final day of work at current job. MOFD HR gives plaintiff a one-page Conviction Information Questionnaire to fill-out and submit.

**Oct. 8, 2022 | Saturday**

MOFD HR rescinds plaintiff’s job offer.

**Oct. 10, 2022**

Plaintiff’s scheduled first day with MOFD.

**Aug. 28, 2023**

Settlement of \$97,500 paid to plaintiff from MOFD’s insurance (\$90,000) and MOFD’s general fund (\$7,500).

convictions are.”

After receiving the ‘green light’ from an HR representative Sept. 28, the plaintiff submitted her resignation to her employer. Her first day with MOFD was to be Monday, Oct. 10.

On Friday Oct. 7, she received a Conviction Information Questionnaire which she completed and returned to HR, noting she was in the process of getting the convictions expunged. According to Yang, she used, “the wrong terminology and meant to say pardon, not expungement.”

“Saturday morning my client was told the offer was being rescinded,” said Yang. “She asked the HR representative if she could speak with someone about the matter. The HR representative responded only that, ‘There is not any further information we have for you at this time.’”

“The plaintiff incorrectly asserted the convictions were in the process of being expunged. In fact, she had sought to have them expunged and the request was denied,” said Holtzman.

According to Yang, no decision has been made about the pardon for her client.

Ultimately, the decision to settle was mediated between CRD and MOFD.

“Although the state disagreed with a procedural element of MOFD’s compliance in the interactive process, we do not agree with the state’s position. It was a no fault settlement,” said Holtzman. “The settlement was accepted, in part, because it is far less than the potential litigation cost, even

if MOFD were to prevail.

“The District stands by its decision not to employ this individual based upon the specific job at issue and the specifics of the plaintiff’s record. However, the failure to complete the interactive process was due to the necessity of reaching a decision in a matter of hours after the discovery of the plaintiff’s record prior to the plaintiff leaving her previous employment.”

The plaintiff’s final day on her previous job was Friday, Oct. 7, one day before the MOFD job offer was rescinded.

The plaintiff incurred financial hardship due to the job offer withdrawal.

“My client lost income due to the rescinded job offer,” said Yang. “I note that this was at the time when she and her part-

ner just welcomed a baby into their family six months earlier. This, of course, exacerbated the stress of the financial impact.”

After receiving notice of the settlement, Yang said her client “felt a sense of relief in being able to put this painful chapter behind her and focus on her path forward and finding new employment. She hopes her case increases awareness of the Fair Chance Act among individuals with a criminal history, so they know their rights when looking for employment.”

Yang also sees this case as an educational one.

“We hope this demonstrates this is something employers need to take seriously and educate their management and human resource professionals on, as there can be serious financial consequences if they don’t,” said Yang. “The Fair Chance Act is an important tool to prevent discrimination in employment and we applaud individuals, like our client, who have the courage to pursue these types of claims.”

MOFD is now fully aware of the law’s provisions and has procedures in place to ensure there are no future violations.

“General counsel provides legal updates as appropriate,” said Holtzman. “Human resource employees also attend trainings provided by outside contractors and associations.”

Holtzman added, “The Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District is committed to providing public safety services, treating all job applicants fairly and in compliance with the law, and ensuring our peace officer positions are appropriately staffed.”

The California Civil Rights Department published a newly launched Fair Chance Act Interactive Guide, which aims to help people understand their rights under the law: <https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/crdnews/sep62023pr/>.

Charleen Earley can be reached at [editor@theorindanews.com](mailto:editor@theorindanews.com).



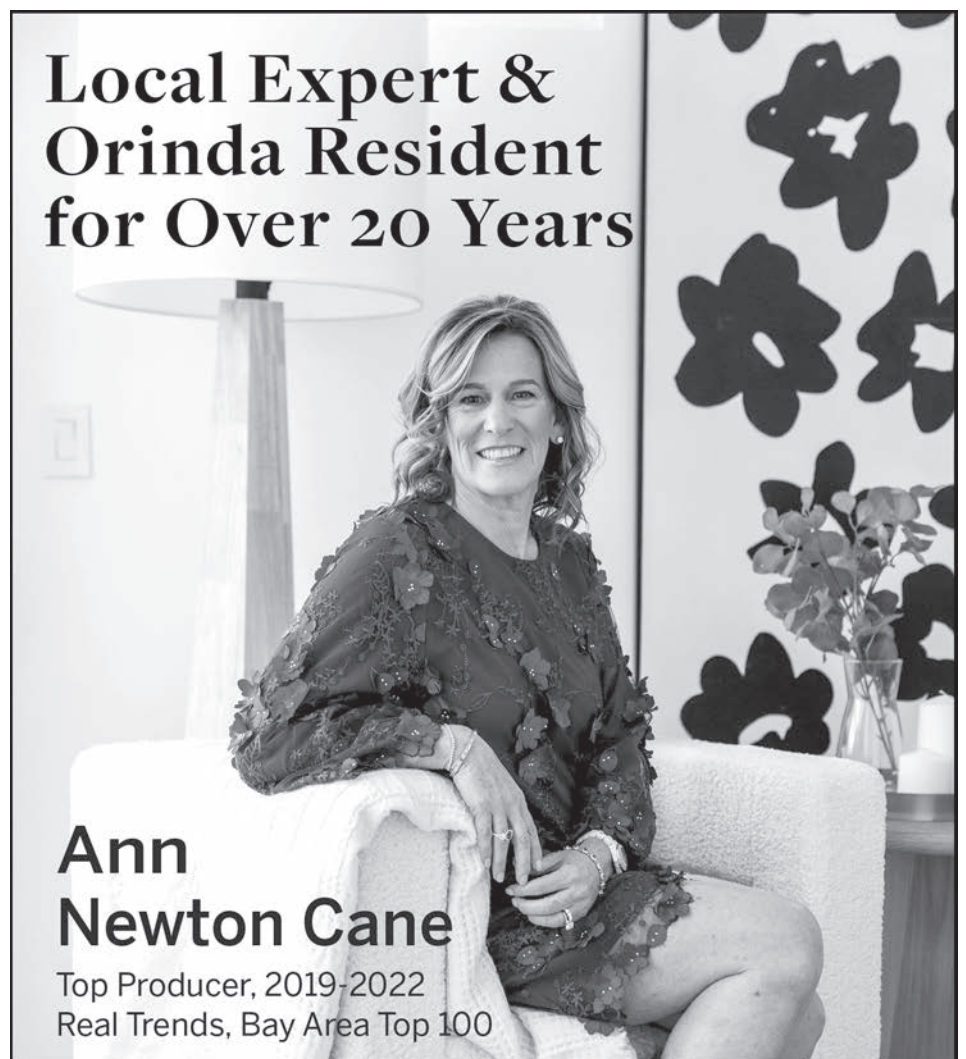
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**Sister City Exchange Program  
Brings Tabor Student to Orinda**

**Orinda Hosts Exchange Student From Tabor**

NICOLE LAMISON  
Staff Writer

Like most 17-year-olds in Orinda, Eliska Tumova is a senior at Miramonte High School. She enjoys spending time with friends and loves to watch Netflix shows, especially *Lucifer*. Unlike most teens here, Tumova is a foreign exchange student from Tabor, Czech Republic.

Tumova came to the United States in August through The Orinda and Tabor Sister City Foundation's student exchange program. She is staying with Bobbie Landers temporarily as the search for a host family continues. Landers is a former mayor and active member in the Orinda sister-city program.

Tumova rides to school with her next-door classmate. She attends classes including English and her favorite, psychology. She's fascinated by the human mind and appreciates learning "how we can make ourselves better."

Tumova has noticed a few differences between the high schools in Tabor and Miramonte. Here, classes alternate between period lengths of 45 and 90 minutes, whereas classes back home are all strictly 45 minutes.

In Tabor, the high school is a four-story building where she takes the stairs to different classes and walks to her school cafeteria, which is off-campus. At Miramonte,

she walks through green lawns and outdoor locker halls to reach her classes and the cafeteria is just a quick stroll away.

A base for the Cheer Team, Tumova goes to practice after school most days and receives a ride home from one of her teammates.

In her free time, she explores the Bay Area with friends, venturing to Walnut Creek, Berkeley, San Francisco and beyond. She enjoys hiking, playing tennis and staying active.

With a nine hour time difference, staying in touch with her family is a challenge. They mostly exchange texts rather than calling because Tumova is asleep while her family is awake and vice-versa. Although she misses her family, she likes meeting new people and is very social.

"People here are really friendly. I didn't expect they'd be this friendly," she said.

Tumova traveled to the United States last year with the Czech Republic's national Cheer Team, but this is her first time ever traveling alone.

"I was a little scared about catching the right flight and how school would go and how people would be here ... I was also really excited because it is a dream of every child to do high school in America," said Tumova. "We have the vision from the films and now it's real life happening to me."

*Nicole Lamison can be reached at [nlamison34@gmail.com](mailto:nlamison34@gmail.com).*



JEFF HEYMAN

Tabor exchange student at Miramonte High School, **Eliska Tumova**, adjusts to life in Orinda and gets to know her fellow Orindans, including **Slavka Ruzicka**, at left, at the Rotary Club of Orinda's Dancing with the Cars event on Sept. 8.

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TEEN CORNER

**TEEN CORNER**

COLLEGE AT A COST: RISING APPLICATIONS, DECLINING ACCEPTANCE RATES AND THE TRANSACTIONALITY OF EXTRACURRICULARS

NICOLE LAMISON 

College acceptance rates have plummeted in the past few years. Competition is so fierce that schools that were typically considered “safety schools” - colleges students apply to and are more likely to get into - now have lower acceptance rates on par with schools considered selective.

Public universities have acceptance numbers nearing single digits. Ivy League schools, Brown, Cornell, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, UPenn, Princeton and Yale, are no longer just a long shot, but an entire Hail Mary with 2023’s acceptance rates ranging from Harvard’s whopping 3.4% to Cornell’s 8%, according to www.crimsoneducation.org.ed

The question is: Why are college admission rates falling so drastically?

Simply, more students are applying and they’re applying to more schools, resulting in decreased acceptance rates. From 2019-2020 to 2021-2022, the number of submitted college applications rose by 21.3%, per www.usnews.com. With an increased number of applications, a decrease in acceptance rates follows. For high school seniors, getting into college is more difficult than ever and most are looking for anything that can give them an edge.

There are many components to an application which colleges examine during the admission process – essays, activities lists, teacher recommendations, standardized test scores and more. For many students, applying to college can feel like a full-time job.

Students study months on end for the SAT/ACT and spend countless hours editing their personal statement and supplemental essays, all while balancing homework, classes, jobs, athletics and a social life.

As someone who recently lived through this process, I can say the college application season was the most hectic and stressful four months of my life.

During my college application work, there was a seemingly never-ending to-do list lingering in my mind. Amidst the hustle and bustle of senior year, there was an underwhelming amount of time for my overwhelming workload. Bus rides to volleyball games, in the library during free periods or at home after long days, every waking moment seemed dedicated to craft-

ing my Common App.

Today, colleges are drowning in applications from seniors with stellar GPA’s and perfect SAT scores from valedictorians, ASB presidents, newspaper/yearbook editors and soccer captains. How do they differentiate all of their qualified candidates? Enter the activities list and personal essays.

Universities look for passionate students who take active roles in their communities. In addition to being academic standouts, students build their resumes with astrophysics clubs, part-time barista jobs, medical internships and an array of volunteer work.

Being brutally honest, some kids participate in activities solely for the purpose of padding their resumes.

A perfect example is founding a Badminton Club as a senior. News Flash: it’s too late by then. Students need to take the time during pivotal freshman and sophomore years to discover what they truly enjoy and what is meaningful to them.

By junior and senior years, hone-in on those activities and seek leadership positions. Colleges are adept at detecting contrived extracurriculars. Rather than being a member of 10 clubs, lean into your passions and look for ways to expand upon them, in and outside of school.

In the height of the college application *Hunger Games* season, I encourage parents to show the twelfth graders in your life a little more love. With everything going on in their lives, the SOS’s, stressed out seniors, need extra support every once in a while.

Nicole Lamison can be reached at [nlamison34@gmail.com](mailto:nlamison34@gmail.com).

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**Teen Tunes Spotify Playlist**

■ **Fallin’ for Fall Playlist**

By NICOLE LAMISON  
Staff Writer

These songs will make you want to bundle up on the couch with a mystery book, take a stroll through a pumpkin patch and sip a hot apple cider in crisp fall morning air. Grab some headphones and enjoy!





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SERVICE TO UKRAINE



Ukrainian refugees and volunteers at English Camp gather together at the end of the day to debrief and dance. GRACE PAIK

## Our Family's Meaningful Journey

By GRACE PAIK  
Contributing writer

I am a recent arrival in Orinda, and while my children have moved beyond high school age and I'm not actively involved in the day-to-day affairs of Orinda, I feel compelled to recount our family's meaningful journey of service to Ukraine and Spain over the past two years.

In the spring of 2021, my husband received a call from our Spanish friend Gabi. Their mission was to aid in the relocation of Ukrainians to western Europe. Collaborating closely with our church's pastor, they extended

a warm welcome to 13 Ukrainian orphans, embracing them into their extended family.

Under the nurturing care of Gabi's family, these children now find solace and protection. Gabi embarked on a profound process of assimilation, warmly embracing these 13 newcomers into their midst. Initially, many of them grappled with malnutrition, illness and various medical complexities. They exhibited signs of withdrawal, detachment and guardedness.

Fast-forwarding to the recent month of June, nearly two years later, my family and I returned to Gabi's home. Gabi adopted an additional four children. The remarkable changes in the kids were strikingly apparent – they are now fluent in Spanish, socially active and in robust health, flourishing in every aspect imaginable. They attend the local school, some have already completed high school and are currently employed, setting aside resources for their future pursuits.

Gabi nurtures a captivating hobby of raising wild creatures, including wolves, lambs, sheep, wild cats, ostriches and a variety of other species. Part of the children's daily routine involves tending to these animals, an experience that has bestowed upon them a significant measure of responsibility.

Since the year 2016, our church has established a biennial tradition of hosting an English Camp. This particular year held a profound significance, as we welcomed the Ukrainian children into our fold. Accompanied by 21 volunteers from local high schools and colleges, along with 12 dedicated adults, we devotedly dedicated our time to meticulously curate the entire English Camp experience.

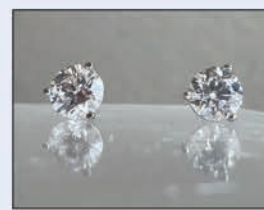
The trip spanned from June 21 to July 6. Our volunteers wholeheartedly engaged in serving the local community, yet an enchanting revelation unfolded – they became recipients of heartwarming blessings, gifted by the genuine warmth and openness of the local youth. This encounter forged a deep bond, a friendship that will forever be etched in their memories, a camaraderie that will forever remain imprinted in their recollections.

The encounter left an indelible mark on my son, who had recently graduated from high school. He observed a child-like happiness, an endless exuberance radiating from the youth unfazed by their humble material possessions and the lack

[SEE UKRAINE page 20]



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SERVING ORINDA TOGETHER: MEET CHRIS LASZCZ-DAVIS

CLAY DEANHARDT



One of the best things about volunteering in Orinda is all the great, interesting people you get to meet. One I want you all to meet is Chris Laszcz-Davis.

I first met Chris in 2009, my second year as a Rotarian. She was a member of The Orinda Association (OA) and the co-chair of the 4th of July Parade, one of four in the role. The OA asked if our club had someone to help organize and manage the

food booths in the park after the parade. I ended up being that person – then and for just about every year until the pandemic.

This story highlights a real feature of Orinda volunteerism that enables our area to punch above its weight with services and events as our various organizations don't compete. They function more like an interconnected web supporting every organization and Orinda as a whole.



JEFF HEYMAN

Chris Laszcz-Davis, one of the founders of Lamorinda Presents and a long-time volunteer for many community organizations, is pictured here (R) with Jackie Buettner (L) at the Orinda Classic Car Show on Sept. 9.

Over the past 74 years, our Rotary club has been involved in hundreds, if not thousands, of projects and events, but rarely alone. Whether in the lead – like the 70+ years of Rotary Field Day – or providing support – like with the 4th of July committee – we've always worked with other groups.

Community service collaborations are Orinda's secret sauce. It's how such a small town gets so much done.

How does all this collaboration happen?

Some of it is history and tradition, certainly. But there are many behind-the-scenes activities to make all this work – like the monthly Mayor's Liaison meeting where local club, civic and educational leaders meet to stay informed and look for opportunities to work together.

This is where the story circles back to Chris.

An Orindan for 34 years, Chris and several area leaders came together a decade ago to organize Lamorinda Presents, a monthly call for area groups to coordinate events, collaborate and keep abreast of what is going on within Lamorinda.

Ideas like that don't just come from nowhere. Chris has been a community and

business leader for years. A "retired" senior executive in charge of health, safety and environmental affairs, she runs her own consulting business, is a member of the OA Board, a Rotarian and former president with the Lamorinda Sunrise Club. She is also a Governor-appointed member of a board which sets California health and safety standards that often get promulgated

[SEE SERVICE page 12]

The Power of Three



MARK BELL

Sadie Symonds #3, Nichole Tuszynski #22 and Tara Dao #18, Co-Captains of the 2023 Miramonte varsity volleyball team. This trio has been finding ways to beat opponents since their time at OIS, winning the schools only back-to-back league championships. Come watch the Musketeers of Miramonte work their magic in their final home game of the season 10/07/23 vs College Park.

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ART OF MIXOLOGY



JEFF HEYMAN

Cathy Merrill, Cindy Powell and Jennifer Vigo (L-R) said “peace and love went into making their Strawberry Fields Forever cocktail at the 2021 Art of Mixology event.” This year’s 10th annual craft cocktail competition and fundraiser, presented by the Lamorinda Arts Council, is Oct. 14 from 4:30 – 7 p.m. at Orinda Theatre Square.

# Get your Fix for the Mix and “Sip- port” Lamorinda Arts Council

By MIMI BOMMARITO  
Staff Writer

Mixing and mingling has double meaning at the Lamorinda Arts Council’s (LAC) annual Art of Mixology fundraiser, transforming Orinda’s Theatre Square on Saturday, Oct. 14.

An array of mixologists, both professional and amateur, orchestrate the mixing and mingling of spirits as patrons mix and mingle with friends. Plentiful hors d’oeuvres and savory snacks will be supplied by local chefs and caterers.

Gone are the days of a simple “Rum ‘n Coke.” The modern cocktail has been elevated to an art form. Creative and original tastes and twists await the palate at this popular event. Ticket prices begin at \$75 and include approximately 15 freshly-crafted, sample-sized offerings, shaken, stirred or garnished by the area’s best. Patron level tickets are \$125, which includes a \$50 tax deductible donation to the LAC.

In addition to a potential “Flash Mob” dance performance by Joy in Motion, a bit of friendly competition keeps the evening lively. Contestants aim not only to delight the senses, but also to snag cash and prizes for the top spot in four categories: Mixologist of the Year, Top Amateur, Best Presentation/Table Staging and Audience Favorite. Judges select the winners of the first three categories and attendees decide the Audience Favorite.

“Many favorite bartenders are returning this year,” said LAC Executive Director Ani Breslin. “I see several familiar award winners, including Cynthia Songco from Casa Orinda.”

Songco’s winning 2022 cocktail was titled, “Henny Penny,” a whiskey sour she

gave a Thanksgiving twist by including cranberry compote and ginger syrup.

Breslin anticipates another successful Art of Mixology, now in its tenth year. As LAC’s main fundraiser, success is critical.

“The Lamorinda Arts Council does amazing things for our community,” said realtor Diane Dwyer, who, along with her business partner Wendy Bond, are top sponsors for a second year.

“Their active presence continually reminds us how important art is in our lives,” added Dwyer, a former newscaster who has emceed the Lamorinda Idol competition since its inception in 2006.

The council oversees art galleries at the Orinda Library and at Wilder – as well as the Lamorinda Idol talent competition. The high school visual arts competition, Artify Orinda, the Super Shorts Film Challenge and Art Embraces Words, keep LAC members active year-round.

“We love the many ways the Lamorinda Arts Council provides opportunities for our artists of all ages to showcase their talents,” said Bond.

The Art of Mixology typically sells out, and Breslin said advance ticket sales have been steady. If last-minute is more your style, a small number of tickets are usually available at the door.

“Since the event runs from 4:30 – 7 p.m., a popular option is to dine afterward at one of our many nearby restaurants,” added Breslin.

For tickets, visit [www.lamorindaarts.org/mixology](http://www.lamorindaarts.org/mixology). Mark your calendars for an evening of raising a mini-glass, okay, multiple mini-glasses, to an event with a maximum impact.

Mimi Bommarito can be reached at [editor@theorindanews.com](mailto:editor@theorindanews.com).

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◆ SERVICE from page 11

across the U.S.

There’s more. Chris is a leader with the Association of American University Women, which, since 1881 has promoted equity in education for women and girls. The 8th AAUW STEM Conference for middle school girls at Saint Mary’s College is March 16, 2024, and serves more than 180 area students.

That’s quite a resume. It tells not only what Chris has accomplished, but more importantly, about who she is. Like a lot of Orindans, Chris is a person you may

not have heard of, but whose life of service affects the quality of life in Orinda every day. She is someone you will never forget meeting.

A final thought – thank you to everyone who joined our celebration of volunteerism in Orinda at Dancing with the Cars. It was a great evening, with a lot of old and new friends.

And thank you to everyone who serves Orinda, as a professional or volunteer.

Clay Deanhardt can be reached at [claydeanhardtrotary@gmail.com](mailto:claydeanhardtrotary@gmail.com).

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LIVE AT THE ORINDA! / PET OF THE MONTH

# Canadian Sensation Opens Live At the Orinda! Concert Series

By SALLY HOGARTY  
Staff Writer

The Live At the Orinda! concert series opens Sunday, Oct. 8 at 5 p.m., with a fundraising gala and the U.S. debut of Canadian singing sensation, Geneviève Leclerc.

“The world has started to take notice of these special musical evenings so we’re inviting the world to Orinda. This season will prove the universal language really is love and music,” said producer

Michael Williams.

Williams became aware of Leclerc through YouTube years ago and was “blown away” by her singing ability.

“I immediately bought her first album and was blown away even further. Not only by her incredible voice, but by how she was able to take classics and well-known songs and sing them in a way that was totally different from the original,” Williams explained.

With mesmerizing eyes and a captivating voice, Leclerc has created quite a stir

in Canada, on local TV as a sensation on “The Voice” and the 25th Anniversary U.S. National Tour of *Les Misérables*, playing the pivotal role of Fantine.

Sounding quite different, her powerful approach to music and intelligent choice of material, along with the ability to fully immerse herself in a song, has led to comparisons with Barbara Streisand, Dame Shirley Bassy and Celine Dion.

“She typically plays large theaters with orchestras and bands, so I wasn’t sure she’d consider a smaller theater,” Williams said. “But when I saw she was doing a series of jazz concerts, followed by a series of Broadway concerts in a smaller venue in Montreal, I thought maybe she would consider it.”

Leclerc was eager to return to the Bay Area and accepted Williams’ invitation to perform. She fell in love with the Bay Area a few years ago when the Royal Caribbean cruise ship she was singing on stopped in San Francisco.

“A very vivid memory lingers in my mind: a square where people dance-swing, vibrant bars and a multitude of restaurants. I am eagerly looking forward to returning; this time for a visit of more than 24 hours,” said Leclerc.

She hopes to explore San Francisco and take a wine trip to Napa Valley during her stay. The Québécoise artist loves how travel, whether around the world singing on cruise ships or on her *Les Misérables* tour has allowed experiencing many different cultures.

“I’ve been fortunate to travel and witness different approaches and various ways of life,” she said. “It has truly broadened my horizons.”

Leclerc brings her “Interprète” show, accompanied by her long-time pianist Nicola Burgess, to her Orinda debut. It mixes



COURTESY OF GENEVIÈVE LECLERC

*Les Misérables* star and Canadian singing sensation **Geneviève Leclerc** opens Orinda’s Live At the Orinda! concert series Oct. 8. Her power, quality and vocal elegance have been compared to **Barbra Streisand** and **Nicole Croisille**, among other legendary singers.

popular and music from musical theater, as well as iconic French songs she hopes will touch hearts even for non-French speakers.

While Leclerc’s music is often challenging, she said her biggest challenge has been learning to wear multiple hats.

“I handle the management and bookings myself,” she said. “It’s work I really enjoy, but it takes a lot of time. I must be incredibly disciplined with managing my time.”

Fortunately for Orinda audiences, she managed to dedicate a good swath of time to create a vibrant concert for her Live At the Orinda! debut.

“I couldn’t be happier to produce Geneviève’s U.S. concert debut and share her phenomenal talent with everyone at the Orinda Theatre,” Williams said.

For tickets to the Oct. 8 show and fundraiser, which includes several silent auction items, visit [www.orindamovies.com](http://www.orindamovies.com).

*Sally Hogarty can be reached at [sallyhogarty@gmail.com](mailto:sallyhogarty@gmail.com).*

## Pet of the Month



JOHN COX

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SENIORS

# Dispatches from Driving Seniors: Wit, Wisdom and Wanderlust Edition

*Dispatches from Driving Seniors is a recurring column featuring the accomplished, fascinating and resilient seniors I've met as part of my volunteer work with The Orinda Association's Seniors Around Town program.*

By KATHY CORDOVA  
Executive Editor

The first thing I noticed about John Kaminski was his cheerful and full-of-life attitude; his ebullience.

Not a word typically used to describe a man emerging from a four-hour dialysis appointment, gripping a walker to steady himself. But ebullience truly is the quality John Kaminski exudes.

As a Seniors Around Town volunteer driver, I've given John many rides. Every single time, he was delightfully good-natured as we shared insightful and inspirational conversations.

When I later drove his wife, Joanne, who has an equally exuberant personality as well as a gorgeous mane of red hair, I was completely entranced by this couple.

John and Joanne met on a blind date



JEFF HEYMAN

Married for 37 years, **John** and **Joanne Kaminski** share a passion for international travel and their large, blended family.

**Kaminski Bios**

**John Kaminski**  
Born: August 2, 1935 in Detroit, MI  
**Career:** President and executive of copier companies. He helped build Taylor Made Business Systems into a multi-million dollar company.

**Joanne Kaminski**  
Born: March 23, 1934 in Dinuba, CA  
**Career:** Registered nurse

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neither wanted to go on. They each vowed to only have a quick drink to appease friends who thought they were perfect for each other.

Turns out, the friends were right. "We never parted after that," said John.

They'd both been married and divorced in the past, but have now been happily wedded for 37 years. They found their soulmate in each other, bonding over shared passions for international travel and their blended family of five children, 16 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren.

When they first met, Joanne shared her dream of seeing the Seven Wonders of the World. Not only did they go on to visit the Seven Wonders as a couple, but they expanded the dream to visit 179 countries.

Their globetrotting has not been without occasional bumps in the road. Five years ago, after unexplained weight gain and a trip to the doctor landed him in the hospital, John discovered his kidneys weren't working. He immediately began dialysis.

His illness and COVID-19 paused their

travels for a time. Determined to continue their adventures, they took a cruise in August, with a dialysis machine on board, and visited Sardinia - their 180th country.

I had the pleasure to talk to them about what life is like at this age, what they have learned and what they look forward to.

**What gets you going in the morning?**

John: Life. We get up and we hope to see the kids and grandkids and great-grandkids. And they show up a lot.

Joanne: We hear from kids every day.

John: We love to see the little babies. When they bring them here, it's such a motivation to keep living.

**What are your aspirations?**

John: To finish our travels. There are probably four or five more countries we'd like to visit. We would like to see a couple more grandkids get married. Four boys are not yet married, but they all have wonderful significant others and we'd love to go to their weddings.

[SEE SENIORS page 19]

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SENIORS

# Lamorinda Village Helps Local Seniors Live in Their Homes

NICOLE LAMISON  
Staff Writer

When I was a kid, the thought of growing up was both exhilarating and terrifying. Although I treasured playing dress-up and hosting lemonade stands, I was afraid of losing the joy and playfulness of childhood.

Adults are afraid too. Of growing old. Of not being self-sufficient. Of having to move out of their home with its countless memories. Lamorinda Village, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, helps people manage and overcome these fears.

Lamorinda Village is composed of residents 55 years or older from Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. By offering services such as social activities and home assistance, it strives to enable their members to remain in their homes as they age.

Founded in 2013, the organization had more than 100 paying members by 2017. Its growth skyrocketed in 2020 when COVID hit, as seniors stayed inside. Essential tasks like grocery shopping became dangerous for elders.

Many Orindans joined the organization and they received food security and a supportive community during a particularly difficult time. After the pandemic, many seniors continued with Lamorinda Village which now has 275 members.

There are several ways Lamorinda Village works to support its members. It offers opportunities to combat loneliness and isolation, one of the fastest growing issues in the senior population, by expanding members' social networks.

Through meditation classes, chair yoga, happy hours and coffee talks, members can enjoy each other's company and create strong connections. Hosted events include Village Conversations, book clubs, movie matinees and sing-a-longs. Members may receive at-home visits and calls from friendly volunteers available to talk and check in.

Kathy Merchant, a longstanding member, said, "Lamorinda Village has expanded beyond home repairs, chauffeuring and tech help to offer a dynamic menu of learning programs and speakers, as well as social activities. I think of this history like the evolution from a cocoon ... as incubation of the concept... to butterfly. The Village has indeed taken wing. It's been a joy to watch and to meet interesting people from

all three communities."

In addition to social support, Lamorinda Village offers assistance with home tasks. Whether replacing an out-of-reach light bulb, helping with tech support, doing yard work, or providing transportation to appointments, errands and Lamorinda Village events, volunteers answer the call.

*"Lamorinda Village has expanded beyond home repairs, chauffeuring and tech help to offer a dynamic menu of learning programs and speakers, as well as social activities." – Kathy Merchant*

Sharon Iversen, president of Lamorinda Village, said, "[Without us], older people would not have the choices they do. They certainly wouldn't have the connections. I don't think people would be quite as happy."

The organization is funded by membership fees, grants and donations and relies heavily on volunteers. Individuals pay \$33 per month or \$360 annually. Households with two or more pay \$52 monthly or \$600 per year.

"We always need volunteers of all ages... It's lovely to know there are people out



KATHRYN ISHIZU

Members of the non-profit group, Lamorinda Village, learning fire safety techniques at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, at a 2022 presentation hosted by Orinda Boy Scout Ben Bocabella, as part of his eagle project to provide help for seniors in emergencies.

there willing to lend a hand," Iversen said.

The non-profit received a large donation from the city of Lafayette to support their low-income seniors. The organization is looking to partner with local businesses to grow their outreach and receive more help from the Orinda community.

Visit lamorindavillage.org to make a donation and sign up to volunteer.

Nicole Lamison can be reached at nlamison34@gmail.com.

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SPORTS



MARK BELL

**Griff Tunney** (in the white cap), a left-handed junior and starter for Miramonte's coveted water polo team, defends against a potential shot from senior attacker, **Oliver Sherwood** (in the green cap), during a recent watch-the-sun-rise practice session. **Captain Grant Kurtz**, (purple cap) normally an attacker, filled in for team goalie **Beckett Randolph** during this training exercise.

**GAME ON**

**YOU'LL HAVE TO GET UP PRETTY EARLY TO BEAT MIRAMONTE**

MARK BELL



Capturing the first glimpses of morning sunlight hitting the unwrinkled surface of the Bill Brown Aquatic Center is a beautiful sight for human eyes.

However, the still-sleepy faces of the young men about to enter these magic waters seem to be looking well past the majesty of the moment. It's 5:58 a.m and time for water polo. Their vision is likely set a little further out, to the horizon of the season ahead. Knowing the chance at greatness lies in challenges far larger than

jumping into a brisk pool.

We're that team everyone would love to beat, after all. High bars have been set in the Miramonte history books, including being named ESPN's best high school water polo team in the country in 2008. Mats' faces are still pinned on locker room dart boards across the state.

Mats fans have been holding their breath waiting for the next Charlie "winning shot" Wisner. Or for another Olympic goalie and Stanford superstar, like Drew Holland.

[SEE GAME ON page 18]

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**Caitlin Chan Moves to Top Seat**



MARK BELL

When folks say, "May the force be with you," they could now be referring to Sophomore **Caitlin Chan**, a mild mannered Miramonte tennis player - and a force of nature. Once playing just behind team starlet **Juliette Krumholz**, who received the brunt of the camera flashes, Chan was, until this point, a true hidden gem. But no longer. Chan will now be top seat on the team ladder, and Krumholz has moved on. That means Caitlin will be playing on the #1 court in the team's quest to win the league, and the NCS championship. She is unbelievably precise. Consistent, fiercely competitive and very similar to some of her teammates like **Nicole Hui, Alison Rhee and Nicole Guo**, a win-under-pressure team player. Paralleling a young Luke Skywalker, Chan, just 15, is still realizing her full strength and confidence. But opponents beware, Chan will get inside your head and politely crank up the volume on that little voice that's been saying "Yep, I should've gone out for Cross Country instead."

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The orange blossom is a poetic and metaphoric way of storytelling. Shiva wrote this book to "show kids despite our differences in languages, foods, nationalities and holidays, we all experience the same joy of authentic food, grandparent's love and nostalgia around the holidays. We also have a common emotional state of sadness when we lose a family member or a friend who was our mentor."



**What's On Deck With Parks & Rec!**

**New classes this Fall include wreath making, science for kids, natural play for babies, and caregiver & child yoga.**

**Registration for OYS Winter Basketball, K-5th grade. Closes on Nov. 5. Play begins in mid-January.**

**Free senior tech help on 3rd Saturday of the month, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Registration required.**

**Thursday Night Food Truck Events occur each week, 5 - 8 p.m. at the Community Center.**

**Friday night movie this month is October 6. Movie begins at dusk.**

**The Orinda Teen Advisory Council (OTAC) is back for the 2023-24 school year. Contact us for information.**

**Go to [www.orindaparksandrec.org](http://www.orindaparksandrec.org) or call 925-254-2445 for questions and registration.**



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COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER

# Orinda Woman's Club Festival of Trees Luncheon and Fundraiser

By ADELIE REINER  
Staff Writer

Save the date! The 37th annual Festival of Trees, organized by the Orinda Woman's Club (OWC), is Friday, Nov. 17, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the San Ramon Marriott.

This event is a significant fundraiser for the OWC, which chose Trinity Center of Walnut Creek in support of their Transitional Aged Youth Program (TAY) as their major beneficiary this year.

"Those who attend will have a wonderful start to the winter season, while helping us fund the very important work of the Trinity Center," said Jean Barnhart, a 25-year member and current president of the OWC.

The event begins with a silent auction of 50+ items, featuring a jersey signed by Golden State Warriors basketball star, Klay Thompson. Themed and decorated tabletop Christmas trees, luxurious gift baskets, original watercolors by local artist Benlu Jiang and drawings for destination stays in Sonoma's wine country and other vacation locations will also be up for bid.

"What better way to celebrate the season of giving while enjoying a wonderful lunch and trying to win some of the many gift baskets, decorated tabletop trees, many fantastic silent auction items and trips?" said Barnhart.

While perusing the auction offerings, guests can enjoy a cocktail or glass of wine before the luncheon in the ballroom at 12 p.m.

ABC Channel news anchor Dan Ashley returns as emcee to greet guests, introduce the major beneficiary Trinity Center of Walnut Creek and announce raffle winners.

But the fun doesn't end there – a fashion

show featuring clothing and accessories from Chico's and J. McLaughlin, of Danville and Le Rouge in Montclair, follows lunch.

The Club assesses requests from local non-profit organizations and donates the proceeds to aid those most in need, with a focus on women, children and the elderly.

The Trinity Center offers essential safety net services and a pathway forward for vulnerable neighbors, advocating for those seeking housing, financial stability and wellness in Walnut Creek and central Contra Costa County.

The TAY program provides support to young adults under the age of 29 who find themselves without housing or financial support.

"The Orinda Woman's Club understands the need and believes in Trinity's ability to make a difference," said Suzanne Murillo, treasurer.

Club proceeds also fund educational or vocational grants to former foster children, women rejoining the workforce and one Miramonte High School graduating senior each year.

"The Orinda Woman's Club has, for more than 50 years, contributed to the Orinda community in so many ways through both donations and hands-on work," said Jean Barnhart, a 25-year member and current president of the Orinda Woman's Club.

Tickets are \$95 and available until Oct. 31 at [www.orindawomansclub.org](http://www.orindawomansclub.org). There is still time to reserve your spot at the Festival of Trees and join the Orinda Woman's Club in giving back this holiday season.

Adelie Reiner can be reached at [adeliejala@gmail.com](mailto:adeliejala@gmail.com).



SALLY HOGARTY

Wendy Boyer walks the runway dressed in J.Jill at the 2022 fashion show, one of many events that helped fundraise for the 2022 beneficiary, Familia Unidas, an organization that deals with employment, homelessness, hunger and mental health in diverse communities in west Contra Costa County.



KATHY CORDOVA

Sondra Landberg and Candy Kattenburg enjoying the 2022 Festival of Trees. This year Landberg is modeling in the fashion show.



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CLASSIFIEDS

◆ MIDSUMMER from page 1

showing at Cal Shakes' Bruns Theater Oct. 7 at 7:30 p.m.

"We are at a pivotal point in the theater industry and there's a lot we can learn from the next generation," said Cal Shakes' Executive Director, Clive Worsley. "This is the first movie

featuring young artists that we've shown here and we're super excited."

These young artists were initially influenced by the actors of Cal Shakes. Last fall, when Randolph was searching for a *Midsummer Night's Dream* script for her students, she came up uninspired. Then she took the class to Marcus Gardely's adaptation of *King Lear*.

"Not only was the play entertaining, but it was also alive with new meaning and delicious interpretation which excited my students," said Randolph. "There was no turning back."

They were bubbling with ideas and we had to write our own adaptation."

She asked her students to write one act, which resulted in a Western, a sci-fi and ultimately the D&D favorite.

Harper Fradley-Smith, 13, and Tracy's son, Matthew Randolph, 16, co-wrote the entire screenplay which imagines two worlds: a Bay Area, after-school classroom with a burnt-out drama teacher and a Dungeons & Dragons campaign world.

The student players enter an alternate world where they work out their internal and external conflicts while learning "what fools these mortals be." The cast includes Jomar Tagatach from *King Lear* as Oberon, and each real-world student plays a corresponding character from Shakespeare's cast, including Puck, a troubled, mischievous teen.

"When writing our version of Shakespeare's classic, I loved bringing in the aspect of Dungeons & Dragons, giving our characters backstories and heart so audiences will care about each of their paths in the film," said Matthew.

"A lot of people assume co-writing is difficult and strenuous, filled with lots of disagreements, but what I learned is it isn't always true," said Fradley-Smith. "Matty and I loved how we were able to mold the characters in the image of our friends, and how they grew and changed throughout our production."

Because Tracy spends a year developing one movie with her students, they dive deep into the themes and language while learning about visual storytelling.

"Everyone knows what it's like to feel outcast from a clique or to have a crush that is unrequited," said Tracy, who studied theater at San Diego State and worked with SF Shakes. "Shakespeare captures the full

spectrum of what it means to be human and if kids are allowed to have fun with it, then they respond."

The "fun" in this film includes a staged dream dance sequence on a vintage couch in the middle of an open field; the kids lugged this key prop to Briones Park for each shoot.

The first Movie Makers film premiere was held in the Randolph's backyard, where a bed sheet hung on a trampoline and families provided snacks. Since then, premieres have graced libraries, classrooms and school theaters. Tracy's husband Jared Randolph, a videographer, helped connect Movie Makers with the Cal Shakes staff.

**What's Next: Anniversaries**

Next year Cal Shakes celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> by expanding programs, reaching out to neighbors and striving to be more things to more people.

Movie Makers will celebrate its 13<sup>th</sup> year by "dancing on the line of superstition," according to Tracy, and creating an adaptation of *Macbeth*.

John Olchak, Cal Shakes Director of Marketing, said this "will create a virtuous circle, because there is no art for adults without art for kids and we are about closing that circle. Movie Makers has the secret sauce where the kids are brought into the art."

The show premieres Oct. 7 at 7:30 p.m. with gates open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and up. Visit [www.calshakes.org](http://www.calshakes.org) and [www.tracyrandolph.org](http://www.tracyrandolph.org).

Amy Moellering can be reached at [ajmoellering@gmail.com](mailto:ajmoellering@gmail.com).

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◆ GAME ON from page 16

Big shoes to fill. Or should I say, big flip-flops with socks? Expectations are set to a pretty high water-mark around these parts.

Feels like a heavy burden treading water with so much expectation riding on one's shoulders, however Coach John Nash seems unfazed.

"We really try to be process-oriented and focus on improving one day at a time," he said. "If the coaches and players maximize each practice and playing opportunity, then we can ultimately live with whatever results we achieve."

Carrying this 1,000-pound torch is a full field of 12 seasoned seniors: Nick Bea, Jack Behles, Max Chua, Henry Engs, Grant Kurtz, Asher Menke, Beckett Randolph, Oliver Sherwood, Luke Wagner, Lucas Washburn, Lôn Washburn and Ethan Yu.

All are swimming chess pieces for Coaches Nash and Lincoln Haley. Nash won four NCS Championships during his time at Miramonte and Lincoln, also an alumnus, is the former head coach just over

the hill at Acalanes. Together they have strategic superpowers the team seems to respond well to.

"We always strive to be the best defensive team on the North Coast," said Nash. "Defense is an effort skill and it translates to play-off water polo."

Hopefully that evolves into beating the dreaded De La Salle Spartans, who knocked the Mats out of the NCS finals the last two years.

Although early morning practices can start off a bit foggy, the dual coaches' vision for the program is anything but.

"As alums who played for Bill Brown and James Lathrop, we're just trying to continue to build on the outstanding infrastructure those two phenomenal coaches built here," said Nash.

Brown and Lathrop are big reasons both Nash and Haley want to give back to Miramonte. Lucky for us.

It takes a village to raise a championship team, after all.

Mark Bell can be reached at [mark@omegalightingdesign.com](mailto:mark@omegalightingdesign.com).

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## CALENDAR

## On the Calendar in October

- International Film Showcase** presents the Bulgarian feature *In The Heart Of The Machine* which has won 17 international awards. Dates and show times available at: [www.orindamovies.com](http://www.orindamovies.com).
- 3 **Orinda Library ;Tiempo de cuentos!** Amiga Ana reads and sings in Spanish & English. 10:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Also, Oct. 10 and 17.
- 4 **Orinda Library Toddler Storytime** for one to three-year-olds and their caregivers. 10:30 a.m. Also, Oct. 11 and 18.
- Orinda Books** Tod Goldberg, author of *Gangsters Don't Die*, Visit <https://bit.ly/3ZkaWM5> to register for free event.
- 5 **Orinda Books Pat's Book Group** will read and discuss *Mecca* by Susan Straight. 11:30 a.m. All are welcome.
- Orinda Library** Paws to Read. 3:30 p.m. Children in grades 1-5 practice reading aloud to dogs certified for their social natures. Sign up at [tinyurl.com/OrindaPaws](http://tinyurl.com/OrindaPaws) or 925.254.2184. Also on Oct. 12 and 19.
- Taste of the World** food trucks Orinda Community Center parking lot, 5 - 8 p.m. Also Oct. 12, 19 and 26.
- 6 **Movie in the Park, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie***. Orinda Community Center Park. Begins at dusk.
- 7 **Orinda Farmers' Market**, 9 a.m. Orinda Way in front of Rite Aid and the Community Center Park. Visit [www.cccfm.org](http://www.cccfm.org) or 925.431.8361. Also Oct. 13, 20, and 27. See article p. 23.
- Orinda Books** Manuel Muñoz, author of the short-story collection *The Consequences*, will discuss his work in conversation with Hannah Onstad of New Literary Project. To register for this free event, go to the following link: <https://bit.ly/3PjXhQO>.
- Orinda Library Gallery** reception with the Glover Group, 4 - 6:30 p.m. See article p. 22.
- Cal Shakes** hosts *A Midsummer Night's D&D (Dungeons & Dragons)* film. 7:30 p.m. Bruns Amphitheater. Visit [www.calshakes.org](http://www.calshakes.org) and [www.tracyrandolph.org](http://www.tracyrandolph.org) for tickets. See article p. 1.
- 8 **Live At the Orinda!** fundraising gala 5 p.m., with Geneviève Leclerc. For tickets visit [www.orindamovies.com](http://www.orindamovies.com). See article p. 13.
- 10 **Orinda Academy** Virtual Information Session, 7-8 p.m. register at [orindaacademy.org](http://orindaacademy.org).
- Orinda Junior Women's Club (OJWC)**: Annual New Member Meeting, 7 p.m., at ReChic, 101 Orinda Way. During meeting, 10% of proceeds go to OJWC to support community service projects. For more information, email [membership@orindajuniors.org](mailto:membership@orindajuniors.org).
- 11 **Orinda Library** College Planning Tips for Parents of 8th Graders, 6:30 p.m. Orinda Library Garden.
- 12 **Miramonte, OIS and All Elementary Choirs Fall Sing** Miramonte Gymnasium 6:30 p.m. Performance for all choir families.
- 13 **Orinda Theatre** presents Taylor Swift's *The Eras Tour* concert on the big screen. 6:30 p.m. Tickets at <https://bit.ly/3PFE1hL>.
- 14 **American Association of University Women (AAUW)** Orinda Moraga Lafayette Branch's Shred Day, 9 a.m. at 5A Rent-A-Space, 455 Moraga Road, Moraga. AAUW fundraiser helps send girls to AAUW's Tech Trek Science & Math Camp. <https://oml-ca.aauw.net/tech-trek/>.
- Expression Unbound Flower Show** 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Orinda Community Center. Admission is free. [www.sogetsu-sohostudygroup.org](http://www.sogetsu-sohostudygroup.org). Also Oct. 15. See article p. 4.
- Art of Mixology** presented by the Lamorinda Arts Council. 4:30 - 7 p.m. For tickets visit [www.lamorindaarts.org/mixology](http://www.lamorindaarts.org/mixology). See article p. 12.
- 17 **American Association of University Women (AAUW)** Orinda Moraga Lafayette Branch 9:30 a.m. at the Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way. Discussion on "Book Banning and Curricula Censorship in California?"
- American Association of University Women (AAUW)** Orinda Moraga Lafayette Branch Walnut Creek Restaurant Walk, 5:30 p.m. Enjoy food from more than 17 restaurants. Tickets are \$36. Support scholarships for 7th grade girls to attend the AAUW week-long Tech Trek STEM summer camp. Contact Jan Cushman, [jancushman@comcast.net](mailto:jancushman@comcast.net), 925-818-0459 for tickets.
- 19 **Orinda Library** Smitten Kittens. The Contra Costa Animal Services van will bring adoptable kittens and the library will have cat-related crafts. 5:30 p.m. at 28 Orinda Way.
- Orinda Theatre Free Movie Night** presents *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane*. 6:30 p.m.
- 20 **Montelindo Garden Club** presents Seth Adams of Save Mount Diablo, discussing the history of SMD and its plans for the future. Lafayette Library Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Open to all. 9 a.m. [www.montelindogarden.com](http://www.montelindogarden.com).
- 21 **Chiller Diller Theater** presents *13 Ghosts*, 8:30 p.m. Orinda Theatre.
- 22 **American Association of University Women (AAUW)** partnering with Harper Greer of Lafayette, shopping days scholarship fundraising through Oct. 29. Mention AAUW and 10% of the profits go to the scholarship fund. For more information go to [oml-ca.aauw.net](http://oml-ca.aauw.net).
- 28 **Orinda Academy** Open House 10 a.m. Register at [orindaacademy.org](http://orindaacademy.org).
- 29 **Sleepy Hollow School** Creepy Hollow noon. Spooky treats, silent action, and family games. <https://bit.ly/3Z11LLk>.

Send calendar items to Jill Gelster at [calendar@aspenconsult.net](mailto:calendar@aspenconsult.net).

## ◆ SENIORS from page 14

Joanne: We look forward to the babies. But I also want to live long enough to see if there's anything out there in outer space. I hope we get an answer in my lifetime.

## Do you believe in the afterlife?

Joanne: Yes, I think I do. Probably more of a spirit world to me.

John: I think there's something out there. I don't know what.

Joanne: We'll probably bug each other when we're gone. Our spirits will meet up someplace.

John: Maybe in a different dimension.

Joanne: We'll still be exploring.

## How is your health now?

Joanne: Fortunately I've been pretty stable, health wise. John just plugs right along. My son in Lafayette has a place with a bunch of stairs and all the boys carry him up those stairs and sit him down. It's nice having a big family.

## Do you have any regrets?

Joanne: Didn't Frank Sinatra sing a song like that? I've had a few, but I did it my way.

John: That's our song.

Joanne: We both have the same attitude about things. If you just look ahead, every time something comes up that's kind of not so good - almost in a few hours for us - something happens and it's just great news. Somebody's getting married or somebody's having a baby. We wouldn't do anything differently.

## Do you have any fears?

John: Not really. Whatever happens, happens, I don't worry about it. Life is too short to worry.

Joanne: Yes, that's how I feel. Why worry about something that hasn't happened yet? We both have the same attitude. After it happens, then we'll worry about it.

## What's a favorite memory?

Joanne: It was really special getting married on a boat in the San Francisco Bay, with all our kids with us.

## Anything you want to add?

Joanne: One thing that has made our lives so much better is Seniors Around Town. These people, they are all wonderful. When I didn't feel comfortable driving through the tunnel anymore to my doctor's appointments, knowing I could have a delightful, pleasant person drive me, just took all my worries away. I don't even know how to explain what a wonderful feeling it is.

To learn more about Seniors Around Town, visit <https://orindaassociation.org/seniors-around-town> or call 925.402.4506.

Kathy Cordova can be reached at [cordova@theorindanews.com](mailto:cordova@theorindanews.com).



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BOBCAT / PUPS

# Orinda Backyard Bobcat Sighting



BARBARA NESTAL

"I saw the bobcat walk along my retaining wall on Aug. 23 at 4:30 p.m., so I grabbed my phone and went into my windowed mudroom," said **Barbara Nestal**, of Orinda on Monte Vista Ridge. "Through the window, he was sitting there near my water feature looking straight ahead. I tapped on the window so he would look my way and snapped the photo."

## Pups and Pints at Thursday Night Food Trucks



JEFF HEYMAN

**Kristin**, with daughter **Kaia** and puppy **Kobe**, enjoyed their time at Pups and Pints at the Orinda Community Center on Aug. 31, hosted by Taste of the World Market. Held the last Thursday of the month, the free, outdoor event features food trucks, beer, dog treats, cutest dog picture contest, music, pet vendors and pet adoptions. Last event of the year is Oct. 26 from 5 – 8 p.m. For more information, visit [www.tasteoftheworldmarket.com](http://www.tasteoftheworldmarket.com).



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### ◆ UKRAINE from page 10

of parental presence. This encounter profoundly etched into his consciousness, the understanding that genuine contentment in life transcends mere societal or financial standing. A certain spark ignited within them caught his attention, a spark that he himself lacked, despite possessing much more. This ignited a desire within him to evolve, transform and blossom as well.

Across the vast expanse of the Atlantic, they have now nurtured a circle of companions, eagerly poised to be embraced, as if they were brothers and sisters. This stands as a testament to the enduring bonds formed during this transformative journey.

Grace Paik can be reached at [grace.paik@gmail.com](mailto:grace.paik@gmail.com).

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BUSINESS BUZZ / OH THE PLACES YOU'LL GO

# GCD Provisions and Genuine Goodness: A Business Partnership

By ANDREA MADISON  
Staff Writer

It's a family affair at GCD Provisions, the new home-goods retail store which shares space with Genuine Goodness at 21 Orinda Way, Suite G. The café, which serves grab-and-go sandwiches, salads, soups, smoothies and take-and-bake meals is now set amongst beautiful home decor items.

Café owner Diane Eames, who opened Genuine Goodness seven years ago, has known sisters Stefanie Murphy and Lisa Hoskins and their mother, certified interior designer Gwen Callan, for over 20 years. The family trio hatched the idea of GCD sharing space with Eames's café.

"I was thrilled to reconceptualize the café space," said Eames. "From my position, I gain ambiance – a bonus for customers to grab-and-go or eat-in among beautiful, creatively inspiring home products."

Callan said GCD began as a series of pop-up shops in Napa, which were very successful. Despite the distance, folks from Orinda made the drive. This, in addition to the lack of shops to purchase quality home goods in the city, led to the creation of GCD.

After a pop-up shop party at Genuine Goodness in May, GCD Provisions opened.

"The criteria that we have is the items we choose have a design integrity, are utile, serve a function and be beautiful," said Callan.



ANDREA MADISON  
GCD Provisions, which shares a business space with café Genuine Goodness at 21 Orinda Way, Suite G, is a family-operated shop selling unique, sustainable and handmade home goods. (L-R) Daughter Lisa Hoskins, mother Gwen Callan and daughter Stefanie Murphy.

The shop steers away from larger manufacturers, focusing instead on one-of-a-kind items in small quantities.

Callan was a partner of an interior design studio in Alamo for 18 years, then moved to Danville, where she opened her own studio. "I missed having that retail contact with people," said Callan.

Murphy said a lot of Callan's clients were looking for finishing touches, "But didn't know where to go to find items which matched the work done in their homes. So

that's how this idea kind of sprung into existence as we did the pop-ups."

The shop seeks and stocks sustainable and handmade goods, such as African baskets and totes, Swedish salad servers and bowls and Mexican pots.

The accessories are culinary-inspired, Callan said. Murphy noted the charcuterie board Eames uses for her catering services is sold at GCD.

"People can walk in here and know the products have been curated, the best of the best," said Hoskins.

The response to the shop has been positive.

"Our goal is to partner with the community for events to host here," said Hoskins, including charitable giving events.

GCD Provisions is open 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and an occasional Saturday. Their Instagram handle is @shopgcdprovisions.

Callan shared a quote from designer William Morris.

"Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be beautiful or believe to be useful."

Andrea Madison can be reached at [drea.madison.05@gmail.com](mailto:drea.madison.05@gmail.com).

## Oh The Places You'll Go



JOSEPH G. BRUCE

Beth and David Doupe attending a Bruce Springsteen concert at Hyde Park, London.

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VISUAL ARTS

# Orinda Art Scene - Glover Group

BY NATASHA KAYE  
Staff Writer

Orinda's very own Glover Group is returning to the Orinda Library Gallery to showcase their *plein air* works this month.

Named for the late Pam Glover, a revered figure in the *plein air* art community and the wider Bay Area art scene, the group has its roots in Orinda. Glover held a month-long student show yearly at the Orinda Community Center.

The Glover Group consists of 17 student artists from various cities including Therese Gladstone Gordon and Maria SantoStefano from Orinda.

"We kind of think of ourselves as having originated at the Orinda Community Center and some of us continue to take classes there because it's a great way to get out and paint *plein air* because you know, you have to go somewhere, right?" said SantoStefano.

*"I joined because Pam Glover was such a notable California plein air painter and colorist. I loved her work, and I wanted to learn from her and be challenged and inspired by the community she created," said Polly Ziolkowski.*

After Glover's passing in 2010, the students carried on her legacy by convening weekly at various outdoor locations for painting sessions. They continue to meet and paint, socialize and partake in a bit of competitive sportsmanship to utilize the tips and tricks of fellow painters.

"I joined because Pam Glover was such a notable California *plein air* painter and colorist. I loved her work, and I wanted to learn from her and be challenged and inspired by the community she created," said Polly Ziolkowski.

"I've learned from all the teachers. Everyone, from Pam to her daughter Anne Marie, even though some didn't paint like me," said SantoStefano.

In addition to knowledge gained from group painting, the Glover Group incorporates the styles and lessons learned from Glover's classes. Her daughter continued teaching classes based on her mother's



Glover Group member, **Iris Sabre**, enjoying a group *plein air* painting session amongst the cloudy scenery at Point Lobos State Park in 2019.

JOHN HENRY

Artists Displaying Work at the Orinda Library Gallery

- Flora Baumann
- Dana Beebe
- Suzanne D'Arcy
- John Finger
- Andrew Fisher
- Sylvia Fones
- Victoria Gay
- Therese Gladstone Gordon
- Lynda Kravitz
- Alecia Larson
- Margaret Mason
- Irene Herrera McDonough
- Teresa Onoda
- Iris Sabre
- Maria SantoStefano
- Mary Claire Stotler
- Polly Ziolkowski

techniques.

SantoStefano recalls flipping through boxes of Glover's old paintings with Anne Marie and being brought to tears by their beauty.

"I've never ever had that reaction before to painting, so that really took me to another level, because when I went to take those classes at the community center, I didn't expect much, you know. I just had no idea what the quality of instruction was. Turned out, it was spectacular," said SantoStefano.

Part of Glover's legacy is her connection to the Society of Six, a group of *plein air* artists from Oakland which was founded in the early 20th century. Their bright colors

and dedication to modernism established them as pioneers in the Northern California art scene.

Glover painted with Louis Siegriest, a member of this iconic group and with his son Lundy after his father's passing in 1989. Glover shared the knowledge gained from Siegriest to her students, continuing the preservation of these revered techniques.

Stop by the gallery Saturday, Oct. 7 from 4 to 6:30 p.m. for light refreshments, live music and a chance to meet and mingle with the artists.

Natasha Kaye can be reached at [natashakaye@berkeley.edu](mailto:natashakaye@berkeley.edu).

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BARBARA KOBSAR



Pumpkins prevail as Halloween approaches, but an array of other fall squash are arriving at the Orinda Farmers' Market. Compared to summer squash, these reach full maturity on the vine to develop a hard, thick shell.

Traditionally fall and winter squash were stored and eaten during the winter months. The hard skin protects the flesh and in turn, allows for longer storage. When placed in a cool, dark, well-ventilated area, they keep for two to three months.

The sweet, creamy, nutty flavor and somewhat dry flesh of buttercup squash makes it the perfect candidate for pies, cakes and breads. They are squatty and round with a dark green skin and orange flesh, compared to the pear-shaped, tan-colored butternut squash with its deep-orange colored flesh.

Butternut squash are a favorite with sweet, creamy, nut-flavored flesh. For easier peeling, use a fork or paring knife to poke holes all over the skin. Microwave for one minute, remove and trim off the top and bottom. Then peel with a good quality peeler or sharp paring knife. Once peeled, stand on end to slice in half and remove seeds. Cut into cubes to bake, steam or sauté.

Appropriately named, acorn squash look like large acorns with deeply ribbed sides. Green or golden in color, these can simply be cut in half, from top to bottom. Remove the seeds and bake with a little brown sugar and butter at 400 degrees for 30 minutes. Other small, sweet varieties to look for include Kabocha and Delicata.

Spaghetti squash is just what it sounds like. Once cooked, the flesh is easily removed with a fork and used as a substitute for spaghetti.

One of the newest members to join the market, The Italian Corner, offers some of the freshest pasta available. The husband and wife team of Oscar Delgado and Nicole Bordoli bring pasta, sauces, raviolis, lasagna and traditional Italian desserts from their kitchen in Petaluma. They also offer a selection of gluten-free items.

*One of the newest members to join the market, The Italian Corner, offers some of the freshest pasta available.*

One of my favorite sauces for fresh pasta combines tomato, onion and roasted butternut squash. It's creamy and delicious and perfect with some of The Italian Corner's pasta.

- Tomato and Butternut Squash Sauce**
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
  - 3 to 4 cups cubed butternut squash (about half, prepared as above)
  - 3 tomatoes, cut in chunks
  - ½ large onion (sliced)
  - 2 cloves garlic skin removed, cut in half
  - ½ teaspoon salt
  - A pinch of dried chili pepper flakes
  - 1 teaspoon dried oregano



BARBARA KOBSAR

Oscar Delgado offers his fresh made pasta ready to take home to add to your favorite homemade sauce.

- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 pound package of The Italian Corner fresh pasta
- Grated parmesan cheese for serving

Mix olive oil with the squash, tomato, onion, garlic and salt in a single layer on a parchment lined baking tray. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes or until vegetables begin to brown. Place cooled vegetables, chili flakes, oregano and pepper in a blender or food processor. (Do NOT add hot vegetables to a sealed blender as heat will cause pressure to build and explode). Blend to desired

consistency, adding a little water or stock if necessary. Cook pasta according to directions. Pour sauce over pasta and mix carefully and thoroughly. Serve with parmesan cheese.

The Orinda Farmers' Market is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Orinda Way in Orinda Village. Visit [www.cccfm.org](http://www.cccfm.org), [facebook.com/orindaFarmersMarket](https://facebook.com/orindaFarmersMarket) or Instagram at [OrindaFarmersMarket](https://instagram.com/OrindaFarmersMarket) or call the market hotline at 925.322.6228.

Barbara Kobsar can be reached at [barbara@cotkitchen.com](mailto:barbara@cotkitchen.com).

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**Garden Nest opens in time for fall Holidays**

A bright new shop – Garden Nest – will open its doors on Oct. 7 in the historic Woosley Building, in the heart of the charming Orinda Village.

Garden Nest Residential Landscape, an award-winning landscape Design-Build company, branches out to add a unique floral and garden shop with nature-based products and beautiful home goods.

This new garden and gift store was the dream seed of owner Jeannie Fitch, a longtime Orinda resident, who comes from a strong retail and project management background with Williams-Sonoma.



Regan Fitch with buyer Kelli Schley

The quaint shop is filled with merchandise personally curated by Jeannie and her daughter Regan Fitch, a professional and talented Bay Area residential stylist.

Regan can't wait to "Spill the Tea" on the latest home goods and oversee the shop's marketing and online sales.

Buyer Kelli Schley, Garden Nest's personal 'plantapedia' with both wholesale and retail horticultural experience, brings her keen eye to plant and flower assortments, gardening accessories and tools.

Jeannie promises "This will not be your typical flower and plant shop."

Indoors and out, the shop has garden-inspired temptations to include hand-selected, seasonally primed outdoor plants, vegetable starts, heirloom seeds and a lush selection of house plants and locally grown fresh flowers.

Visitors will also find an assortment of unique vintage treasures, gifts, essential oils, crystals, books, home textiles and jewelry from local artisans.

The shop offers made-to-order Bloom Bouquets to "grab and go" for commuters heading home to that special someone, plus a wide selection of potted succulents and gorgeous floral centerpieces for your next party.

Just in time for holiday gift-making, Garden Nest will host hands-on classes and workshops, ranging from wreath-making, terrariums, Japanese Kokedama, fresh and dried flower arrangements to working with botanical dyes and essential oils.



Mother-daughter team, Regan and Jeannie Fitch

In addition to the nature-based classes, lifestyle events may delve into the mystical with guided meditations, oracle readings and music circles.

"My intention is to bring people back to appreciating nature and the simple moments in life," said Jeannie. "Come hang out with us under the mulberry tree and get a little dirt under your nails. We invite you to unleash your creativity and follow your curiosity."

**garden nest**  
105 Orinda Way, Orinda  
925.546.0118



MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

# Notorious RBK: Orinda's Own Social Justice/Climate Warrior

By KATHY CORDOVA  
Executive Editor

Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (aka RBK, in a nod to her admiration for the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg) represents Orinda as part of the 16th District in the California State Assembly. Read on to learn about Bauer-Kahan, her job, her family and her inspirations.

**How long have you lived in Orinda and what brought you here?**

We moved here from Oakland in 2011 when I was pregnant with our second child. My husband went to Cal and he said everybody he met from Lam-orinda was so kind and wonderful, so we chose to move here and raise our kids.

**What are your favorite things about Orinda?**

I love the community. It's been an amazing place to have my kids grow up. We have a village here.

**Is serving in the State Assembly a full-time job?**

Yes. I have two full-time jobs. Mom and assemblymember.

**You commute to Sacramento every day during the eight months the assembly is in session. How do you do it?**

I have an amazing partner. My husband Darren is incredibly supportive of me serving our community. Our village has been critically important, too. I do my best to make sure I'm home for dinner and to tuck my kids in at night.

**Why did you want to run for State Assembly?**

Our kids. We have two boys and a girl, ages 13, 11 and 9. I really want to ensure they inherit a planet at least as good as the one we inherited. I was an environmental lawyer and I'm a huge environmentalist. I knew somebody had to continue the fight to save our planet.

**You are a granddaughter of refugees who escaped the Holocaust. How did this affect your desire to serve?**

My grandparents were 18 when they came to the United States. They were very clear-eyed that this country gave us life in the most tangible way possible. If they had not been able to come here they would have died in the Holocaust. They taught me we owe this country everything we have, including our lives.

**What issues are particularly important to you and why?**

The environment, womens' and reproductive rights have been front and center. Also, education and gun violence prevention.

**What is the makeup of your district in terms of Republicans vs Democrats?**

I don't know. Independent voters are a growing part of the electorate. It's the most highly educated, with the most advanced degrees district in the state. [Our constituents] tend to be huge supporters of the environment, LGBTQ+ and reproductive rights, while being very fiscally conservative.

**You're a Democrat. In 2018, you narrowly**



COURTESY OF THE OFFICE OF ASSEMBLYMEMBER REBECCA BAUER-KAHAN  
Rebecca Bauer-Kahan addressing a gathering at National Gun Violence Awareness Day on the grounds of the state Capitol in Sacramento, California on May 31.

**defeated Republican incumbent Catharine Baker. How did you do it?**

I think (the constituents) felt comfortable with a moderate Republican when she was elected in 2014. We thought reproductive and LGBTQ+ rights were safe, and we had a federal government which was going to hold the line on climate change. When that shifted, the district prioritized some of those issues.

**Who is your hero?**

Ruth Bader Ginsburg. From her time as a lawyer to serving on the court, hers was some of the most brilliant work in the legal field. She started with gender equity cases representing men, because at the time, she thought that would be successful. I think sometimes we have to achieve our goals in the least expected ways.

**Who inspires you now?**

There are so many young people becoming activists, especially in the area of climate. Watching them, even before they can vote, stand up and use their voices and want to learn about government and how they can make change, is incredible. We have a problem today where not enough people are engaged. I see a shift in this generation that is so amazing and makes

me want to show up every day and do the work they need us to do.

**What's your best experience serving in the assembly?**

A year ago I co-authored and got Assembly Bill 988 passed into law, which created an alternative to 911 when people are in a mental health crisis. If you are struggling with suicide ideation or you're in a mental crisis, you can call 988 instead of 911 and you can get mental health officials instead of law enforcement.

**Do you have political ambitions beyond your current position?**

I don't. I love my job. I can do it for seven and half more years. (Twelve years is the term limit.)

**Then, what will you do?**

It's funny. I didn't expect to ever do this. I had no ambition to be a politician or an elected official. At the moment I decided to run I decided it was the best use of my talents and skills for the community and I don't know what that will be when I'm done with this.

Kathy Cordova can be reached at cordova@theorindanews.com.

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