

THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis
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12 Issues Annually
December 2012

Lots of Singing and Dancing to be Had This Holiday Season



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WomenSing



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Contra Costa Children's Chorus



SALLY HOGARTY

Orinda Ballet



SALLY HOGARTY

Hospice Tree Lighting

Members of **WomenSing** will bring holiday cheer to audiences at two concerts in December (see page 10) while the **Contra Costa Children's Chorus** presents a December 7 concert (see page 17). **Orinda Ballet's** Patricia Tomlinson and Kendall Sparks join their students for a production of *A Sweet Dream Nutcracker* on December 7 - 9 (see page 17). Choirs from Orinda's elementary schools will entertain at the annual **Hospice Tree Lighting** on December 1 (see page 17). Other entertainment not pictures includes Miramonte High School's **Instrumental Music Winter Concert** on December 13 and **Choral Winter concert** on December 19 (see page 17).

Status of Orinda's Major Residential Developments

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

As 2012 draws to a close, Orinda's six residential developments gain ground with some in the approval stage, others breaking ground, and one seeing the first residents move in. The following gives information and the status of each. Upon completion, each development will bring increased tax dollars, increased traffic, and new residents to Orinda.

Orinda Oaks

Located on Stein Way between Oak Road and Knickerbocker Lane, this 23-acre subdivision is being developed by Signature Development Group Inc. Twelve homes are proposed for the site, which, according to the developer, will "step down" the hillside to minimize visual height and bulk. A total of six home designs ranging in size from 4,214 - 4,923 sq. feet will be available.

The development was first considered at the June 26, 2012 Planning Commission meeting.

Grading is currently underway on the project with construction scheduled for this winter.

Lavenida Lane

Located southwest of Moraga Way at the intersection of Lavenida Lane and Donna Maria Way, this 12.2-acre subdivision will add 13 homes to the area. Developed by the Bruzzone family, this project has had its share of controversy. Originally approved by the Planning Commission on January 24, 2012, a group of neighbors filed an appeal



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DAHLIN GROUP

The design for the senior housing being developed at the old library site on Irwin Way recently won the Gold Nugget Grand Award for Best Senior Housing Community in development.

citing "flawed noticing and ill-conceived timing of hearing" as well as safety concerns during construction. It came to the City Council on March 6 where the council remanded the project back to the Planning Commission. The commission approved it on April 12. But a second appeal brought the project back to the City Council who approved the tentative subdivision map on June 5, 2012.

The developer anticipates beginning remedial grading and infrastructure improvements in 2013.

J&J Ranch

Also intersecting with Donna Maria Way, J & J Ranch is in the Del Rey neighborhood on a hill backing up to the Moraga Country Club. This portion of Donna Maria Way

is accessed from El Camino Moraga. J & J Ranch is named after Joaquin Moraga [SEE HOUSING page 14]

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ORINDA LIBRARY GALLERY

Streets of Old Jerusalem, Origami, Painting With Fabric, and Cartoons at Library Gallery

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Benjamin Franklin said, "The Constitution only guarantees the American people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself." This month the Library Gallery is where you can! George Wahbeh's oil paintings, Alex Meckes' origami, Roland Nunn's wool tapestries, and Alexander Walchek's wry cartoons will delight and uplift viewers during the holiday season. Please join them at the artist reception on Sunday, December 2, from 2-4 p.m. where light refreshments will be served.

George Wahbeh of Walnut Creek is in love with Old City Jerusalem, his place of birth. His 10 plus works are infused with the peace and beauty he experiences while painting the streets he often visits. Wahbeh will also display a map of the Old City with numbers on the map corresponding to each painting depicting his favorite street scenes. A peaceful man, he paints the Holy Land in spring and summer with beautiful flowers as seen from Mount Olive and Villa Della Rosa, where people like to promenade

under the arches. "I started painting in oils when I was 15, but my education and civil engineering career got in the way; now that I am semi-retired, I have time to paint again." Wahbeh lived in Europe for 20 years and visited museums and galleries, soaking up beautiful art whenever he could. Works he is showing include *Street in the Armenian Quarter*, 24" x 36," and *Jerusalem Old City Seen From Mount of Olives*, 36" x 24"; both are *giclée* prints made from original oils. Wahbeh hopes people who view his paintings discover something that triggers them to engage with the art and, perhaps, pursue creating something themselves. Come and see the Old City of Jerusalem through his eyes and contemplate its ancient beauty.

Alex Meckes, age 9, is a fourth grader at Wagner Ranch School in Orinda and is showing 40 origami pieces. He got started when he randomly picked out a book on origami in the school library, took it home and really liked it. "I like to do geometry with my origami because it connects with math and makes math kind of more fun." Meckes has a large collection of books with origami designs including *Origami To*



Nine-year-old Alex Meckes with his origami piece entitled "Flower Power."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

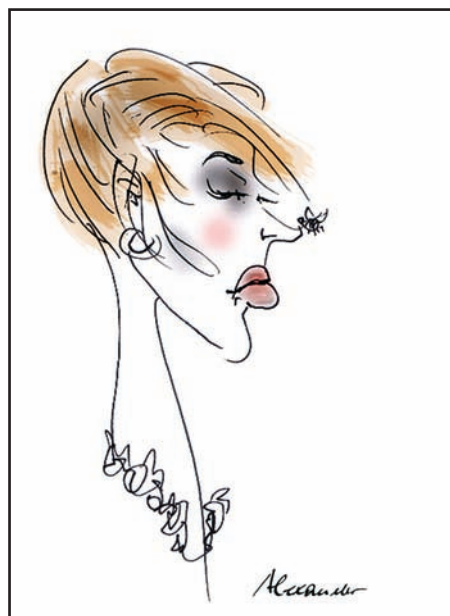
Astonish and Amuse and *Origami Tessellations*. To create his pieces, he looks through origami design books, sees what appeals to him, chooses his paper, and starts folding. Some take two minutes, others an hour and a half, and complicated ones can take days. So viewers can understand the process, he will display all the steps that go into making the pieces. Some have hundreds of steps, others are modular (which then have to be put together) and some are simple, like cranes. Meckes hopes that when people see his origami they will make the connection between art and math, geometry and origami. *Flower Tower*, 7.5" x 7.5," designed by Chris Palmer, is a fractal; *Square Weave Tessellation*, 7" x 7," designed by Eric Gjerde, is shown both backlit and plain.

Roland Nunn of Orinda has been creating

traditional hooked rugs (or tapestries) for 23 years using wool fabric. According to Christopher and Suzanne Sharp, founders of The Rug Company and Banners of Persuasion, an art commissioning organization in the U.K., "... there is little difference between a rug and a tapestry, save that the latter is wall-hung" (see www.bannersofpersuasion.com). Nunn obtains his wool in bolts from a New Hampshire manufacturer, Dorr Mills. He dyes in swatches, which means he creates eight different values from very dark to light for each color he uses; only five percent of rug hookers do it this way. Nunn says, "Most people don't realize you can create a precise picture of near photographic quality just from wool strips; I want people to experience the media. I call it 'painting with fabric.'" Works include *Lake Shore*, 35" x 38"; *Pasture*, 22" x 30"; and *Bighorns*, 24" x 32"; all made with wool, cloth and dye. His rugs have been chosen in the national *Rug Hooker Magazine's* contests where over 200 entries are considered. Scrapbooks document the over 50 rugs he has created; four scrapbooks will be on display at the artist reception along with dye and wool samples. A volunteer will be demonstrating, and Nunn invites anyone to bring along what they are working on to observe this practical demonstration by an experienced rug hooker. Nunn is a member of the McGowan Guild and is a past treasurer and president of the Peninsula Rugmaker's Guild in San Jose, now serving as their secretary and auditor.

Alexander Walchek of Lafayette has been creating line drawings/cartoons for 85 years; he is now 89. Growing up in Germany, he was influenced by Wilhelm Busch (*Max & Moritz*) and Ironicus, the

[SEE GALLERY page 16]



"Pesky Fly," a 8.4" x 11" digital print of Alexander Walchek's pen and ink drawing will be among his many works at the Library Gallery in December.

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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From OA Board Member

Volunteering is Great Fun!



Cindy Powell

Some of the best fun to be had in this town is in the guise of “volunteering.” Regular people, like you, your neighbors, the kids in our schools, and long-time residents are interested in making Orinda a better community.

The schools seem to be a good place to begin. Playing with my kids through Glorietta’s Fun Fest and Wagner Ranch’s Round Up connected me with other parents. Some parents at Sleepy Hollow and Del Rey still attend their Pumpkin Patch events, even though their kids are long gone. Any parent that has volunteered at Orinda Intermediate School (OIS) Bulldog Kennel will agree they were part of a frantic, food service synchronized dance. The best part was the education we received about current students and teachers and what was happening up at the high school, via “the grapevine.”

OIS also has the parent-run Others First program to offer monthly volunteer activities to the middle school students. At Miramonte, the students produce their own volunteer events. The theatre and music students recently produced Performers For Progress, a variety showcase open to anyone, and well worth the ticket price.

I have helped with costumes at a few Miramonte Musicals (lucky for me, no experience required) and had fun watching the progression unfold. Parents of young attendees were surprised that a professional performance was held in a nice theatre here in our town! This is happening at all of our schools. Parents produce, costume and choreograph hundreds of kids in wonderful shows. Go see a show in your neighborhood. Great show in a local venue, who knew? Volunteers do!

Most of these events are supplemented by

the Educational Foundation of Orinda and Orinda Arts Council (OAC) funding, whose members are more volunteers helping Orinda. The OAC also presents Orinda Idol, an amazing music showcase for K-12, and oversees the Orinda Library Art Gallery’s monthly exhibits. Take a few minutes to enjoy the art, and contact OAC to volunteer to keep art related gifts in our town.

And, enjoy our beautiful library. The Friends of the Library built our original library in the 1950s and own our current library. Their monthly book sales and bookstore supply funds for new books and programs. Also downstairs in the library building is the Orinda Historical Society, which tells our city’s story. Enjoy the fun display window or peek inside for some Orinda gifts (love the Orinda blanket!) and consider helping preserve our history for a few hours per month. And next door is the Chamber of Commerce, which presents events like Comedy Night and Dine Around Town that sell out for a reason...FUN!

Don’t miss the Orinda Association office. You may know us best for the 4th of July activities. The Volunteer Pick Up band is the oldest in the country. Volunteers make this party happen!! The parade had the most spectators ever this year, and we are looking forward to our 30th parade anniversary in 2013. Join us and make it really memorable.

OA also created and coordinates the Seniors Around Town program. You can volunteer to drive a few hours per month or come by our Volunteer Center and see what’s new. Next month, we award our Volunteer of the Year and William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental awards. In October we held City Council and School Board election forums to keep Orinda informed. Lucky me, I get to meet the real movers and shakers in this town. Join me, and move and shake.

Is there something YOU are interested in or would you like to know more? Follow us in the Orinda News, and like over 80 percent of Orinda residents, keep current of the opportunities to participate in upcoming events. My husband, Jonathan, jokes about another meeting to “Save Orinda” but honestly...who’s having more fun?

**The Orinda Association
Next Meeting
December 10 at 7:15 p.m.
May Room
Plaza Level of Library**

Nominations for Volunteer of the Year Nears Deadline



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Orinda Arts Council (shown above) won Volunteer of the Year in 2010. The Orinda Association is currently accepting nominations for the 2012 Volunteer of the Year and the 2012 William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award. If you know someone who volunteers to make Orinda a better place or someone who helps the environment, send in your nominations by December 5. A gala awards dinner on January 27 will honor the recipients. Nomination forms can be downloaded at www.orindaassociation.org or forms can be picked up at the office in the plaza level of the Orinda Library. For more information, call 254-0800.

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Help the EFO and Yourself

The Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO) has several ways residents can help support local schools. On November 30 and December 1, Europa Restaurant and Deli will donate 20 percent of its sales on those days to EFO. You can also purchase sports equipment and clothing at Walnut Creek’s Sports Basement and raise money for EFO at the same time. Just mention EFO at checkout and you’ll get an automatic 10 percent discount off your purchase with an additional 5 percent going to EFO. In addition, if you mention EFO on December 22 or 23, Sports Basement will give 10 percent to EFO.



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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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Did You Know That...

The Orinda Association has published *The Orinda News* since 1986?



Maggie Sharpe is calendar editor and sometime contributor to *The Orinda News* news team. She grew up in Ireland and graduated from Trinity College in Dublin. She says working with editor Sally Hogarty is the best part of the job. “Sally brings fun and a great news and literary ethic to this job,” says Sharpe. “It’s the reason I work for the paper.”



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The Orinda News Welcomes New Interns

Each year, Canyon Elementary School offers internships to students in grades 6-8th. *The Orinda News* has participated in the program for the past several years. The following are brief bios written by and about our current interns, Zarah Saporito and Khyber Pratt.



Khyber Pratt

Khyber Pratt is a 7th grade student at Canyon School. He is doing an internship at *The Orinda News*. When asked why he wanted to do this internship, he answered, "I enjoy journalism and all of its features." Pratt jumps his dirt bike in his spare time and his favorite subject is history.

— Zarah Saporito, Intern



Zarah Saporito

Zarah Saporito is in 6th grade at Canyon School. She chose *The Orinda News* internship because, "I enjoy taking photos, and I like writing so this is the perfect internship for me." Her favorite part is taking photos and interviewing people. "This internship is great, and I will have lots of fun here."

— Khyber Pratt, Intern

Letters to the Editor

What's the Skinny?

How much money did Gina Khan Salon pay *The Orinda News* to run an ad on the first page of your November 2012 issue with an anorexic model? Must have been a lot. Hope the teenage girls in our community are smart enough not to be lured by such a promotion.

— Nadine Klement

Profiling. Really?

I got a kick out of Richard Hurley's letter to your publication last month alleging racial profiling by the Orinda Police Department at 7 a.m. on the Hurley's jaunt through Orinda. If this involved a couple of African American male teenagers, maybe, but why would the OPD want to profile a retired couple from Rossmoor? The only "shameful incident" is that the Hurley's would insult the OPD and Orinda City Council.

— Matt Davis

Replacement of MOFD Station 43

MOFD needs to think twice about spending \$3 million to replace Station 43 (St. Stephens/Charles Hill) as reported in last month's *Orinda News*.

1) If Station 43 truly has seismic issues, why has MOFD not addressed these in the 15 years the district has been in existence? At the time of formation, Orinda taxpayers started paying a new parcel tax, 1/3 of which was to be used to address seismic problems. In 15 years, \$8.1 million of parcel tax has been collected. \$2.7 million should have gone to seismic repairs. To

date, \$400,000 has been spent on seismic repairs. Now, when the district is in financial crisis, they are not just going to fix the seismic issues but replace the entire station.

2) The rebuilding of Station 43 will do nothing to improve service to Orinda residents. Same station; same location; same response times. The citizens task force report indicates that almost 40 percent of responses to time-critical emergencies (80 percent medical) do not arrive within the industry-standard six minutes. (www.OrindaTaskForce.org – Table III-4) If MOFD has an extra \$3 million, shouldn't an effort be made to bring service response times up to standards as opposed to building an architecturally pleasing building?

3) MOFD is running an \$800,000 deficit this year. Their last audited financial statement (June 2011) showed them with \$54 million of net liabilities including all of the liabilities "hidden" in the footnotes. In their current year statement, pension liabilities will increase by another \$6 million. Two years from now a new methodology for determining pension liabilities will be put into effect which will increase their net liabilities by an additional \$100 million.

Does MOFD have \$3 million to build a new fire station and will that benefit Orinda? Next month, two new Orinda representatives will be seated on the MOFD Board. I hope they will take a hard look at this issue.

— Steve Cohn

Potential Conflict Of Interest At City Hall

A potentially serious conflict of interest exists with Orinda City Council member, Victoria Smith.



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Smith a candidate for re-election to the council in 2008 and 2012 is – and has been for many years – a member of the board of directors of the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority, a government body that sets the rates for garbage pick-up in Orinda and other cities. (Also on the board is Steve Glazer, another member of the Orinda City Council.)

Since February 2008, garbage pick-up rates in Orinda have gone up from \$66 per

three months to the current rate of \$94.80. This is a 44 percent increase in just over four years.

In 2008, Smith received political contributions from Orinda's garbage-collection company and from the labor union that represents the garbage workers.

In 2012, Smith received money from Sil Garventa, a member of the family that owns Concord Disposal Services (*Contra Costa* [SEE LETTERS page 16])

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

Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, fax them to 254-8312, or email to news@orindaassociation.org. Letters to the Editor for the January issue are due December 5, 2012.

For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 or email to jill@aspenconsult.net. The deadline for the February issue is December 20, 2012.

FILM FESTIVAL / POLICE BLOTTER

California Independent Film Festival

By DAVID DIERKS
Assistant Editor

The California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF) had its 15th annual showing in November. In addition to showcasing over 60 films (a variety of foreign films, documentaries, short films, and children's programs), the festival also presented its Slate Awards to recognize the best of the festival. Films were shown at the Rheem Theatre in Moraga as well as the Orinda Theatre. CAIFF also hosted Actor Studio format conversations with its Slate Award honorees, Connie Stevens and Dawn Wells.

Connie Stevens, best known for her roles in television and film, received the Slate 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award. "Ms. Stevens career has spanned over 50 years in motion pictures, television, Broadway, as well as being an international recording artist and, most recently, a major force in the cosmetic industry. A teen idol in the '60s, Ms. Stevens is best known for her role as Cricket Blake in the hit detective series *Hawaiian Eye*," said CAIFF publicist Stephanie Kusinski.

Dawn Wells, best known as Mary Ann on *Gilligan's Island*, received the Slate 2012 Diamond Award, which is given to a woman for her outstanding contributions to the entertainment industry. "In addition to starring in over 150 television performances, six motion picture films and 50 theatrical performances, Ms. Wells is also a producer, author, journalist, motivational speaker, entrepreneur, teacher and chairwoman of the Terry Lee Wells Foundation, which helps women and children in northern Nevada," said Kusinski.

The Slate Award winners were:

- Best Picture Drama: *Lore*



DAVID DIERKS
Derek Zemrak, president and founder of CAIFF Association and actress Dawn Wells.



JILL GELSTER
Connie Stevens at the CAIFF Slate Award's reception.

- Best Picture Comedy: *One Small Hitch*
- Best Director: Cate Shortland – *Lore*
- Best Actress: Saskia Rosendahl – *Lore*
- Best Actor: Daniel Auteuil – *Well Digger's Daughter*
- Best Short: *Friend Request Pending*
- Best Student Film: *Good Night*
- Best Mini Short: *Only Child*
- Best Documentary Feature: *Scarred Lands & Wounded Lives – The Environmental Footprint of War*
- Best Documentary Short: *Mr. Christmas*
- Best Cinematography: *Well Digger's Daughter*
- Best Music: *Well Digger's Daughter*
- Best Animation: *The Boy in the Bubble*
- Best Screenplay: *Halfway Home* – David Schroeder

Local resident Julie Rubio had a short featured during the Bay Area Showcase of Shorts segment of the festival. Rubio said, "We sent in our film late but to our surprise and shock they loved it and invited us to showcase it!" Rubio and her team, Blake Wellen, Elijah Stavena (age 16), and Jack Niehaus (age 15) were on hand to discuss the film after it was shown. *Everything is Temporary* is "about a 36,000 square foot warehouse that's over in Berkeley that is being called the Sistine Chapel of Graffiti Art. The owner of the building allowed these artists to come in to paint their work. Now it's been sandblasted and painted over. This film has to do with what we value in the art world, what our society values and rates as art, and how we can just paint over something because we don't value it," said

[SEE CAIFF page 6]

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POLICE BLOTTER

October 2012

False Residential Alarms: Officers responded to 91 false alarm calls throughout the city.

Burglary – Auto: 3 incidents were reported on Brookwood Rd., Camino Encinas, and Hwy. 24 at Wilder.

Burglary – Commercial: 3 incidents were reported on Moraga Way (2) and Orinda Way.

Burglary – Residential: 1 incident was reported on Barbara Rd.

Petty Theft – From Vehicle: 1 incident was reported at Theatre Square.

Stolen Vehicle: 4 vehicles were stolen from Bryant Way, Moraga Way, Camino Encinas, and Spring Court.

Arrests

Burglary - Commercial: 1 arrest was made on Moraga Way.

Domestic Violence: 1 arrest was made.

Driving Under the Influence –

MISD: 1 arrest was made on Ivy Dr./Moraga Way.

Driving Under the Influence – MISD < .08: 2 arrests were made on El Nido Ranch Rd./ St. Stephens Dr.

Drunk in Public: 1 arrest was made on Glorietta Blvd./Moraga Way.

Interfering with a Public Officer: 1 arrest was made on Ardor Dr./Loma Linda Ct.

Juvenile Alcohol Related Arrests: 1 arrest was made.

Possession of Dangerous Drugs: 1 arrest was made on Moraga Way.

Warrant Arrest: 4 arrests were made on Camino Sobrante/El Ribero, Camino Encinas/Camino Pablo, Glorietta Blvd./Rheem Bl. and Camino Pablo.

Orinda BART Station

Stolen Vehicle: 1 vehicle reported.

– Compiled by Jeanette Irving, Orinda Police Department

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THE REEL LESS TRAVELED
ON A SLOW NEWS DAY



Tom Westlake

There is a very real sense of irony present this month. As I have mentioned in the past, the season of celebration, beginning in October, is usually associated with plenty, over abundance and excess. By the time you read this, *James Bond*, *Anna Karenina* and *Wreck-It Ralph* will have been released upon the world and, in a very short amount of time, we will also be inundated with hobbits, zombies, and too many others to mention. Indeed, December is

when the studios open up the floodgates, all vying for your attention, money and (to those that belong to Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences) your Oscar vote.

It can become overwhelming and, unless you have an unending degree of patience, time and money, it is a rare individual that will be able to see everything. Even I, who love film, have already resigned myself to the sorry fact that I'll probably have to wait for some films to be released on DVD.

The California Independent Film Festival's Derek Zemrak and Efi Lubliner and JoAlice Canterbury, the dynamic duo that is the International Film Showcase, knowing they cannot stem the tide of holiday blockbusters are content (mostly!) to let the studios hold sway and take a break from their enticing independent gems. But, rest assured, this is a temporary deficit, and it won't be long until the International Film Showcase returns.

But, there are still a few quirky morsels to be had. To start with, the fine folk involved with the Film Classics Series and the Moraga Movers have joined forces to present *The Bishop's Wife*. Although it doesn't have the emotional punch of *It's a Wonderful Life* or the historical significance of any one of the many adaptations of *A Christmas Carol*, it is still a film to seek out. Frankly, any film with Cary Grant and David Niven should be reason enough, but there's also something to be said about the theme of the

film. Without giving too much away, there's just as much value to gifts coming from unexpected sources, especially when you have the lovely Loretta Young as one of the recipients. It will be showing on December 15 at 7 p.m. and again on December 19 at 4 p.m. For further information and tickets, visit www.lamorindatheatres.com or call 925-388-0752.

The other film of note (and by note, please be aware that I'm being extremely liberal here) will take place on December 21 as *Vanessa, the Queen of the Rheem*, winds up the year with another brain-deteriorating flick. This time it's *Santa Claus Conquers the Martians* (1964). In truth, it would seem that even Vanessa has standards as she herself describes it as a "movie that insults the intelligence of a moron not to mention the kiddie audience it's aimed at." Plodding along in the same vein as *Mars Need Women*, the story this time involves the corrupting influence of television on youth...specifically Martian youth. To say more would strain credulity. If this film has any other redeeming features, it might be that this was Pia Zadora's film debut...and look how well that turned out! Regardless, this travesty will screen at the Rheem on December 21 at 9 p.m.

Irony opened up this column and irony will close it. What else would you call it when I urge you to stay in the dark, where the magic lies, during the Season of Light?

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◆ CAIFF from page 5

Rubio.

Rubio directed the short and Stavena, Wellen and Niehaus did the cinematography. "We used a skateboard to skate through the place with the camera," said Stavena. "The great thing is it's a building that you would never think anything about. It's basically a warehouse on the outside, but when you walk in, it's a museum," added Wellen. "We wanted to document it's existence before it was painted over. It's very urban - it's very scary in there. The light only comes through from the back of the building half of the day. You can't go in in the morning and you can't go at night. It's really sad - it was a really beautiful space," said Rubio.

For more information, visit www.Caiff.org.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Elijah Stavena filming *Everything is Temporary*.

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REALTOR / CAR TIME

Prudential California Realty Names David Pierce As Head Of Fine Homes Division

By GINNY CAIN
Contributing Writer

David Pierce, a longtime real estate professional, has been named vice president of Prudential's fine homes division. In his new position, Pierce will be responsible for working with the company's Fine Home Specialists to promote luxury and high-end residential real estate properties.

"Buyers and sellers of luxury residential properties and estates have high expectations of the professionals they choose to represent them," said Pierce. "They want and deserve to work with accomplished individuals who represent affluent clients and specialize in marketing upper-tier properties – professionals who are knowledgeable, well-connected and actively involved in the communities they serve. I take great pride in being able to lead this effort."

Pierce has been in the real estate industry since 1987 and has been a top producing real estate agent since his second year in the business. He has been with Prudential California Realty since 1994, and was inducted into the President's Circle for top production the same year. Pierce, who lives in Orinda with his wife, Ellen, is very active in his community having been the president of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, as well as a director for the Contra Costa Association of Realtors.

Pierce's new responsibilities include ensuring that the fine homes international brand is represented and visible in the nearly 20 markets in which Prudential California Realty operates, as well as managing and providing intellectual and marketing support to the approximately 50 credentialed fine homes international specialists within Prudential California Realty. In



David Pierce

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

addition, the position assists the president with monitoring the high-end brokerage competition and advising on ways to promote the company's brand and improve its relative competitive position.

Bereavement Services

Hospice of the East Bay offers a variety of support groups and workshops for adults, children and teens experiencing grief after the death of a loved one, including a cherished pet. Classes are offered at locations in Pleasant Hill, Brentwood and Walnut Creek.

Bereavement Services are provided free of charge to all community members in need, however, donations are greatly appreciated. For a complete listing of services available, go to www.hospiceeastbay.org.

CAR TIME

What is the Real Environmental Impact of Electric Cars?

By JOHN VANEK



According to a recent study, electric cars, which are often perceived to have much less of an environmental impact than conventional fossil fuel-powered cars, do in fact present some serious environmental concerns over their lifetime, especially due to the materials and methods used during their production. Compared to conventional vehicles, which normally experience 10 percent of their life-cycle global warming potential (GWP) during the production phase, electric vehicles experience nearly 50 percent of their lifetime GWP potential during that same phase. Manufacturing electric engines and batteries, which contain heavy metals that produce toxic by products, is far more environmentally exhaustive than producing conventional vehicle components. Clearly, the lower emissions produced by electric cars make up for the high level of global warming potential generated up front, but, according to the study, not enough to declare them significantly more environmentally

friendly than conventional vehicles. In fact, diesel-powered conventional vehicles were shown in some cases to actually have a lower lifetime environmental impact than electric cars.

The study discusses the concept of "problem-shifting," which it argues applies to electric vehicles because they reduce emissions on the road while failing to reduce levels at the factory stage, resulting in only a slight reduction in total emissions generated. In addition, the fact that electric engines and batteries contain higher levels of scarce metals means that the potential for widespread metal depletion is a legitimate concern as well.

The study, entitled, "Comparative Environmental Life Cycle Assessment of Conventional and Electric Vehicles," was published on October 4 in the *Journal of Industrial Ecology*.

Editor's Note: Vanek utilized the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association News as a source.

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New Trainer and Tae Bo® Instructor at Living Lean

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

From an early age, exercise has played a big role in Anya Litvinova's life. "As a young child, I swam competitively throughout high school, as well as danced ballroom dancing at a national level. During my first year of college, I partook in my first Tae Bo® Fitness Class, which changed my life."

Litvinova received her Tae Bo® Fitness instructor and personal trainer certifications and has taught in over eight gyms in the Bay Area as well as been featured in Tae Bo® Fitness DVDs. She also has a bachelor's degree in exercise and sports science from the University of San Francisco.

She will be teaching a special 4-week series for Living Lean. "Tae Bo® Fitness is a program that combines the best of a variety of different exercise disciplines to provide an overall workout," says Litvinova. "It is



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Anya Litvinova teaches a 4-week series in Tae Bo® Fitness.

the combination of self-awareness and control of martial arts, the focus and strength of boxing, and the grace and rhythm of dance."

Everyday Changes

Glitz, Glamour and Hollywood Retro for Holiday Looks That Sparkle

Bonnie Waters



Welcome to winter! Did you know that fashion never takes a holiday even when it is gloomy, rainy and grey outside? This holiday sparkle, glitz, romance and glamour are the fashion solution. Sequins and metallics are perfect for those who like to turn heads the minute they take off their warm winter coat. Traditional winter evening fashion colors are usually dark, however, this year is an exception. Featured looks for Holiday 2012 are romantic with feminine colors like pastels, white and cream. Evening attire this season has definitely gone retro with a nod to "old Hollywood." When you think of your favorite Hollywood glamour icons of the '40s and '50s, you no doubt think of curves and waves. The current version of this retro look is timeless and understatedly sexy. This year, it is definitely about slender silhouettes and softly draping fabric that make any holiday fashion glam. Ornate, elegant jewelry, particularly diamonds and pearls, fit with this style and will match a variety of 2012 holiday dresses.

Retro hair fashions are also the rage.

Finger waves are just as striking now as they were in the "old Hollywood days" and make us think of Marilyn Monroe with her white dress billowing. And don't forget sexy bangs! We loved them on Audrey Hepburn in "Roman Holiday," and these cropped bangs are back into style with celebrities like Michelle Williams, Ginnifer Goodwin, and Penelope Cruz wearing them so well. If you aren't up to making bangs a permanent commitment, we have the perfect solution at Changes. We offer Tress Couture's bang accessories, which can be color matched to your hair and clipped in to provide bangs "on demand." Another retro look revisited is the updated side ponytail with a teased crown. Again Tress Couture comes to the rescue with clip-in hair providing the bump for effortless volume at the crown. Clip-in color hairpieces can also provide temporary color variations from ombre to outrageous!

Play up that ritzy-glitz retro mood with metallic smoky eyes. The eyes can offer a subtle wink to the past with a "kitten" ef-

[SEE RETRO page 10]

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SANDRA TOM'S SUCCESS STORY

Sandra Tom of Orinda tells her Living Lean story in her own words,

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Being lean again was my goal. I didn't realize that I could achieve that by building a lot more muscle. I didn't expect to become so much stronger.

As I told Sheena, I'm in the best shape of my life, thanks to how I've learned to eat and workout from Living Lean."

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by Sheena

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The elbow should be bent and the palm facing down, making contact with the knuckle part of the glove.

Try to keep the elbow parallel to the shoulder.

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

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HOLIDAY GIVING

Create a Circle of Giving This Holiday Season

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

No matter what form your holiday gift giving takes, why not consider something different this year? It's not just about spending dollars in local stores, although it is always a good idea to keep our local economy vibrant. You can create a circle of giving by reflecting on all the people and organizations you interact with all year long



Sweet Dreams toy store offers a wide selection of fun gifts.

and what would fill a need for them. Know a senior? Contribute to **Seniors Around Town** in their name (925-402-4506) or buy them a gift certificate at a local restaurant or café. Your gift creates a circle back to those in our community. Your place of worship or the organization you belong to might need goods or services in order to function better – call them and ask! Then buy locally. Do your kids have an interest in sports, art, math, acting, music, animals? Gifts in their area of interest in the form of toys or games are appreciated, of course, but how about a **Cal Shakes** summer program for kids (510-548-3422 or www.calshakes.org)? What about a gift certificate you create which allows your child to choose their own class at **Orinda Parks & Rec**? Call or stop by the Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, 254-2445, for suggestions. Perhaps you know an adult who has always wanted to learn how to paint or draw – ditto!

Businesses like **The Republic of Cake** model a circle of giving. They donate 10 percent of their revenue from *Sam's Very Messy Chocolate Cupcake* (named after co-owner Peter McNiff's special needs son) to nonprofits that provide assistance for children in need. Since the business opened in 2009, over \$18,000 has been con-

tributed to nonprofits. A different organization is chosen each month with Seattle's Children's Hospital being the December recipient. Stop by to try the other December cupcakes: hot chocolate – peppermint butter cream with a homemade marshmallow drizzled with chocolate; gingerbread with a Meyer lemon cream cheese frosting; eggnog and two savory cupcakes - Brussel sprouts with brown butter and potato with sour cream and chives. Contact them at 254-3900 or stop by Theatre Square, #151 for a sample.

Between **Orinda Books** and **Canetti's Bookstore**, you are spoiled for choices. Popular titles for kids, according to Jeff Koren, owner of Canetti's, include *Ivy and Bean* series by Annie Barrow; *Big Nate* series by Lincoln Peirce; *Dork Diaries* series by Rachel Russell and, of course, old favorites by Shel Silverstein and Roald Dahl. For older kids, consider the *Mackenzie Blue* series by Tina Wells and *Keeping the Moon* by Sarah Dessen. Lynette Perkins at Orinda Books recommends the new John Grisham, *The Racketeer*; Jo Nesbo's *Phantom*, *The Light Between Oceans* by M. L. Stedman; *The Art Forger* by B. A. Shapiro and, *The Richard Burton Diaries*, edited by Chris Williams. Contact Orinda Books at 276 Village Square, 254-7606, www.orindabooks.com and Canetti's Bookstore at 39 Moraga Way, 258-9076. Both bookstores have a wide variety of books including book club choices, fiction and nonfiction.

It would take an entire column to list all the fascinating toys, games and what-not



McDonnell Nursery has lots of items for gift giving or to decorate your own home this holiday season.



ZARAH SAPORITO

Sam's Very Messy Chocolate Cupcake from Republic of Cake not only gives great taste to the buyer, 10 percent of every sale goes to a nonprofit organization that helps children in need.

available at **Sweet Dreams**, Theatre Square #107, 254-6672. Richard Tiscareno says that their most popular gift overall is the IR UFO helicopter with handheld remote (ages 6 and up), the demo version of which has been handled by 50+ kids in the store and is still going strong. While you are learning to fly this little bot, keep in mind it comes with some spare parts. He also recommends the Spot It travel games (age 7 to adult) to keep everyone occupied while en route. Whimsy puzzles have a new twist – the pieces are

different animal shapes such as elephants, horses, etc. (age 8 and up). For boys, the Nurf Fire Vision provides illuminated glasses so they can play catch night and day; the Cyberfire Football set has a softer ball for younger boys. For girls, Groovy Girls dolls and accessories are popular as well as the classic Breyer horse series and accessories.

Finally, **McDonnell Nursery** is ready to help you create just the right ambiance in [SEE GIFTS page 15]

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

Guild Luncheon Features Chamber Choir



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Saint Mary's College (SMC) Chamber Choir will provide the entertainment for the SMC Guild's Merry Christmas Luncheon on Thursday, December 6. The group will perform a Christmas medley incorporating a wide range of musical styles including classical, jazz and Broadway show tunes. Sharon Lee Kim will accompany the group as well as play during the luncheon.

The social hour begins at 11 a.m. with lunch at noon. There will also be a Christmas raffle and bake sale with all proceeds going to the SMC scholarship fund. Tickets are \$45. For more information, call Pat McEnaney at 376-3306.

WomenSing Plans Lively Holiday Concerts



PJ BARBER

(L-R) Orinda resident Amy Hiestand, Nancy Beckus, Molly Marshall and Nancy Sheets are among the members of WomenSing who will bring the warmth of holiday carols to their December concerts.

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

WomenSing gets creative this holiday season with a fun concert that features steel drums and Latin-fused music as well as traditional tunes. The local group draws talented singers from throughout the Bay Area, and this year's December concert entitled "Sing an Endless 'Ave'" promises to draw a diverse audience as well.

Directed by Martin Benvenuto, the holiday concert includes two movements from Glen McClure's *St. Francis in the Americas: A Caribbean Mass* as well as two Benjamin Britten carols, an audience sing-along, an arrangement of the English carol *I Saw Three Ships*, and much more. A highlight of the concert will be selections

from WomenSing's upcoming CD *Songs from the Old and New World*. The CD will be available in early December and can be purchased through the website, www.womensing.org, or at the holiday concerts.

Concerts take place on Sunday, December 9, at 4 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of Oakland at 2619 Broadway Avenue and on Wednesday, December 12, at 8 p.m. at the Lafayette/Orinda Presbyterian Church at 49 Knox Drive in Lafayette.

Advance tickets are available up to 24 hours prior to the concerts at www.womensing.org, or by phone at 925-974-9169 or at the door. Tickets are \$30 for premium seats, \$25 for general admission, \$20 for seniors, and \$10 for students/youth 18 and under.



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◆ RETRO from page 8

fect, which is like a cat eye but done with a shorter flick of liner at the outer corners. While the bold red lip is always exciting at the holidays, a dab of peach cream blush on the lips is pretty in an understated, dashed-off kind of way, especially when offset by metallic smoky eyes. Book a makeup lesson and learn how to make your eyes more seductive or how to add a romantic twinkle.

And we can't forget the nails! This holiday our manicurists threw their support behind classic shades of rich burgundy or cherry red. For an updated version of the French Manicure, try our contrasting look, more subtle yet dramatic at the same time with the nails muted — think cream or putty — then edged tips with dark red for a refined touch or black and silver for flashier moments.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hairstyles are going retro with lots of long, wavy curls.



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HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Drop Off Food Items at Mechanics Bank

Pictured (L-R) are Mechanics Bank employees **Berit Volga, Jessica Smith, Amy Bang-Knudsen** and **Ken Roesling**. The Orinda branch at 77 Moraga Way will be accepting food donations through December 21 for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. Among the most sought-after food items are canned meat and fish, soups, canned ready-to-eat meals, canned fruits, vegetables and tomato products, peanut butter, cereals, fruit juice, dry beans, powdered milk, and enriched rice or pasta.



DAVID DIERKS

Attitude of Gratitude Now in Journal Form

Several years ago, local yoga guru **Jeanne Dowell** joined forces with her daughter **Dana Dowell Windatt** to form **Green Buddha**. The ethically responsible product line includes clothing and accessories that inspire a lifestyle of gratitude while supporting developing areas of the world. A percentage of the proceeds of sales at **Green Buddha** goes to **S.E.E.D.S.**, which provides relief to Nepal's poorest villages.

Just in time for the holidays, **Jeanne** and **Dana** have published an *Attitude of Gratitude Journal* that includes quotes on each page from such well known people as **The Dalai Lama, Winston Churchill, and Buddha**. "This journal was designed by **Dana** and I, who, while going through challenging times, discovered gratitude. It's not that we never met gratitude, we never LIVED gratitude," says **Jeanne**. "Our discovery was the difference between temporary thanks and 'grateful living' as a spiritual practice." For more information on **Green**



GRADY CHANDLER

Jeanne Dowell (L) and Dana Dowell Windatt.

Buddha and the new journal, go to www.thegreenbuddha.net.

– **SALLY HOGARTY**, Editor

Holiday Sales and Boutiques in Orinda

By **SALLY HOGARTY**
Editor

Orinda Books' annual holiday art sale takes place on December 7 from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and features ceramicist **Gerry Wallace** and *plein air* painter **Paul Kratter**. The store will also offer a fun session beginning at noon on December 15 where representatives of **Random House** and **Penguin Books** will present intriguing and provocative titles suitable for holiday gifting, including books for children. For more information, call 254-7606 or email orindabooks@thegrid.net.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ceramic boots by **Gerry Wallace**.

from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. at 1 Tarabrook Drive in Orinda. Formerly the **Overhill Holiday Boutique**, the crafts faire includes hand-crafted gifts and food from over 30 local artisans. A percentage of the proceeds benefits the **National Breast Cancer Foundation**. For more information, call **Jackie Smith** at 254-3944 or email beadsmith@sbcglobal.net.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Paul Kratter works on one of his *plein air* paintings.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Birdhouses will be among the items at the **Tarabrook Holiday Boutique**.

The 11th annual **Tarabrook Holiday Boutique** takes place on November 30 from noon - 8 p.m. and December 1-2

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LOCAL RESIDENTS

Local Author Ruth Kaiser Lunches with Oprah Winfrey

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

Author Ruth Kaiser is optimistic about the magazine cover she designed featuring Oprah Winfrey pushing a cart of Kaiser's new book *The Smiley Book of Colors*.

Things are looking bright for Kaiser. After all, Random House, one of the nation's top publishers, put out her book last year. And her website, www.SpontaneousSmiley.com, has over 17 million hits and counting.

And, she adds, *The Smiley Book of Colors* was featured on *CBS Evening News with Katie Couric*. There's also that matter of her lecturing on Tedx Silicon Valley last year. The enthusiasm in her voice bubbles as she adds she really did have lunch with Oprah last month.

It looks like the idea of her book being chosen as one of "Oprah's Favorite Things" annual list may not be that far fetched. The lunch was the result of Kai-

ser's friend asking Oprah to join them when the pair attended a conference in which the star was speaking. Kaiser and her friend had started a group called "OWN Ambassadors" who support Oprah's television network through social media and spoke to Oprah when she joined their Twitter stream.

Instead of the "OWN Ambassadors" taking Oprah to lunch, the talk show host offered "How about I take you out to lunch?" and soon Kaiser found herself meeting Oprah, as well as other stars of the network, Gail King and Iyanla Vanzant.

Kaiser laughs when she says her book deal was the result of putting her "foot in her mouth" which, it turned out, also meant putting her "foot in the door." Kaiser was developing a book from her popular web page, when a Facebook friend introduced her to an online friend. Kaiser's new friend seemed to know quite a bit about publishing and kindly answered the questions of the novice book writer.

"I didn't know how to do things and was just putting it out there," the author and teacher said, adding that she was greatly surprised to discover her online friend was an executive at Random House. Kaiser asked if she could submit her manuscript, and the rest was history.

The book is an evolution from Kaiser's website where viewers post pictures of smiles they notice spontaneously in their environments. Fans post pictures that show smiley faces created in trees, buildings, cars – even bird excrement.

"*Spontaneous Smiley* is as much about looking for happiness as it is about looking for smiley," Kaiser said. "It's a mind set that says: I am going to attend to my life, be fully present. Deciding to notice the small every day in your life helps you to ignore the things you cannot change."

Each time a Smiley is uploaded to Kaiser's website, a \$1 donation is made to Operation Smile, a group which treats children with facial deformities such as cleft lips. According to Kaiser, "Spontaneous Smiley" has funded 25 surgeries, "one Smiley photo at a time."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Ruth Kaiser is thrilled with the reception of her new book *The Smiley Book of Colors* now available at Orinda Books, online at www.amazon.com, and at www.spontaneousSmiley.com.

Kaiser will appear at "Santa's Bag" at the Lafayette Community Center, November 30 and December 1 and 2. She said that she hopes to see some of the "thousands of Lamorinda families that have attended TOT DROP (where children know her as "Teacher Ruth") for over the last 19 years."

For information on *The Smiley Book of Colors*, go to www.SpontaneousSmiley.com/smiley-book.

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Winter Break 2 (Dec 27, 28) "Winter Wonderland"
Two days of fun after the Christmas Holiday include an excursion to a local park to "test drive" any new toys and hike through Las Trampas to find Holly and Mistletoe. Gingerbread and hot cocoa are a must.

Winter Break 3 (Dec 31-Jan 4) "Tree Homes & Winter Habitats"
This week we will visit Tilden Park, Ardenwood Farms and Hidden Villa; learn about various animals and "build" habitats for ourselves and others. Animal track recognition and discussion of winter survival.

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PGA Professional Eric Jones Drives His Way to Championship Title



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Orinda resident and professional golfer **Eric Jones** recently won his second RE/MAX World Long Drive Championship.

By MAUREEN MCINANEY
Contributing Writer

Orinda resident Eric Jones captured his second RE/MAX World Long Drive Championship in the Super Senior Division

(age 50+) with a drive of 369 yards. Jones previously won the Senior Division title in 2003. As he did in 2003, Jones relied on his sixth and final ball to blast the winning drive, out-driving Mike Barbarossa by just three yards in a battle that went back and forth with three lead changes.

Jones, who played golf at Stanford University and later served as the Junior Varsity team coach, is a PGA professional with a Master's degree in sport psychology, teaches golf in Northern California, and runs the unique Golf Coach Program, which offers unlimited supervised practice to golfers of all abilities. He is the author of multiple books on golf, including "*The 5 Keys To Distance*" - a comprehensive training program with video drills. Jones also developed the website www.TargetCenteredGolf.com in 2008 as a comprehensive online resource to help golfers take their game beyond technique and play more confident, consistent golf.

As his teaching practice has evolved, Jones has found that sometimes students benefit most from a mental shift, sometimes from a mechanical change. "The key is to put the right solution in front of the student at the right time," says Jones.

Sherrie and Billy wish all of our friends and neighbors a safe, healthy, and joyous Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

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AROUND THE TOWN

Something to Howl About...
Animal Tales
"Bring On The Reindeer"



Jennifer Conroy

Look, up in the sky, and toward the end of this month, you just might see reindeer. And who might those reindeer be? They would be Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen, and, of course, Rudolf.

In case you are wondering what other name the reindeer goes by, the scientific name is *rangifer tarandus*, also known as the caribou, resident to the arctic and subarctic. Both the bulls (males) and the cows (females) grow antlers, with the males' antlers being more splendid. Migratory reindeer can travel over 3,000 miles in the course of a year, searching for food and suitable autumn mating grounds. A herd of reindeer can consist of as few as 10, but as many as several thousand have been reported.

While not high on the list of domesticated animals, some native people maintain small herds for work such as pulling sleds and even riding them. A certain Mr. Claus has such a back up herd, and two of its members are named Fireball and Olive. I'm told that the Claus Reindeer do not subsist on lichen, as do their wild kin, but rather enjoy sweet Kentucky blue grass and Oregon apples, flown in to the North Pole on a regular basis.

On the ground, reindeer have been known to achieve speeds of 30 miles an hour but their endurance is low and they much prefer slow-paced grazing. The Claus Reindeer are unique in their ability to fly and easily reach mach one, or 717 miles per hour, as they journey around the world one special night each year. The fastest of them is

Dasher with Donner running a close second. The Claus Reindeer never seem to age unlike their wild counterparts who typically do not live more than a decade.

Reindeer babies, called calves, are born in the spring, typically one calf per cow. The calves can stand immediately and usually are able to run within two hours of birth. The fact that both the bulls and cows have antlers is important to these little ones to protect them from predatory wolves and bears.

Now what about that Rudolf? Unlike his teammates who were popularized by Clement Moore's 1823 poem, "The Night Before Christmas," Rudolf's role was only revealed years later by Robert May in his 1938 book, *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, as part of a department store promotion. And, as far as the red nose goes, it turns out that Rudolph came down with a cold on the annual "flight night" and refused to give up his spot as lead reindeer. A real trooper that Rudolph, he found honeyed warm milk and mint jam covered grass waiting for him when he brought the sled and the rest of the team home.

This December if you hear click, click, clicking sounds on the roof, that would be the natural sound of reindeer hooves and that grunting you hear, well, reindeer make that sound, too. Or, it could be the sound of a white-haired fellow lugging a large sack. Of course, one does not have to see or hear such things to believe, does one?

Whatever holidays you enjoy, I hope you enjoy them with all your favorite critters around you.

Saint Mary's College Men's Basketball Team Begins Season With a Win



HEATHER WILSON

Point guard Matthew Dellavedova discusses the team with media prior to first game of the season.

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

The men's basketball team at Saint Mary's College began its season with a win on November 10, beating Sonoma State 95-69 at home. Once again, West Coast Conference Player of the Year Matthew Dellavedova led the way with 20 points and five assists. He is the Gaels' all-time assist leader. The senior honed his skills over the summer playing on the Australian team in the Olympics along with fellow

Aussie Patrick Mills, who also played for Saint Mary's and currently plays for the San Antonio Spurs.

The Gaels, recognized as one of the top mid-major programs in the United States, hope to make a run at the NCAA tournament again this season. The team has made it to the tournament recently in 2008, 2010 and 2012. As of press deadline, they were 3-0 on the season. With coach Randy Bennett and a roster of talented players, they have a good chance again this year.

Election Party at Europa Deli



DAVID DIERKS

Mayor Steve Glazer (L) organized a party for all running for City Council and Orinda Union School Board and their supporters at Europa in Orinda. Glazer won re-election along with City Councilmember Victoria Smith (C) and school board member Matthew Moran (R).

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◆ HOUSING from page 1

and his cousin Juan Bernal, recipients of an 1835 Mexican land grant for the area.

The subdivision encompasses an approximately 20-acre site that would be divided into 13 single-family large-lot home sites. Approximately 39 percent of the site will be open space with riparian vegetation maintained.

Preservation of the historic Moraga Adobe, built by Joaquin Moraga in 1841, is a critical component of the proposed subdivision. The developer's proposal that the Moraga Adobe become a clubhouse for the exclusive use of the 13 homeowners drew protests from the Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe, a local group dedicated to preserving the building and providing public access.

A hearing of the Planning Commission was held on October 9, 2012 to consider the developer's request for use of the Moraga Adobe as well as to address other residents



KHYBER PRATT

This is one of two homes completed and occupied at the **Wilder** development. When finished, the project will have 245 homes.



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concerns regarding traffic congestion around Del Rey Elementary School and environmental concerns. TJKM, the city's consulting traffic engineering firm, studied the potential additional traffic from the proposed development and found that it would not impact the elementary school or nearby streets.

The project was approved at the Oct. 9 Planning Commission meeting that went until after midnight. Planning director Emmanuel Ursu noted that the city could not force the developer to open the Moraga Adobe to the public and Planning Commissioners urged the developer and the Friends group to continue meeting on the subject.

Depending upon timing of city approvals, the developer will begin grading in the spring of 2013.

Senior Affordable Housing

The City of Orinda selected Eden Housing, LLC to develop affordable senior residences at 2 Irwin Way (site of the former library). Development of affordable housing is mandated by state law and compliance with state housing laws allows the City of Orinda to receive over \$300,000 in road maintenance funds annually through Measure J.

Eden Housing proposes developing the site with 67 units. Eden also proposes a 10-space community parking lot at 10 Irwin Way.

Many community meetings were held during 2010 and 2011 and, subsequent to residents' concerns regarding height and other visual impacts, the project was redesigned. The Planning Commission approved the project on July 26, 2011. On July 11, 2012, the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee approved Eden's

tax credit application clearing the way for Eden to secure the balance of the funding necessary to build the project. In June 2012, this project won the Gold Nugget Grand Award for Best Senior Housing Community in development. The prestigious international competition recognizes developers for excellence and innovation in addressing complex design/build issues.

Ground-breaking will take place in mid-December with completion of the project slated for April/May of 2014.

Orinda Grove

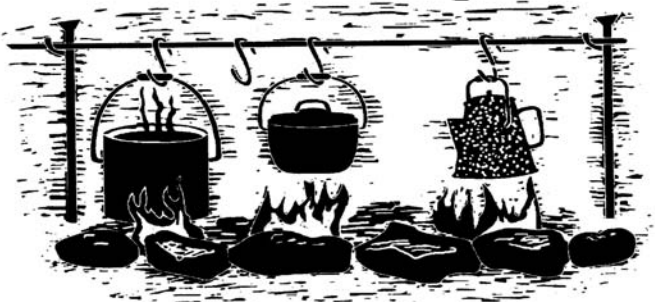
On May 17, 2005, the city received a formal application from Pulte Homes for development of the 11-acre Pine Grove site and the adjacent 3.1-acre city-owned ball fields. The development proposal contained: 80 homes (later revised to 73 homes), relocation of the city-owned ball fields to the area near the northwesterly corner of the project site, and construction of an approximately 6,000 square foot Orinda Union School District (OUSD) office building to replace the existing district offices on the site.

On July 22, 2008 the Planning Commission certified the Final EIR and approved the vesting tentative map, design review, tree removal, sign, and exception applications and recommended that the City Council approve the General Plan Land Use and Zoning Map amendments and planned development plan application for the Project.

On August 19, 2008 the City Council gave its approval.

On June 25, 2012, Pulte took ownership of the land and paid OUSD \$19.5 million, which will be used for capital improve-

[SEE HOUSING 2 page 16]



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HEALTH

Orinda Resident Strives to Educate on HPV-Related Cancer

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

Pamela Tom's husband Jeff is a lifelong athlete, who never smoked, rarely drank and was in great shape. But last year, Jeff started experiencing difficulty swallowing.

"His doctor chalked it up to "post nasal drip" and prescribed nose spray," Pamela said. She insisted her husband see a specialist when eating and swallowing became more difficult. "The head and neck specialist immediately saw a lump in his throat at the base of his tongue. The biopsy revealed a malignant tumor: Stage 4 HPV-associated throat cancer," explained Pamela.

The news shocked the couple. "By then, it was too late to have the tumor surgically removed," Pamela said. "Jeff endured seven weeks of simultaneous radiation (daily) and chemo treatment. He went from 195 pounds of athletic mass to 150 pounds, and he now wears our son's shorts and pants. He relied on a feeding tube only."

While they wait for Jeff's prognosis after cancer treatments, Pamela, a veteran news journalist who has worked for ABC 7 News and KPIX/CBS 5, decided to use the information she had garnered while researching her husband's disease to create a website to help others. She decided to launch a public awareness campaign about HPV (Human Papillomavirus) associated throat cancer in the form of a multimedia website. The website will host information about prevention, symptoms, latest research, and offer support.

In order to develop www.HPVANDME.org, she launched an Indiegogo crowd-funding campaign. The web-based funding raising method, www.indiegogo.com/hpvandme, is accepting donations through mid-December.

"There is a lot of information out there, and I am trying to make it clearer," Pamela explained. She plans on consolidating information into a magazine format with resources that are easy to find. "It will be helpful for others going through this."

And, unfortunately, there will be others. Pamela's website offers a stern warning: By 2020, the American Society of Clinical Oncology says HPV-associated throat cancer in men will surpass that of women who get cervical cancer from HPV.


"Early detection, like with any other cancer, is crucial," Pamela said, adding that there is no formal screening test for men. "They need to develop one. It's not some rare virus. It's so rampant and so prevalent; people need to know about it." According to her, doctors have only really seen cases of HPV-associated throat cancer in the last six-eight years.


"There is this window of opportunity to advance the science, to get people vaccinated," said Pamela. "Awareness will help others catch the disease earlier. Because HPV is a sexually transmitted disease, it has the same social stigma that AIDS once had and that's why it needs more awareness," Pamela added. "The Center for Disease Control (CDC) says at least 75 percent of the population will get HPV sometime in their lifetimes."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Jeff Tom, shown above with his wife Pamela, has been battling HPV-associated throat cancer.

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◆ GIFTS from page 9

your home. A plethora of Christmas aromas waft over you as you enter the store, which is filled with table décor such as angels, Santas and toy trains. Debbie Gunst says their most popular candles are apple spice, sweet evergreen, currant and cinnamon spice. Fresh cut Christmas trees can be delivered to your home in your tree stand for free and placed where you wish. Stop by 196 Moraga Way, call 254-3713 or go to www.mcdonnellnursery.com.

For help creating a circle of giving, call the Orinda Chamber of Commerce at 254-3909. Candy Kattenburg can recommend Orinda nonprofits that line up with the interest area of the person or organization you are gifting. You can then contact the nonprofit and donate in the name of someone on your holiday list, thus completing the circle of giving back into our community. Happy Holidays!



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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

DECEMBER

- 1 **11th Annual Tarabrook Drive Holiday Boutique** features handcrafted gifts and foods by 30 local artists. 1 Tarabrook Drive, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Percentage of proceeds benefits National Breast Cancer Foundation. Free admission. Also December 2. Call 254-3944.
- Orinda Books** hosts a Sisters-in-Crime Holiday Party. Meet the writers and hear about their latest mysteries, 286 Village Square, 1 p.m. Call 254-7606.
- Hospice Tree Lighting**, 4:30 p.m., in front of Bank of America in Orinda Village.
- 4 **Orinda Arts Council** Holiday Luncheon features entertainment by the Orinda Idol Singers and scenes from *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* by OIS Bulldog Theatre Company, Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante, noon to 2 p.m. Tickets are \$22. Visit www.orindaartscouncil.org or contact Myrna Witt at keyofm@aol.com for reservations.
- 5 **Orinda Historical Society** Holiday Party, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, 6 to 9 p.m. Call 254-1353.
- 6 **Orinda Books** hosts Rhys Bowen discussing her latest mystery, *The Twelve Clues of Christmas*, 286 Village Square, 2 p.m. Call 254-7606.
- 7 **Orinda Books** features Gerry Wallace's ceramics and Paul Kratter's *Plein Air* paintings in their Annual Holiday Sale, 286 Village Square, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 254-7606.
- Orinda Ballet's A Sweet Dream Nutcracker**, 6:30 p.m., Orinda Library Auditorium, also Dec. 8 (11:30 a.m.; 4 p.m.) and Dec. 9 (11:30 a.m.; 3:30 p.m.). Go to www.brownpapertickets.com.
- Contra Costa Children's Chorus** presents a Holiday Concert featuring compositions by Benjamin Britten, Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, 1801 Lacassie Drive, 7 p.m. Also Dec. 14, 7 p.m., at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Tickets are \$15 adults, \$5 children under 14. Contact programs@childrenschorus.org or call 945-7101, ext. 2.
- 9 **Orinda Books** hosts Richard Black discussing his new novel, *Burning Barn*, 286 Village Square, 1 p.m. Call 254-7606.
- WomenSing** "Sing an Endless 'Ave,'" 4 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 2619 Broadway Ave., Oakland and Dec. 12 at 8 p.m., Lafayette/Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Lane, Lafayette. Call 925-974-9169 or go to www.womensing.org.
- 13 **Miramonte High School** presents an Instrumental Music Winter Concert, MHS Theatre, 750 Moraga Way, 7 p.m. Tickets are \$6 to \$10, purchase at www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte/ or at the door.
- Orinda Tabor Sister City Foundation Celebrate Christmas event at a private residence, 7 p.m. Call 254-8260.
- 14 **Voices of Musica Sacra** sings The Glory of Christmas featuring Rutter's *Gloria* and other carols, Walnut Creek United Methodist Church, 1543 Sunnyvale Ave., 8 p.m. Also, Dec. 16, 2 p.m., at St. Stephen Catholic Church, 1101 Keaveny Ct., Walnut Creek. Tickets \$20 adults, \$15 seniors 60+, \$10 students, children 5 through 12 free. Visit www.vmschorus.org.
- 15 **Orinda Books** Holiday Extravaganza features Ron Shoop of Random House, Wendy Pearl of Penguin Books and Dandy Conway of Random House Children's Books with book suggestions for gifts and seasonal reading. Also raffle, refreshments and gift items for sale by local craftspeople, 286 Village Square, noon. Call 254-7606.
- 19 **Miramonte High School** presents a Choral Winter Concert, MHS Theatre, 750 Moraga Way, 7 p.m. Tickets are \$6 to \$10, at www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte/ or at the door. Also December 20.
- 22 **Orinda Books** hosts local ceramic artist Gerry Wallace with gifts for the holidays, 286 Village Square, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 254-7606.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. The library will be closed Dec. 23, 24 and 25 for Christmas. The library will close at 5 p.m. on Dec. 31. For more information, call 254-2184 or visit www.ccclib.org/locations/Orinda.html.

- 1 **Saturday Morning Live**, family story time for 3- to 5-year-olds, Picture Book area, 11 to 11:30 a.m. Also Dec. 8, 15 and 22.
- Book Sale** sponsored by Friends of the Orinda Library, Book Shop and Sorting Area, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 4 **Toddler Lapsit**, stories, songs and fingerplays for infants to 3-year-olds and their caregivers, Gallery Room, 10 to 10:30 a.m. and 10:30 to 10:55 a.m. Drop-ins welcome, but limit attendance to once per week. Also Dec. 5, 11 and 12.
- Peek-A-Boo Time** features songs, stories, rhymes and rhythms for newborns through 1-year-olds and their caregivers, Gallery Room, 11:30 to 11:55 a.m. Also Dec. 11.
- 5 **Winter Music at the Library** with Ace Batacan on acoustic guitar playing everything from jazz to pop and seasonal favorites, 6:30 p.m. Adult program.
- 11 **Free Legal Workshop**: Wills and Trusts covers wills, durable powers of attorney, Advanced Healthcare Directives, trusts and probate, Gallery Room, 3:30 to 5 p.m. Adult program. Registration recommended.
- 14 **Mystery Book Club** members discuss *Still Life* by Louise Penny, Tutoring Room, 3 to 4:30 p.m. Adult/teen program, drop-ins welcome.
- 18 **Holiday Tot Hop**, toddlers and preschoolers are invited to dance to seasonal and story time favorites, 10 a.m. Also Dec. 19.
- 19 **Library Books on My Nook** workshop explains how to check out books on a Nook eReader, Gallery Room, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Adult program. Registration recommended.

CLUB MEETINGS

- Diablo Star Chapter #214**, Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m., Orinda Masonic Center. Contact Karen Seaborn, 689-0995.
- Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe**. Third Monday, 7:30 p.m., Moraga-Orinda Fire District Conference Room, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga, www.moragaadobe.org.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks**. Fourth Wednesday, 7 - 9 p.m., May Room, Orinda Library, 253-1997.
- Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition**, every third Wednesday, 10 to 11:30 a.m. at Orinda City Hall Sarge Littlehale Room. Call 687-8844, ext. 227.
- Lamorinda Sirs** for retired men. Second Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. Luncheon speakers plus golf, tennis, bocce, bridge and astronomy. Call Pete Giers, 254-4667.

Charlotte Meyer Joins the Century Club

By DAVID DIERKS
Assistant Editor

On November 18, Charlotte Meyer turned 100 years old. The centenarian has been an Orinda resident since 1947. She has three sons by her first husband James "Jim" Chapple: Lawrence Chapple, Alvin Chapple and George "Geotty" Chapple. Meyer lives with Geotty and her daughter-in-law Susan in the house that her late husband Jim renovated between 1959 and 1961.

Meyer graduated from Cal in 1936 and took a Master's Course at Stanford. She went on to become one of the first scenic designers for the San Francisco Opera Ballet (SFOB), which was founded in 1933. The company split in 1942 and became two separate entities: San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Ballet. As a result of her work with SFOB, Meyer was the first woman in the Scene Painter's Union. "I was painting a set, and somebody came out from Chicago and they thought I should get into the union," Meyer recalls. "They insisted that I join. However, there were no other women in the union so they didn't know what to do with me. There was a rule that you had to go to meetings, and they didn't think it was appropriate for me to go, so I



DAVID DIERKS

Charlotte Meyer turns 100.

was very controversial for a while." Not only was Meyer the first woman in the Scene Painters Union, she was also the first member that wasn't required to go to the meetings. Chapple added, "She wasn't think it was appropriate for me to go, so I

[SEE MEYER page 19]

- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary**. Every Friday, 7 a.m., Postinos, Lafayette, 254-0440, ext. 463.
- Lamorinda Toastmasters**. Every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Temple Isaiah, 3800 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, www.lamorinda.freetoasthost.net.
- Montelindo Garden Club**. Third Friday, September through May, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, 9 a.m., www.montelindogarden.com. This month's Holiday Luncheon, Bazaar and Auction also features storyteller Diane Ferlatte.
- Orinda Juniors Women's Club** community service group. First Tuesday, September to June, 7 p.m. Contact Julie Mercer or Charlene Robinson at info@orindajuniors.org or www.orindajuniors.org.
- Orinda Rotary**. Every Wednesday, noon, Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, 254-2222.
- Orinda Association**. Second Monday, 7:15 p.m., Orinda Library, May Room, 254-0800.
- Orinda Hiking Club**. Hikes every weekend and the first Wednesday of the month. Visit www.orindahiking.org for weekly schedule or call Ian at 254-1465.
- Orinda Historical Society**. Third Wednesday, 5 p.m., Historical Society Museum, 26 Orinda Way, 254-1353.
- Orinda Job's Daughters**. First and third Monday, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 283-7176.
- Orinda/Tabor** (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation. Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m. social, 7:30 p.m. meeting, call 254-8260 for location.
- Orinda Teen Advisory Council**. Second Wednesday, 4 p.m., Community Center, 28 Orinda Way. For information, email orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com.
- Orinda Woman's Club**. Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. to noon, call Jean Barnhart, 254-3881.

CITY/FIRE/SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

- Acalanes Union High School District**. First and third Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., district office, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette.
- City Council**. First and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.
- Historic Landmarks Committee**. Fourth Tuesday, 3 to 5 p.m., Library Garden Room. Call 925-788-7323.
- Moraga-Orinda Fire District**. Third Wednesday, 7 p.m., Administration Building, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga.
- Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees**. Second Monday, 6 p.m., OUSD Conference Room, 25 Orinda Way—Suite 200, Orinda, CA 94563. For the latest listing of dates, please check the website at www.orindaschools.org.
- Planning Commission**. Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.

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

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LOCAL BUSINESS

A Very Special Pair of Scissors



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

On one of Chamber executive director **Candy Kattenburg's** trips to visit her father at the Veteran's Home in Yountville, she mentioned that her ceremonial scissors, used by the Chamber of Commerce for ribbon-cutting ceremonies, were falling apart. A group of veterans came to her rescue and made a new set for the Orinda Chamber complete with gold plaque. Shown above are (L-R) VA administrator **Karen Zanetell**, veteran **George Case**, and **Kattenburg**.

Cloud 9 Welcomed to Chamber of Commerce



DAVID DIERKS

(L-R) Chamber members **Dina Zapanta**, **David Cronin**, president **Rick Kattenburg**, Cloud 9 Salon owners **Alyssa Renteria** and **Leah Koa**, chamber members **Sylvia Jorgensen**, and **Nora Harlow**.

Orinda Tire and Wheel Has Grand Opening



DAVID DIERKS

Located at the 76 Gas Station on Moraga Way, **Orinda Tire and Wheel** recently had its grand opening and official ribbon cutting. (L-R) Chamber member **Susan Martin**, executive director **Candy Kattenburg**, president **Rick Kattenburg**, owners **JJ. Ibrahim** and **Sara Ibrahim**, and Chamber member **Patti Camras**.

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Theatre Square's Facebook Winner



SALLY HOGARTY

Angie Garcia (center), shown above with **Peter Wenzel** (L) of GLL Properties, owners of Theatre Square, and **Sophina Gellon** (R) of Cushman and Wakefield, is the winner of Theatre Square's first Facebook contest. In order to win, Facebook users had to "like" Orinda Theatre Square. A random number generator selected the winner. Garcia, who owns a promotional items company called City Lights Promotions, won a \$200 shopping and dining spree at Orinda Theatre Square.

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BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 20

barista staff, they focus on customer service and friendliness. "We want to give customers a special feeling with their espresso or coffee," he adds.

A household illy espresso maker is available for purchase at Caffé Teatro, as well as four different illy beans – Guatamala, Ethiopia, Brazil and Arabica, which make nice stocking stuffers. Available in half pound cans priced at \$14.95, Joe points out this is the lowest price for illy coffee in the world. You will also find commuter mugs and a selection of espresso cups and saucers that the coffee lover in your life might enjoy.

A selection of sandwiches and fresh baked goods is available, as well as the popular breakfast sandwich, which goes exceptionally well with espresso. Starting this month, an All American style breakfast of scrambled egg, hash browns, bacon and toast will be added to these offerings.

Originally from Korea, Joe and Jin Cho immigrated to the Bay Area in 2002. The couple lives in Moraga with their two young daughters, Clara, age seven, and Allison, age five. They enjoy seeing the latest Disney-Pixar films and visiting the park together.

Caffé Teatro is open Monday through Thursday, 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 254-5871.

◆ Bailey Orthodontics Comes To Town

After enjoying a music career as a piano teacher, Melissa Bailey knew she wanted to pursue another direction and enrolled at the UCLA School of Dentistry. While a student there, she started orthodontic treatment and that experience piqued her interest in orthodontics. "As an orthodontist, I provide a truly life changing experience for my patients. Building confidence with an



Dr. Melissa Bailey of Bailey Orthodontics

attractive smile makes a big impact, and it is important to me to enhance my patients' development in this way," says Bailey. She recently purchased Dr. Neal Wells' practice at 15 Altarinda Road, Suite 104A.

Wildlife photos adorn the walls of this intimate office and the large windows offer attractive views looking westward toward the Orinda hills. "We are modernizing the practice using trusted and cutting edge technology such as Invisalign treatment and mini-implants, an alternative to the traditional "headgear." In addition to orthodontic treatment, Dr. Bailey offers sleep appliances for snoring, grinding or sleep apnea. "Our goal is to make the reception area relaxing and as much like home as possible. iPads are available for parents to use while patients are getting their check-ups," she explains.

Bailey chose to develop a small practice because she enjoys one-on-one time with patients. "I like getting to know patients and families and building relationships. Typically orthodontic treatment is a one and a half to two year process, and since I am the

only doctor here, patients will see me every time for their treatment," explains Bailey. "I work with a patient for a period of time and truly help them build confidence by developing a winning smile. I believe if we are happy with our smile then we are able to project more confidence," says Bailey.

Dr. Bailey's spouse, Jeff Bailey, is an attorney who is currently serving as office manager for her practice over the next few

months. "Jeff and I love traveling and exploring the variety of great restaurants, as well as the art and entertainment offerings here in the Bay Area," she says. With her siblings living close by, Orinda was a natural destination. "There are many wonderful families here and an excellent educational system that I admire," adds Bailey.

For more information, visit the website at www.BaileySmile.com or call 254-4568.

◆ MEYER from page 17

required to go to the meetings because the men didn't want to watch their language."

While working for the opera, Meyer was also on the staff of Theatre Arts Colony, a group similar to American Conservatory Theatre where staff taught theater and produced shows. Meyer married Jim Chapple while working in the costume department for the San Francisco Opera Ballet.

Once in Orinda, Meyer got involved with Dramateurs, an Orinda theater group that used to perform at the Orinda Union School auditorium. She joined in 1945 as the group began its second year of operation. In the early 1950s, Dramateurs moved to Lafayette. It was during her time with Dramateurs that Meyer met George Meyer, who would become her second husband. In 1992, Dramateurs reorganized and became

known as Town Hall Theatre Company. Meyer remained involved until the 1990s.

In the 1980s, Meyer formed her own company, Orinda Starlight Village Players (OrSVP), with her son Geotty Chapple. Chapple said, "We got into the Community Center by doing children's shows each summer for three or four years." Shortly after the amphitheater was built in 1982, OrSVP rented the space and put on their first non-children's show, Peter Coke's *A Breath of Spring* in 1983. Meyer continued producing, directing and costuming shows until 2006, when the cold of the outdoor theater started to bother her. But the cold didn't stop her from adapting Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* for Starlight's 2010 season. Although Meyer is no longer involved with Starlight, her son Geotty and daughter-in-law Susan continue to operate the popular summer entertainment.

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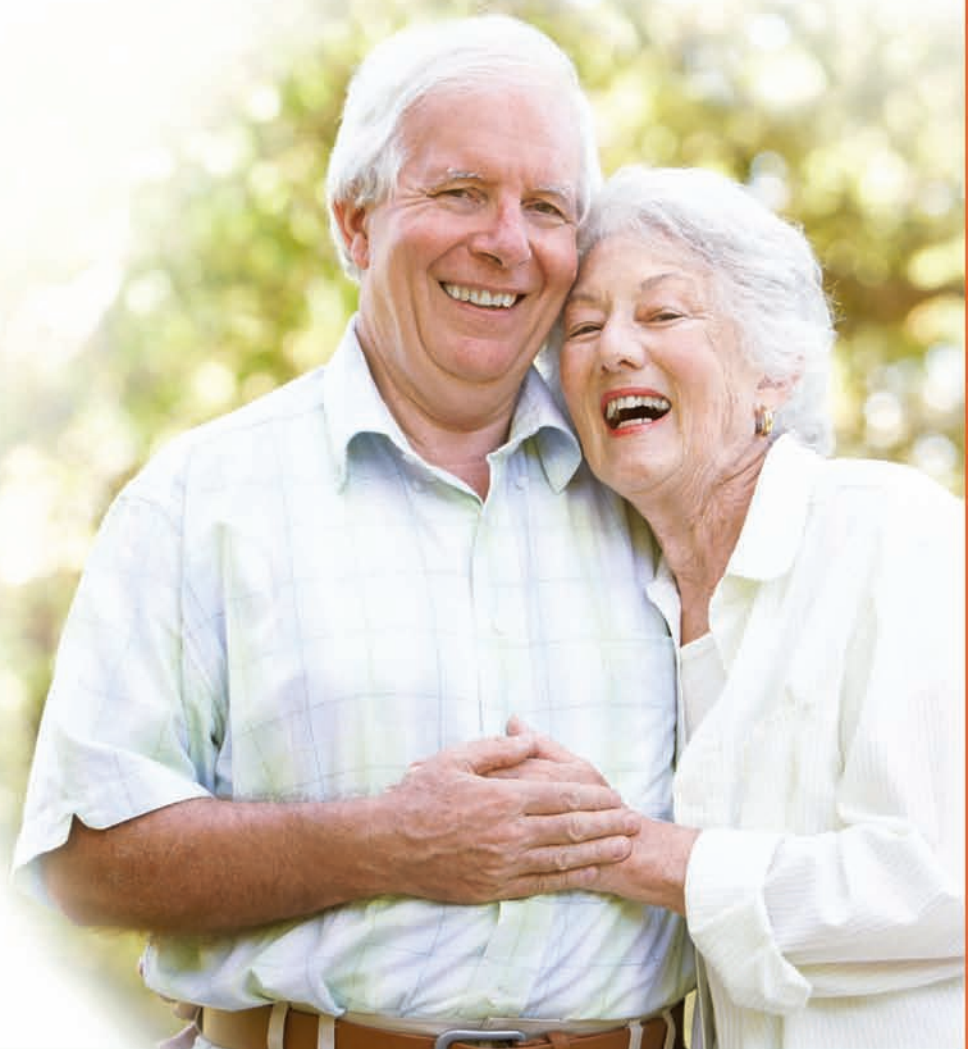
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Yan's Mandarin and Szechuan Cuisine Opens on Orinda Way

With 18 years in the restaurant business, the Yan Family brings delicious specialty dishes and exquisite service to Orindans, in the recently renovated space at One Orinda Way (formerly Hsiang's). Since the age of 16, Susan Yan has been working in the family enterprise, first at the El Sobrante location, then at Yan's Chinese Bistro in Walnut Creek and in Lafayette. When they lost their lease in Lafayette this year, the Yan's relocated their restaurant to Orinda, complete with fish aquarium in the entry and gorgeous pink carnations adorning the tables.

The Yan Family immigrated to the Bay Area from Canton, China in 1990, bringing with them tried and true authentic recipes. "My father, Sun Chuen Yan, works with his ingredients and recipes making his own signature sauces every day. He has a good friend who works at a five star hotel in China who often sends him great recipes to use," says Susan. House specialties

include spicy dishes such as Mongolian Beef, General Chow's Chicken and Honey Walnut Prawns.

Susan knows every facet of the enterprise. "I am involved in all aspects of our business, customer service, overseeing the table service and, sometimes, I even cook the dishes too," she says. "We always use fresh ingredients, high quality meats and seafood, and incorporate consistent quality at every restaurant. We make our own sauces on site. The Mongolian and Kung Pao sauces are made either by my father or me," she adds.

The menu includes a respectable selection of California wines – Kendall Jackson, Sonoma-Cutrer for starters, as well as Tsingtao, Heineken, Sapporo, Fat Tire and non-alcohol beers. The lettuce wrap dishes – prawn, chicken and roast duck – are all very popular with customers. "We cover Mandarin, Szechuan and Cantonese dishes. Salt and pepper dishes are favorites with our customers and these include salt and pepper pork chops, salt and pepper calamari and our salt and pepper prawn dishes are really nice." The new location features a private party room that seats up to 24 guests.



VALERIE HOTZ

Left to right: Father/Daughter team Sun Chuen Yan and Susan Yan.

Susan Yan is married to Jonathan Dy, a computer system engineer at Lawrence Berkeley Lab. The couple have two children, 2-year-old Kelly and 1-year-old Kingsley. With a restaurant enterprise being a 24/7 proposition, Susan spends what free time she has with her family. They especially enjoy visiting local parks together.

Yan's Restaurant is open Sunday through Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. (closed on Tuesday) and Friday and Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 4:30 to 9:30 p.m. Visit the website at www.yansrestaurant.com to see the take out menu. To place a take out order or for more information, call 253-9852.

the proposition of earning the designation "artist of taste" (*artista del gusto* in Italian).

"An expert from illy worked with us for two full days, demonstrating how to handle coffee beans, the machines, the maintenance and cleaning of the machines, as well as the way in which the custom drink is served to a customer," says Joe. "An illy cappuccino is distinctive." Joe and his staff of baristas always add a signature flourish with the milky froth of the beverage, such as a leaf, heart or swan. A family owned concern since 1933, illy espresso is prepared exclusively with the custom designed La Cimbali espresso machine, which (you probably guessed it) was designed with input from the illy family.

In order to retain the illy designation (Caffé Teatro is one of only 15 in Califor-

Next Year Marks 10th Anniversary for Caffé Teatro

Husband and wife team Joe and Jin Cho became proprietors of Caffé Teatro in 2003, upon its relocation from Theatre Square to the then new Orinda Library at 26 Orinda Way. Being that the former owner sold illy, as well as other coffees, Joe made it a habit to always prepare the custom drinks with illy beans, using the other blends for the drip coffee. So it was that in 2008 he was contacted by illy representatives to discuss



VALERIE HOTZ

Joe Cho with the illy exclusive espresso machine, La Cimbali.

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nia) the place is inspected regularly by an illy technician who checks every detail of operation, including the grind of the coffee bean (fine or coarse). Caffé Teatro receives a grade after the inspection is completed. "We get surprise visits by someone from the company that we do not recognize," adds Joe. Incorporating this strict regimen and attention to detail, when Joe trains his

[SEE BUZZ page 19]

CONGRATULATIONS

SARAH BUTLER

Congratulations on your election to the Orinda School Board.

Ann Marie & Bob Kadie