



# THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis  
Volume 30, Number 12

Published by The Orinda Association  
Delivered to 9,000 Households and Businesses in Orinda

12 Issues Annually  
December 2015

## Petition Reflects Orindans' Wish to Improve Downtown

By DAVID DIERKS  
Assistant Editor

Orinda resident Monica Fitzsimmons presented a petition to the Orinda City Council on Nov. 3 encouraging members to restart the downtown revitalization dialogue.

"I stand here tonight to share with you the overwhelming response of a petition that I started on change.org to restore downtown Orinda," said Fitzsimmons. The petition states, "The residents of Orinda are concerned about the present condition of our downtown and its lack of improvement and amenities. A renewed downtown is necessary to better serve residents and merchants and to bolster the financial health of the City of Orinda, our property values and school district. Current, new, old, young and future Orinda residents deserve to live in a place of pride and enjoyment."

Fitzsimmons created the petition in September. "In just eight weeks since I started this petition, we received nearly 700 signatures," she said. "That's nearly 700 Orinda residents that are concerned about the present condition of our downtown and believe that we deserve to live in a place of pride and enjoyment. We want to see our community thrive. It's a movement that organically grew from conversations with other families and friends at swim team, long hours at the pool, frustrated by driving all over Walnut Creek, Lafayette and other outlying communities to get what we needed."

The main points from the petitioners are to make the downtown more vibrant and to provide housing alternatives for those who want to downsize from their homes into a condo or townhouse. "We want a downtown that enhances our sense of community and opportunities to interact and engage with one another. A community that has vitality and vibrant elements while retaining our intimate village character," said Fitzsimmons. "One that optimizes our natural environment, reconnects the two sides of Orinda, attracts restaurants and Orinda-centric retail, enables our senior citizens to downsize and stay in Orinda, and a downtown that supports our property values and the city's tax base. I currently leave Orinda to shop, eat out and entertain in neighboring towns while Orinda stays stagnant and run-down. I know I'm not alone in these actions."

Some residents think that a third party can help with the planning and recommend the Urban Land Institute (ULI). "We badly need housing for people who want to downsize and move closer to town," said Orindan Eartha Newsong. "Yes, we need a downtown-specific plan, but that requires

[SEE PETITION page 7]

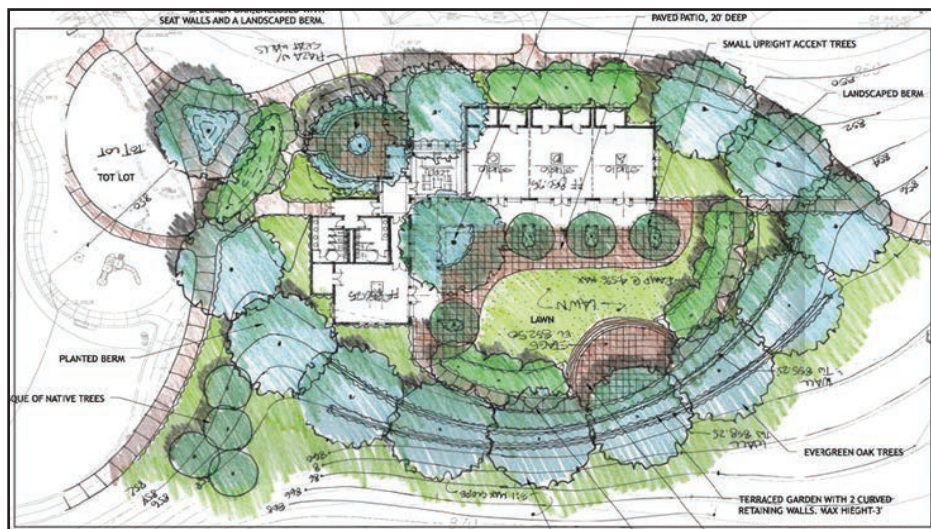
## Hospice Tree Lighting on Dec. 5



CHARLIE JARRETT

The annual tree lighting includes performances by school choirs and, of course, a visit by Santa, shown here with Sydney and Kylie Vox at last year's event. See story page 9.

## Developer Proposes Location Change for Art and Garden Center



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

An artist's rendering shows the proposed Art and Garden Center at Wilder.

By SALLY HOGARTY  
Editor

When the developers for the Wilder residential project were negotiating with the City of Orinda for the various approvals to build the luxury development, they agreed to several amenities for local residents. These included five sports fields (three of which are completed and well used by local teams), a community park and an art and garden center.

Originally, the art and garden center was to be located at the far end of the development, but recently the developer, Brooks Street, has proposed moving the public amenity to the southerly end of Wilder Park at the beginning of the 245 home development. Brooks Street would like to use the original site for permanently storing excess dirt from grading pads in the overall development. The site would be restored to a hillside when the development is built out.

A study session was held on Nov. 2

where the developer presented sketches of the facility. The developer also proposes to pay the full costs of the relocated facility, fixtures and equipment, as well as construct a trailhead area that includes up to 22 parking spaces with two designated for equestrian trailers. A restroom facility would also be constructed.

Approximately 12 members of the public attended the study session and gave input. The City Council has formed a subcommittee to study the proposal and has also asked arts groups and the garden clubs to weigh in on the project.

City Staff has been asked to develop a proposed schedule (Community Center classes, etc.) and a budget for the facility and a comparison of the operational costs for the original site versus the proposed site. The report will be presented at a future City Council meeting.

## Obama Urges States "Cut Back on Standardized Testing"

By BILL O'BRIAN  
Staff Writer

In late October, President Barack Obama announced that school tests should be limited to two percent of classroom time, which translates to 3.6 days of the 180 school days each year. Though Obama cannot force states or districts to limit testing, he directed the U.S. Department of Education to make it easier for states to satisfy federal testing mandates and urged them to use factors beyond testing to assess student performance.

According to a study of the nation's 66 largest school districts recently released by the Council of the Great City Schools, students spend about 20 to 25 hours a school year taking standardized tests. "How much constitutes too much time is really difficult to answer," said the council's executive director Michael Casserly.

In an article in *USA Today*, author Chris Doering outlined the White House administration's 10-page plan to help educators end assessment that is burdensome or not beneficial to students or teachers. The administration said tests should be "worth taking," time-limited and provide a "clearer picture" of whether students are learning.

According to [www.Edsource.org](http://www.Edsource.org), a site [SEE TESTING page 16]

### IN THIS ISSUE

News	
City Commissions	7
Police Blotter	5
Around Town	
Holiday Events	9,11,14,17,19
Local Residents	5, 13
Performing/Visual Arts	2,12
Schools/Students	10, 11, 15
Between the Lines	6
Business Buzz	20
Calendar	17
Car Time	7
Classified	16
Editorial	4
Everyday Changes	18
Orinda Association	3
Roving Reporter	13
Something to Howl About	8
The Reel Less Traveled	14

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

Postal Customer



**Breedlove** Insurance Services  
Life, Health, Long Term Care

**Expert Medicare and Pre-65 health advice since 2004**

Phone 925 254-6262  
[www.breedloveinsurance.com](http://www.breedloveinsurance.com)



## Local Artists Exhibit Jewels, Paintings and Origami at Library Gallery

By ELANA O'LOSKEY  
Staff Writer

“Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast,” or so says Shakespeare. The Lamorinda Arts Council offers you both at its Orinda Library Gallery exhibit this month; jewelry by Karin Lechner, digital paintings by Mark Coffey, chalk pastel paintings by Jean Sanchirico and origami by Alex Meckes. Take a break from holiday busyness and stop by the gallery on Dec. 4 for their artist reception from 4 to 5:30 p.m. when light refreshments will be served.

Karin Lechner of Lafayette creates one-of-a-kind statement pieces of wearable art, all comprised of unique beads. She frequents gem shows all over the Bay Area where she searches for signature pieces for her designs. For a necklace, she might choose fresh water pearls or an enameled cameo from Mexico as a focus. She then chooses the remaining beads to complement the focus piece. Lechner keeps an extensive inventory of filler beads on hand. A member of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance and the Lafayette Art Gallery, Lechner is showing about 30 pieces. She hopes that

viewers find pieces that match something about their style and personality.

Mark Coffey of Orinda has been creating digital paintings for about three years; his background is in architecture and magazine production. He likes the fact that with digital painting there is no mess to set up or clean up. Since he already knew Adobe InDesign, Illustrator and Photoshop, he added a Wacom tablet and Wacom Artist Brush, took more courses and now paints away. His work is representational, tending towards vibrant colors. A member of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance, he is showing about 20 pieces. Four are from his *Cocktail Series* and four are from his *Floral Series* – the rest are various scenes and objects. Look for *Sailing Through a Field of Dreams*, a 24” x 28” work painted as an acrylic and printed as a Giclée on canvas,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Artist Mark Coffey's digital watercolor painting is entitled *Halcyon*.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alex Meckes, a 7th grader at Orinda Intermediate School, poses with his origami creation *Dodecahedral Frame*.

Dan Rider "Callas"

Lafayette Art Gallery  
3420 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925.284.2788

**"Yellowstone: Beauty, Beasts, and Boneyards"**  
Featuring paintings by Lisa Gunn  
and tableware by Lisa Neimeth

December hours: Every day till Christmas eve from 10 - 6  
Your destination for fine art and handcrafted gifts  
Ample and free parking

**MORAGAARTGALLERY**  
522 Center St., Moraga, CA 94556 www.moragaartgallery.com 925-376-5407

and *Halcyon*, a 24” x 18” work painted as a watercolor and printed as a Giclée on watercolor paper. A Giclée is a high-quality digital inkjet print used to reproduce fine art. See [www.maclare.wordpress.com](http://www.maclare.wordpress.com) for more of his work.

Jean Sanchirico of Berkeley has been creating chalk pastel landscapes for nine years. She likes the immediacy of the medium, being able to get color down quickly without laboring to mix color as you would with paint. Because she can lay down color rapidly, the method allows for fluid, interpretive soft-edges and forbids overworking. Her theme for this show, *Morning Light in Tilden Park*, is a large wooded panoramic consisting of five 28” x 35” paintings hung side by side. The panoramic presentation was inspired by the recent Hockney exhibit at the de Young Museum. Those who visited it will recall the room where Hockney ran a seamless loop of images

of a particular wooded scene through four seasons, enveloping the viewer in nature. Sanchirico's five pieces create an almost 180° curve of pine trees. She belongs to two artist groups: one focuses on painting together with mini-critiques; the other focuses on finding venues to show work. She hopes viewers will be moved by her work, perhaps even recognize the particular place she has depicted. See [www.jeansanchirico.com](http://www.jeansanchirico.com) for more of her work.

Alex Meckes, age 12, of Orinda began creating origami in second grade because it's a bridge between art and math, two subjects he is drawn to. He hopes the 40 pieces he is showing convey the beauty of geometry, show a different side of math and inspire others. Five of the pieces are large-scale geometric, modular pieces; his other focus is origami tessellations. A tessellation is created when a shape is repeated over and over again covering a plane without any gaps or overlaps. His work is kept fresh because, "No matter how complex the piece I'm working on is, there is always a more complex piece that can be attempted; I

[SEE GALLERY page 12]

Moraga Gallery Presents  
*Yellowstone: Beauty, Beasts, and Boneyards*



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lisa Gunn's *Boneyard Trucks*, a 14” x 18” oil painting on board, is part of her exhibit at the Moraga Art Gallery through Jan. 9, 2016.

By ELANA O'LOSKEY  
Staff Writer

Moraga Art Gallery presents *Yellowstone: Beauty, Beasts, and Boneyards*, through Jan. 9, featuring oil paintings by Orinda artist Lisa Gunn. The artwork reflects Gunn's recent trip to Wyoming, Montana and Yellowstone national parks. Stop by to view her paintings of truck boneyards, bison and a Wyoming ranch. The show also features collections of pottery, jewelry and glass by guest artists.

The gallery at 522 Center St., Moraga, is open daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. through Dec. 24. Call 925-376-5407 or visit [www.moragaartgallery.org](http://www.moragaartgallery.org) for more information.

*Morrison's*  
Family Owned Since 1923

Make us your family jeweler  
for decades to come...

Visit us at 35 Moraga Way, across from the Orinda Theater. (925) 253-9227 [www.morrisonjewelry.com](http://www.morrisonjewelry.com)



ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President  
Time For Nominations and Renewal



Bill Waterman

As the year draws to a close, the Orinda Association (OA) is busy preparing for next year's happenings. In February, we will have our 30th dinner to honor the OA's Volunteer of the Year and William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award winners. The volunteer award focuses on someone who acts in a volunteer capacity in the community, while the William Penn Mott, Jr. award recognizes a person's efforts to enhance our environment by direct actions or efforts in education. Please consider nominating someone deserving of our consideration and send nominations by Dec. 4. Go to [www.orindaassociation.org](http://www.orindaassociation.org), click on "Programs and Events" and follow the prompts to the "Volunteer of the Year" nomination page. The winners will be announced next month in *The Orinda News*.

Second, we are focused on membership renewals! Did you know that the OA relies on memberships to support activities including *The Orinda News*, Fourth of July, Seniors Around Town senior ride program and the Volunteer Center? While advertis-

ers pay for most costs associated with the newspaper, we rely on OA Memberships to fund the shortfalls. The OA organizes and pays for the Fourth of July celebration – this is not paid for by the City of Orinda (but we do appreciate the city covering the costs of police and city staff working that day). Great partners such as The Orinda Community Foundation, Orinda Parks and Recreation Foundation and others support the Fourth of July. But we rely on OA Memberships to help cover the costs. Renewals are extremely easy: Go to our website and renew or become a first time member by clicking on "Membership."

The OA is a 501(c) (3) so you get the added benefit of a year-end tax deduction. We have two basic levels – "Family" (\$50) and "Senior" (\$40). So please become a member of the OA or renew your membership – we greatly appreciate your support!

Here's wishing everyone a safe and memorable holiday season, and an early Happy New Year for 2016.

Seniors Around Town Holiday Luncheon for Participants



SALLY HOGARTY

Volunteer **Eartha Newsong** serves a rider at a previous holiday luncheon.

On Dec. 8, the Orinda Association's Seniors Around Town program pays tribute to its riders and drivers at a festive holiday luncheon.

The merriment begins at 11:30 p.m. in the Garden Room, located in the library at 26 Orinda Way and includes a performance

by Miramonte High School's Bella Voce. The 22 young women in the vocal ensemble are led by Meredith Hawkins.

If you are a rider or driver in the SAT program and haven't received your invitation or need further information, call 925-402-4506.

**MARY H. SMITH, D.D.S. • CECELIA THOMAS, D.D.S.**

A Professional Corporation  
96 Davis Road, #5 - Orinda, CA 94563  
**925.254.0824**



Taking care of all your dental needs for you and your family. Emphasizing cosmetic dentistry with implants, and Invisalign. Nitrous oxide is available. Consultations are complimentary. Dentistry with Excellence.

YOUR SMILE IS EVERYTHING

CERT Offers Water Storage

In the event of an emergency, local residents may be without water for several days or longer. The Lamorinda Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) will be making a large purchase of emergency household water supply drums, and residents are invited to participate in the bulk order. Water stored properly in these FDA approved drums, can last for years.

If interested in purchasing 15 or 55 gallon drums for water storage along with drum wrenches and pumps, residents should order through CERT at <http://lamorindacert.org/resources/disaster-supplies/>. Details and prices can be found on the site. Orders must be placed by Jan. 15, and drum pickup will be in Moraga on Jan. 22-23.



presenting

- Regular & Chicago style pizza
- Fresh, high quality ingredients
- Gourmet specialties
- Pizza by the slice at lunch
- Salads
- Fast, free, on time delivery for lunch, dinner, parties and special events

1 Camino Sobrante, Suite 4  
254-2800  
Open 7 days 11-10 p.m. Monday - Saturday  
11-9 p.m. Sunday

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.

P.O. Box 97  
26 Orinda Way (Lower Level Library)  
Orinda, California 94563  
Phone: 254-0800 Fax: 254-8312  
[www.orindaassociation.org](http://www.orindaassociation.org)



OFFICERS

President Bill Waterman  
Vice President: Joe Garvey  
Secretary Alison Dew  
Treasurer Cindy Powell  
Membership Jim Luini

BOARD MEMBERS

Maura Aars  
Joe Haughin  
Chris Laszcz-Davis  
Tom Romaneck

Don't wait for the  
Bubble to Burst...

Low inventory + abundance of buyers  
= opportune time for sellers

If you have been thinking about selling your home, there may be no time like the present.

Happy Holidays

43 Moraga Way, Sute 203 Orinda  
(925) 254-7600 Office  
[Alex@AGreality.com](mailto:Alex@AGreality.com)

Search MLS at  
[www.AlexGailas.com](http://www.AlexGailas.com)



Award Nominations Due December 4

Send in your nominations for 2015 Volunteer of the Year and the William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award by 5 p.m. on Dec. 4.

Individuals or local groups are eligible. Winners will be feted at a gala dinner at the Orinda Country Club in February.

Go to [www.orindaassociation.org](http://www.orindaassociation.org) for a nomination form, call 925-254-0800 or email [oa@orindaassociation.org](mailto:oa@orindaassociation.org).

Celebrate those who make our  
community such a  
wonderful place to live!





# Letters to the Editor

## Need Downtown Plan Regardless of Who Facilitates It

In a recent letter "Downtown Plan (if necessary) Requires Public Vote," Chris Kniel took our OA president Bill Waterman to task for having the audacity to suggest that we need a "Downtown Specific Plan" and for suggesting we may want to use the Urban Land Institute to help develop that plan. Mr. Kniel went on to "suggest" that the lack of "developmental progress downtown" was due to the council being in favor of "big development" and ignoring the building codes and our General Plan. To lend credence to his comments, he identified himself as a former member of the "Planning Commission, Planning Review Task Force, and Finance Committee." He went on to raise the Montessori appeal as an example, I guess, of just how wrong things are in our city.

Like him, I served on the Planning Commission (three full terms) and served on the Planning Review Task Force, I did not serve on the Finance Committee but after reviewing records at the city, I could not find that he did either. I filed the Montessori appeal, not Orinda Vision or any other group; just me. I did it for several reasons; the application was in violation of our General Plan because the use (child care) is called out in it as not appropriate in the Downtown Commercial District, a use that would bring 150 cars each morning, and 90 at lunch time everyday (applicants numbers) to the intersection of two public streets effectively ruining the ability of several local businesses to conduct their business, because the application required an amendment to the General Plan, which the Planning Director told them they needed, but the applicant did not bother to apply for and because having children exit a child care facility onto a busy public street corner to wait for their parents was unsafe. For all these reasons, the appeal had to be filed, and it was never about design just about the use. Mr. Kniel knows my reasons for appealing; he was there and commented to me on them yet he talks in his letter about "designs" and "codes."

The City Council did exactly what we as voters should want them to do by voting to uphold the General Plan, the process for changing that Plan, the viability of local business and the safety of our children. The members of the council should be commended for voting the way they did not vilified for it. I have to ask what Mr. Kniel has against local business that he want to destroy it for a use that is not allowed, what he has against our children that he would then put at risk going to and from pre-school, and why he does not want us to have a plan for the downtown?

Mr. Waterman is right, we need a new downtown plan, and I don't care who is

used to facilitate getting one, and Mr. Kniel is right when he suggests that Orinda is your town and you need to be involved in any process that will bring change to the downtown. But ask yourself: Do you want to spend the time needed to understand everything you will need to know to make an informed vote? Let your voices be heard by the people elected to represent you then expect them to do exactly that.

– Terry J. Murphy

## The "S" in TSAC Is For "Safety"

The City Council has heretofore refused a request by the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) for a \$50,000 budget for "traffic calming" measures, approving only \$30,000 in TSAC funding. It is time for TSAC to implement its "safety" duties by going back to the City Council, firmly asking for increased funding for traffic calming for this Fiscal Year (to June 30, 2016). Thirty thousand dollars is totally inadequate, shown by the cost of significantly-increased numbers of valid traffic safety problems brought before TSAC this Fiscal Year.

The high costs of identifying/prioritizing Orinda locations of traffic calming concerns, analyzing proposed "calming" solutions per complex and numerous State and Federal regulations, and still-higher costs of installing solutions (speed bumps, simple crosswalks or signs) cannot be met by this meager sum approved by council.

TSAC's renewed appeal to City Council would truly be seeking to protect the safety concerns persuasively expressed by Orinda parents and residents who are rightly concerned about both the increased speeds and traffic in our residential neighborhoods.

At the TSAC meeting on October 19, 2015, a question was posed whether TSAC should evaluate a request for "traffic calming" in an Orinda residential neighborhood extending parallel to Route 24. Traffic to be "calmed" includes that which bypasses Route 24's incessant stop-and-go commuter traffic, choosing instead to drive through this residential neighborhood. There are clearly-recognized risks from hurrying commuters that cross paths of children getting on school buses or traversing streets to play local sports. Such risks extend to Orindans dog walking, exercising or attending meetings/classes in this neighborhood.

TSAC Chair, Mark Roberts, asked, why choose to come to this neighborhood during Route 24 commuter hours? Chair Roberts's "take-away" message was to "stay home" during these bypass times of day.

Chair Roberts' response does not acknowledge the real-life risky circumstances that prevail in this neighborhood for the many children who must cross the commuters' paths while going to school and other scheduled activities, nor does it re-



## List of *The Orinda News* Advertisers

	Page	Page
<b>Arts and Entertainment</b>		Law Office of Victoria Robinson Smith 20
Dan Rider Contemporary Indoor & Outdoor		May Technology 19
Sculpture	2	Orinda Taxi 9
Moraga Art Gallery	2	Taxi Bleu 18
Orinda Ballet Academy & Company	9	<b>Real Estate</b>
<b>Automotive</b>		AG Realty
Orinda Motors	7	Alexander Gailas 3
Orinda Shell	10	Better Homes & Gardens
<b>Beauty and Fitness</b>		Lisa Shaffer 12
Changes Salon & Day Spa	20	Coldwell Banker
CoreKinetics	19	Laura Abrams 13
Living Lean Exercise & Eating Program	18	Patti Camras 19
<b>Construction and Trades</b>		Suzanne Toner Geoffron 18
David Collins Painting Services	8	Shellie Kirby 5
Tom Romanek Painting	9	David Pierce 9
<b>Dental</b>		Steve Stahle 7
Dr. Kristi L. Doberenz DDS	13	Maureen Wilbur 11
Dr. Mary Smith DDS	3	Pacific Union
<b>Educational</b>		Billy & Sherrie Perlstein 12
Orinda Academy	9	Virginia and Paul Ratto 6
<b>Financial and Insurance Services</b>		Leila Schlein 15
Breedlove Insurance Services	1	Soheila Smith Real Estate
Prospect Mortgage		Soheila Smith 14
Kat Rider	6	Village Associates
RPM Mortgage		Dexter Honens 15
Dianne Crosby	5	April Matthews 6
<b>Garden/Landscaping</b>		Ann Sharf 14
Blue Ridge Landscaping	19	Clark Thompson 5
McDonnell Nursery	15	<b>Restaurants/Catering</b>
Tree Sculpture	6	Baan Thai 14
<b>Medical</b>		Casa Orinda 5
Advanced Therapy Center	13	home/made kitchen 17
Dr. Brian Clark	11	La Mediterranean 14
Dr. Nicole Ionascu	15	Lava Pit 16
Medicine Shoppe	5	Siam Orchid 17
Dr. Kristin Walker	11	Village Inn Cafe 10
<b>Non-Profits</b>		Village Pizza
Orinda Association	3	Zamboni's Pizza 3
<b>Pet Service</b>		<b>Retail Stores</b>
Animal House Pet Sitting	8	Echo Grove 19
Theatre View Veterinary Clinic	8	McCaulou's 14
<b>Professional Services</b>		Morrison's Jewelers 2
Cruise Adventures Unlimited	12	Theatre Square 20
Kattneburg Architects	9	

spect Orindans who should not have their schedules held hostage to commuter-caused problems that are far beyond neighborhoods' control.

TSAC's first responsibility must be to advocate for its citizens' safety. This committee must remind the council that budgetary decisions should be based upon demonstrated safety needs, not upon incautious

disregard for the well-being of residents. If TSAC believes it owes its allegiance to the convenience of commuters over its citizens' safety, its value is in question.

– Chet Martine

## Government Policies Harm Orinda

Body odor is likely to be the new scent [SEE LETTERS page 15]

*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) and distributed to key locations throughout the city.

Editor.....Sally Hogarty  
 Assistant Editor.....David Dierks  
 Copy Editor.....Maggie Sharpe  
 Advertising Representatives.....Jill Gelster, Elana O'Loskey  
 Editorial Committee.....Jill Gelster, Sally Hogarty, Lynn Kalmar, Jim Luini, Elana O'Loskey, Mark Roberts, Bill Waterman, Kate Wiley  
 Staff Writers.....Jennifer Conroy, Bobbie Dodson, Valerie Hotz, Charlie Jarrett, Kathryn G. McCarty, Marian Nielsen, Bill O'Brian, Elana O'Loskey, John Vanek, Bill Waterman, Bonnie Waters, Tom Westlake  
 Contributing Writers.....Kenneth Hogarty, Cheryl Richards  
 Graphics.....Aspen Consulting: Jill Gelster & David Dierks  
 Printing.....Folger Graphics

## The Orinda News

A Publication of  
 The Orinda Association  
 Mailing Address  
 P.O. Box 97  
 Orinda, California 94563  
 Telephone: 925 254-0800

www.orindanews.org



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

Opinions of *The Orinda News* are expressed on the editorial page. Views of writers and letters to the editor are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Orinda Association or of *The Orinda News*. Advertisements appearing in *The Orinda News* are not to be construed as endorsements by The Orinda Association or *The Orinda News*. Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis and should be no longer than 400 words. They must include the writer's first and last name, signature and telephone number.

Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, or email to news@orindaassociation.org. Letters to Editor for the January issue are due **December 8, 2015**.

For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 or email to jill@aspenconsult.net. The deadline for the December issue is November 8, 2015.



EMERGENCY MEDICAL AND POLICE

# Emergency Medical Services Professional Receives Award

By DAVID DIERKS  
Assistant Editor

Orinda Resident Gail Porto is one of 34 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) professionals in California to receive an award from the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) for their extraordinary contributions to EMS on December 2. "These men and women epitomize the spirit and commitment to quality that embody these awards and deserve official recognition for their contributions in making California's EMS system one of the best in the world," said Director of the California EMSA Howard Backer.

Porto is receiving an Innovation in EMS award for playing an integral role in the initial development and implementation of community paramedicine programs in California. Porto, who works with Alameda Fire, said, "I worked collaboratively with Dr. Baxter Larmon of UCLA in the delivery of the Regional Community Paramedic



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Alameda Fire Department recognized their recent paramedic program graduates and EMS education coordinator: (L-R) **Stephen Lucero, David Wills, Armando Baldizan**, EMS Education Coordinator **Gail Porto, Michael DeWindt** and **Patrick Corder**.

curriculum." This was the first time this curriculum was delivered. "I was also responsible for developing and delivering the local curriculum and setting up the Community Paramedic Program in Alameda."

The Alameda Community Paramedic [SEE PORTO page 6]

**The Medicine Shoppe**  
100% Pure Pharmacy<sup>SM</sup>  
**Happy Holidays!**   
Stock up on Stocking Stuffers!  
We offer a variety of healthy items for everyone on your stocking stuffer list.  
Alan Wong, R.Ph.  
Next to Hollyhock and McCaulou's  
282 Orinda Village Sq. • 254-1211  
www.medicineshoppe.com

**Shellie Abbes Kirby**  
Warm wishes for a  
**Happy & Healthy  
Holiday Season**  
Office: 925-253-6321  
Cell: 925-872-4257  
email: shellie @shelliekirby.com  





## POLICE BLOTTER

October, 2015

**Battery:** 1 incident: Van Tassel Ln.  
**Burglary, Auto:** 5 incidents: Bear Creek Rd./Camino Pablo, Orchard Rd., Rheem Blvd., Theatre Square and Wilder Blvd./Hwy 24.  
**Burglary, Commercial:** 1 incident: Orinda Way.  
**Burglary, Residential:** 2 incidents: Moraga Way and Moraga Via.  
**Grand Theft from Building:** 1 incident: Moraga Way.  
**Hit and Run Misdemeanor:** 1 incident: Moraga Way.  
**Petty Theft:** 6 incidents: Orinda Way, Donald Dr., El Nido Ranch/St. Stephens, La Cuesta Rd., Safeway and Camino Sobrante.  
**Petty Theft from Vehicle:** 2 incidents: Orchard Rd. and Claremont Ave.  
**Shoplift:** 2 incidents: Safeway.  
**Vandalism:** 1 incident: Moraga Way.

Moraga Way/Brookside Rd., Camino Pablo/Claremont, HWY 24/Oak Hill Rd., Safeway (2), and Miramonte High School.  
**Misd. Traffic:** 1 arrest: Camino Pablo/Monte Vista.  
**Petty Theft:** 1 arrest: Safeway.  
**Probation Violation:** 1 arrest: Brookwood Rd./Camino Pablo.  
**Warrant Arrest:** 2 arrests: Lost Valley Dr. and La Sobra Ct.

**Local BART Stations\***  
**Aggravated Assault:** 1 incident.  
**Assault/Battery:** 4 incidents.  
**Auto Burglary:** 17 incidents.  
**Bicycle Theft:** 21 incidents.  
**Catalytic Theft:** 1 incident.  
**Robbery:** 1 incident.  
**Stolen Vehicle:** 10 vehicles.

– Compiled by David Dierks  
Assistant Editor

**Arrests**  
**DUI:** 8 arrests: Old Tunnel Rd. (2),

\*Be advised that the manner in which BART compiles crime statistics is based on zones, and the Orinda BART station is in the same zone as Concord, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek and Lafayette. BART is unable to separate Orinda specific crimes from the other mentioned stations, therefore, the statistics comprise all five stations.



**Village ASSOCIATES**  
REAL ESTATE

30 Years as Lamorinda's #1 Broker

**CLARK THOMPSON**  
REAL ESTATE BROKER

(925) 254-8585  
[www.clarkthompson.com](http://www.clarkthompson.com)

Solid options for dynamic people

## Dianne Crosby

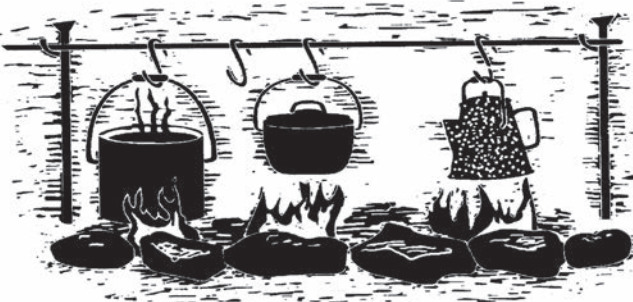
### RPM MORTGAGE



CELL 510.541.1662  
DIRECT 925.743.3501  
[www.dianneecrosby.com](http://www.dianneecrosby.com)

Serving Lamorinda, the Bay Area, and the entire State of California from her loan processing center located at 51 Moraga Way, Suite 2, Orinda, CA 94563.

RPM Mortgage, Inc. - NMLS#9472 - Licensed by the Dept. of Business Oversight under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act. Equal Housing Opportunity.  NMLS# 304682



## CASA ORINDA

### RESTAURANT

Dinner served nightly from 4 p.m.

925.254.2981 ■ 20 Bryant Way ■ Orinda, CA 94563



BOOKS

# Between the Lines

## A 2015 Alphabet of Holiday Gift Books from A to Z

Marian Nielsen, Orinda Books



**A** is for *Alone on the Wall* by Alex Honnold (Norton \$26.95) – a free climber’s stories make breath-taking reading.

**B** is for *Between the World & Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates (Spiegel & Grau \$24) – a gifted *Atlantic Monthly* writer tells his son about life as a black man in America. Painful but important reading!

**C** is for *Circling the Sun* by Paula McLain (Ballantine \$28) – Beryl Markham’s life in Kenya and beyond has been turned into fascinating fiction.

**D** is for *Do Unto Animals: A Friendly Guide to How Animals Live & How We Can*

*Make Their Lives Better* by Tracey Stewart (Artisan \$19.95) – from rescue animals to backyard critters, Stewart’s stories are engaging and enlightening.

**E** is for *Enchanted Forest: An Inky Quest & Coloring Book* by Johanna Basford (Laurence King \$15.95) – one of the hot new coloring books to keep us alert.

**F** is for *Fates & Furies* by Lauren Groff (Riverhead \$27.95) – and “f” is also for fine fiction, which Groff’s latest contemporary love story certainly is.

**G** is for *Green Lizards & Red Rectangles* by Steve Antony (Scholastic \$16.99) –

“let’s all get along” is the sensible message of this charming children’s book. (Ages 4-7)

**H** is for *H is for Hawk* by Helen MacDonald (Grove Press \$26) – both as an elegy for her father and as the story of her goshawk year, MacDonald’s memoir is compelling reading.

**I** is for *The Illustrated Edition: Harry Potter & the Sorcerer’s Stone* by J.K. Rowling (Arthur Levine \$39.99) – a beautiful journey awaits young Muggles and their grown-ups. (Ages 8 and up)

**J** is for *Jacques Pepin: Heart & Soul in the Kitchen* by Jacques Pepin (Houghton Mifflin \$35) – a memorable companion volume to Pepin’s final television series.

**K** is for *Knitting Pearls: Writers Writing About Knitting* by Ann Hood (Norton \$25.95) – Laura Lippman and Jodi Picoult are just a few of the writers who testify to the healing powers of knit 1, purl 2.

**L** is for *Life Size Birds: The Big Book of North American Birds* by Nancy Hajeski (Thunder Bay \$39.95) – they’re big as life in this outsized gift for the birdwatchers on a holiday list.

**M** is for *My Kitchen Year: 136 Recipes That Saved My Life* by Ruth Reichl (Random House \$35) – when *Gourmet Magazine* was closed, the kitchen became Reichl’s salvation.

**N** is for *Never Surrender: Winston Churchill & Britain’s Decision to Fight Nazi Germany in the Fateful Summer of 1940* by John Kelly (Scribner \$30) – history buffs will welcome this new and definitive look at a 20<sup>th</sup> c. turning point.

**O** is for *The Oregon Trail: A New American Journey* by Rinker Buck (Simon & Schuster \$28) – Wagons ho! a contemporary re-creation of the 1830s trek across the plains is extraordinary reading.

**P** is for *Percy Jackson’s Greek Heroes* by Rick Riordan (Disney \$24.99) – beautiful illustrations accompany this slightly irreverent re-telling of the Greek myths. (Ages 10-13)

**Q** is for *The Quartet: Orchestrating the Second American Revolution-1783-1789* by Joseph Ellis (Knopf \$27.95) – prizewinning author Ellis has made the period his own – and ours – with his accomplished narration.

**R** is for *The Road to Character* by David Brooks (Random House \$28) – the wisdom and humor he brings to his PBS commentary have also made his books bestsellers.

**S** is for *The Secret Chord* by Geraldine Brooks (Viking \$27.95) – Iron Age Israel comes brilliantly to life in Brooks’ fictionalized story of King David.

**T** is for *This Bridge Will Not Be Grey* by Dave Eggers & Tucker Nichols (McSweeney’s \$19.95) – and it could have been red, white and blue. The Golden Gate Bridge grows before our eyes. (Ages 3-6)

**U** is for *Us* by David Nicholls (Harper \$15.99) – a light but wise fictional treat, Nicholl’s newest (now in paperback) is a splendid stocking stuffer.

**V** is for *Voices in the Ocean: A Journey into the Wild & Haunting World of Dolphins* by Susan Casey (Doubleday \$27.95) – nature literature at its best in this very personal underwater odyssey.

**W** is for *The Witches: Salem, 1692* by Stacy Schiff (Little Brown \$32) – as she did with *Cleopatra*, Schiff breathes new life into the past and now into this particularly American drama.

**X** is for *X: Kinsey Milhone #24* by Sue Grafton (Putnam \$28.95) – we all wish there were more than 26 letters in the alphabet so that Kinsey could go on forever.

**Y** is for *Yosemite in the Fifties: The Iron Age* by Dean Fiedelman & John Long (Patagonia \$60) – historic ascents and legendary personalities are the backbone of what is a new classic of mountain climbing.

**Z** is for *Zen Socks* by Jon Muth (Scholastic \$17.99) – Muth’s engaging giant panda, Stillwater, is back to charm his young friends with simple and wise stories. (Ages 4-8)

Happy Holidays and Happy Reading from A to Z



Refinancing? Purchasing?

Home lending in Lamorinda over 25 years

Call Kat!

Kat Rider Loan Officer NMLS#202928

Cell: 925.787.1692

kat.rider@prospectmtg.com

8 Camino Encinas Suite #100 Orinda CA 94563

Equal Housing Lender. Prospect Mortgage is located at 15301 Ventura Blvd., Suite 0300, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403, 800-464-2482. Prospect Mortgage, LLC, NMLS ID #3296. (www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org) is a Delaware limited liability company, licensed by the Department of Business Oversight under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act, 1910 Olympic Blvd #120 Walnut Creek, CA 94596 Branch #301524



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

Consistently representing Buyers and Sellers in Successful Transactions

- \*Expert advice
- \*20+ years of Lamorinda knowledge
- \*Personalized strategy
- \*Extensive marketing
- \*A thorough plan for your home preparation/staging
- \*Outstanding negotiating skills



April Matthews  
925.253.2147

aprilmat@comcast.net

CalBRE# 01221153

www.dreamhomelamorinda.com



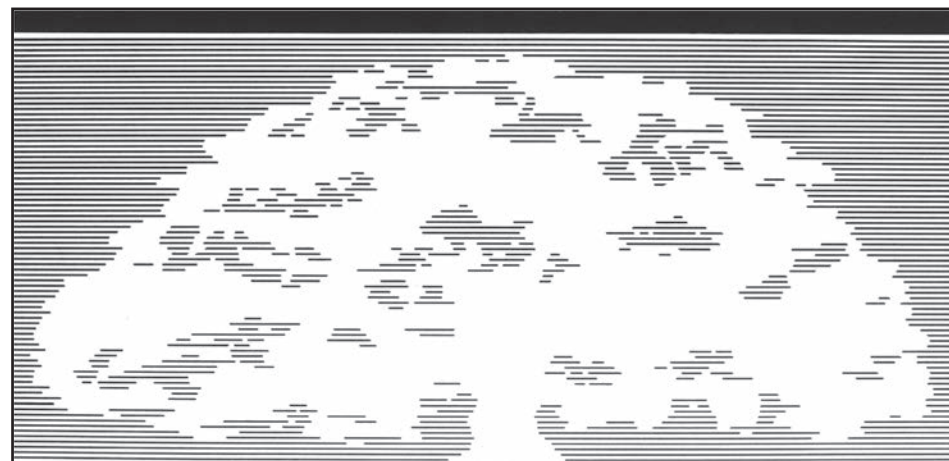
Giving Dreams an Address

### ◆ PORTO from page 5

Program provides follow-up care for individuals with chronic illnesses who have been recently discharged from the hospital. Among the many services provided are medical assessments, chronic disease care, collaboration with primary care physicians, home safety assessments, psychological assessments and substance abuse treatment support. “I continually see our patients lacking in resources to help make their lives more manageable, yet these resources are often times available. The key is to connect the two,” said Porto. “Recently the State of

California Emergency Medical Services Agency committed to doing a two year pilot project to study if the paramedics could safely provide a resource as well as a safety net for those in need. Alameda Fire was one of 11 sites selected to be part of this pilot project.”

The awards will be presented at the Marines Memorial Club & Hotel in San Francisco at the regular meeting of the Commission on Emergency Services. For more information, visit [www.co.alameda.ca.us/fire](http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/fire) and [www.emsa.ca.gov](http://www.emsa.ca.gov).



## TREE SCULPTURE

COMPLETE TREE CARE

Proudly serving the East Bay since 1965!

Fully Insured ❖ Certified Arborists ❖ License #655977

(925) 254-7233 ❖ [www.treesculpture.com](http://www.treesculpture.com)



Virginia Varni-Ratto

(925) 998-9501

[vvarni@pacunion.com](mailto:vvarni@pacunion.com)

[www.rattoandratto.com](http://www.rattoandratto.com)

Paul Ratto

(925) 899-9536

[pratto@pacunion.com](mailto:pratto@pacunion.com)

[www.fixup2sell.com](http://www.fixup2sell.com)



Happy Holidays!

We would like to thank all of our clients for their loyalty and trust and wish everyone a Happy New Year 2016!

just ask our clients



51 Moraga Way, Suite 1

ORINDA, CA 94563

925-258-0090

see our open homes and many more listings with virtual & multi-media tours on [pacunion.com](http://pacunion.com)



CARS



**NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE  
ON A CITY OF ORINDA COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE**

The City of Orinda is seeking applications from *resident volunteers* to serve on the City's:

- Art in Public Places Committee (1)**
- Planning Commission (3)**
- Parks & Recreation Commission (2)**
- Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission (3)**
- Public Works Aesthetic Review Committee (1)**
- Historic Landmark Committee (3)**

The City of Orinda is also seeking applications from *resident volunteers* to serve as the City's Liaison to the following local agencies:

- Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District Trustee (1)**
- Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging (1)**
- County Connection Citizens Advisory Committee (1)**

Statement of Interest forms are available from the Orinda City Clerk's Office, 22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563. If you have any specific questions regarding the recruitment, please contact Michele Olsen, City Clerk at 925-253-4221 or [molsen@cityoforinda.org](mailto:molsen@cityoforinda.org). Application forms may also be downloaded from the City's website at [www.cityoforinda.org](http://www.cityoforinda.org).

Completed Statement of Interest forms must be submitted to the City Clerk's Office by Friday, January 15, 2016 at 5:00pm.

Qualified applicants for City Commission and Committee appointments will be invited to interview before the full City Council.

◆ **PETITION** from page 1

skilled input from people who have the knowledge to come in and guide the city." Orinda resident Ethan Elkind added, "We need a specific plan for downtown. Every other successful downtown in the Bay Area has clear rules. A clear public plan that really explains where things go, where the parking goes, what kind of planning design standards we want to have."

"I think it's clear that the majority of Orindans, based on the response to Monica's petition, agree that we need to take some steps forward on our downtown," said Orinda Association (OA) President Bill Waterman. "I do think we should consult outside experts. It doesn't have to be ULI; it could be other experts."

Waterman suggested forming a committee to look into the matter. "I think it makes sense if we have a citizen commit-

tee or commission, like we have done with roads, to help the City Council through this process," said Waterman, who volunteered the OA as a facilitator in future discussions. "One of the OA's three missions is to promote dialog in Orinda about important issues. This is an important issue. The OA would be very happy to host a community forum on this issue next year and everybody who wants to be involved in the whole organization and process of it are more than welcome."

"We did have a matter initiated by Councilmember Worth, and I know that it's coming back to the council," said Mayor Dean Orr. "It is something that will be happening in the near future. I encourage you to stay in touch and stay involved as we move forward on the item."

For more information, visit [www.cityoforinda.org](http://www.cityoforinda.org) and [www.change.org/p/orinda-city-council-restore-downtown-orinda](http://www.change.org/p/orinda-city-council-restore-downtown-orinda).

**CAR TIME**

**All Brake Jobs Not Created Equal**



By JOHN VANEK

In today's price-sensitive world, folks try to get the best price they can for a brake job. It makes sense to be a good consumer and get the best job for your money. However, the best brake job is usually not the least expensive. A brake job seems like a routine repair, but there are many variables that can affect the outcome – the most important being the brake parts used.

The car manufacturer does not usually produce the brake parts. However, the engineers *do* dictate the exact formulas for the friction materials used. The quality and formula of the brake pads make a big difference. Most car manufacturers won't let the brake company use their formula for aftermarket sales.

The raw materials available in countries such as China are not up to the quality of brake products available in other countries. In many cases, the best brake pad friction comes with the highest price tag. Cheaper products often mean inferior results in the long run. The weight of the brake rotors (discs) makes a big difference too. Less

weight saves money but does not get the same results. Brake friction is crucial!

Labor costs are important as well. A proper brake job includes complete disc assembly, cleaning and lubrication. If the proper time is not spent, the results will be inferior. Brake hardware and anti-squeal shims come into play also. Choose a service provider who ensures these components are in good condition to achieve a good brake job. Cheap brake jobs are a combination of cheap parts and cheap labor.

The steep hills in Orinda and frequent short trips in a heavy vehicle are hard on brakes. An inferior brake job leads to premature wear, shudder under braking and annoying squealing noises. The brake wear will vary after you get some miles on your vehicle as well. Ride control suffers when your struts get worn and affect the brake wear. Worn-out struts and shocks make the brakes and tires work harder. Locate a shop that can recognize these things and advise you accordingly.

[SEE CARS page 8]



**Steve Stahle**  
(925) 324-4121  
[steve.stahle@camoves.com](mailto:steve.stahle@camoves.com)  
[www.homesinorindaandlafayette.com](http://www.homesinorindaandlafayette.com)  
Coldwell Banker  
40 years business experience  
Tradition of Trust - Service You Desire  
BRE#01861509





**Winter is coming!**

Getting ready for ski season? Holiday traveling?  
Rainy weather? Avoiding accidents?



**Is your car ready?**

Your car requires special attention when the weather is severe. Let us perform a pre-winter inspection and make sure your car is safe!

- ✓ Tires ✓ Battery ✓ Brakes ✓ Anti-Freeze ✓ Belts ✓ Hoses
- ✓ Fluids ✓ Wiper Blades ✓ Windshield Washer ✓ Lights

**Orinda Motors**

*Rated the highest quality for over 10 years by Diamond Certified*

Still the best choice for your car or SUV!



[www.orindamotors.com](http://www.orindamotors.com) 63 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563



PETS

Halloween Parade for Tots



DAVID DIERKS

Youngsters (and more than a few adults!) got into the Halloween spirit early at the annual Halloween Parade for Tots at the Orinda Community Center Park. Participants joined Glenda the Good Witch for a stroll around the park before enjoying Halloween-themed activities. The event is sponsored by the Orinda Community Center Auxiliary.

Something to Howl About...  
Animal Tales

'Tis the Season for Silly Pet Questions

Jennifer Conroy



You've heard of stupid pet tricks but what about stupid pet questions, especially during the holiday season? I don't mean questions we ask our pets. I mean questions we ask ourselves during this time of year. Here are just a few....

**Is it safe to get a Christmas tree for a home that includes three cats?**

Of course it is. The cats will love having a new "cat tree" to climb and all those shiny ornaments to bat around.

**Can my dog have his photo taken with the neighborhood mall Santa?**

I would say yes only because I have done that with my dogs in the past. I must caution, though, that sometimes Santa over-promises and under-delivers.

**My cat keeps interrupting when I play the dreidel game. What can I do about that?**

Consider getting your cat a Kong Cat Wobbler toy. It's basically a "top" for cats. You can fill it with catnip and keep your cat amused and away from the dreidel for hours.

**My dog barks every time I kiss someone under the mistletoe. How can I get her to stop?**

That's an easy one. Give your dog a kiss every time you step under the mistletoe.

**Is it wrong to put an antler headpiece on my dog or cat?**

Yes it is. But it is perfectly all right to put one on a pet snake.

Now on to serious matters! Before you go out and buy live holiday plants this year, such as mistletoe and poinsettia, realize that the leaves and berries are poisonous to animals – that goes for plants you want to bring into your house as well as plants you may be thinking about giving as gifts.

While thinking about gifts, the very worst gift of all is the gift of an animal.

Each year, animals are brought to shelters because they are unwanted. Even when someone expresses a desire for a "pet," they may not really be ready to take on the full responsibility and the expense for the lifetime care of an animal. A better idea is to create a gift certificate for the person that indicates you will pay for the purchase or adoption fee of an animal. That way your friend or family member can take the time to consider carefully the decision as well as the choice of animal or breed. You can really spice up this gift by adding to the gift certificate that you'll pay for a visit to veterinarian, for bedding, for food, or other supplies.

This is also the time to make charitable donations before the end of the tax year. There are many wonderful animal welfare nonprofit organizations throughout the country and right here in the Bay Area. They rely on your support to rescue, care for, adopt and help all types of animals, both wild and domestic. If you have not already chosen an organization for your support, check on GuideStar (guidestar.org) or Charity Navigator (charitynavigator.org) to find organizations with good track records.

Happy Holidays to you and all the animals in your life!

◆ CARS from page 7

Price shopping on brakes is a risky proposition. There is no way that a service professional on the phone is going to know exactly what kind of brake job you need. The issue gets worse when you price shop from a list of auto shops that you know nothing about. Are they trustworthy? Do they use quality parts? What kind of warranty do they offer? Are their technicians trained to perform proper brake jobs? The answer to the last question is especially important if the price for the job is significantly lower than a top-tier shop.

John Vanek can be reached at john@orindamotors.com



animal house

PET & HOME CARE

Ski trips or winter travel plans?

Let me take the worry out of what to do with your home and pets while you are away.

- Pet Sitting
- Dog Walking
- Pet Taxi
- Home Watch/Security
- Collect Mail and Newspapers
- Water Plants
- Insured and Bonded

925-254-3677 Office

925-368-8978 Cell

animal-house@comcast.net



Residential and Restoration Painting Services

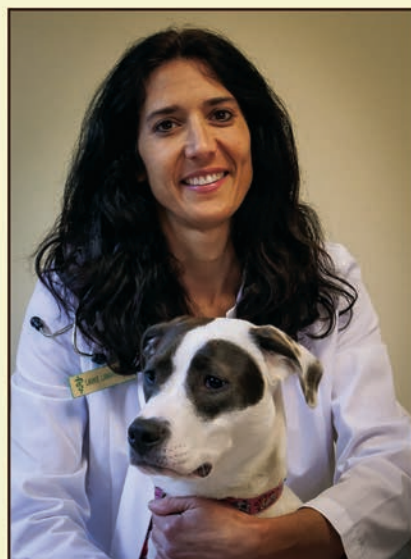
Meticulous attention to detail  
44 years of satisfied customers  
We also paint wine cellars!

David Collins, Orinda

925-254-6882  
lic. 583003



Theater View Veterinary Clinic, owned by Dr. Laurie Langford, is excited to announce a new addition. Dr. Amelia Ausman has joined our team. Come check us out.



P: (925) 317-3187  
F: (925) 334-7017  
E: tvvc@theaterviewvetclinic.com  
W: www.theaterviewvetclinic.com

1 Bates Blvd., Suite 200  
Orinda  
CA 94563

**THIS SEASON SHALL CHANGE ALL GRIEF & QUARREL INTO LOVE.**  
...Shakespeare

Wishing My Clients & The Lamorinda Community a Holiday Season of Joy & Magic & A New Year Filled With Hope, Peace & Prosperity.

DAVID PIERCE | Broker-Realtor  
925 . 254 . 5984  
david.pierce@cbnorcal.com  
www.davidpierce.net



BALLET / TREE LIGHTING

# A Sweet Holiday Tradition

By SALLY HOGARTY  
Editor

Nothing says “holidays” more than dancing flowers and an army of mice for many Bay Area aficionados of Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker*. Thanks to Orinda Ballet, local residents don’t have far to go to see this annual treat. The company celebrates its seventh anniversary with a production of the favorite ballet about Clara and her magical nutcracker. Performances are Dec. 11-13 at the Orinda Community Center.

For those who have never seen this fanciful holiday tradition, *The Nutcracker* tells of a very special Christmas Eve when family and friends have gathered to celebrate at the Stahlbaums’ home. The children receive presents – young Clara gets an intricately carved wooden nutcracker from her godfather Drosselmeyer. When the clock strikes midnight and all are asleep, the nutcracker

comes alive and takes Clara on a magical journey to the Land of Sweets.

“We are so excited to be celebrating seven years of producing this popular event for the community,” says artistic director Patricia Tomlinson. “We have such wonderful young performers and adult volunteers who work along with our guest artists to make this show so special.”

This year, Tomlinson has over 70 young dancers, ranging in age from four to 18, performing the many roles. “Even the very young dancers, who are just five years old, dance several roles and are involved in many scenes,” says Tomlinson. “I love watching the older students mentor the young ones. We’re like one very large family.”

Adding to that family are the many parent volunteers who keep the backstage area from utter chaos and make sure young dancers make it to the stage on time and in

[SEE BALLET page 16]



TIFFANY FONG

(L-R) Ilana Rubin, Catherine Schultz, Georgia Varrelmann (middle back) Snow Queen Connie Warthen from last season’s *Nutcracker*.

# Annual Hospice Tree Lighting Inspires Awe, Provides Comfort

By KATHRYN G. McCARTY  
Staff Writer

The yearly lighting of the Orinda Tree of Lights brings about a child-like sense of amazement in Orinda resident Sharon Iversen. “I feel hope and wonder,” she said. “And a little awe in the possibility of a greater presence than ourselves in the universe.”

Iversen will attend the Dec. 5 ceremony at 4:30 p.m. in Orinda Village Square. Sponsored by the Friends of Hospice, Orinda and the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, the ceremony is one of 11 East Bay events. It takes place at the oak tree in front of Bank of America on Orinda Way

Iversen has been attending annual tree lighting ceremonies throughout the East Bay since 2006. “Each community has its own unique ceremony,” she said, adding that the ceremony will have a similar format to former years, which she finds “comforting to me in its familiarity.”

Stewart Larson, a former president of Friends of Hospice, Orinda, as well as this year’s chairperson for the Tree of Lights,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sharon Iversen is an Emeritus board member of Hospice.

became involved with hospice when he observed first-hand “the wonderful care my sister received during the last days of her life.” Larson said he feels the ceremony “brings the community together at this most special time of year.” The event will include choral music and remarks by Mayor Dean Orr and hospice staff. Special guest Santa Claus will arrive via a Moraga-Orinda fire engine, bringing treats and holiday cheer

[SEE HOSPICE page 16]

# ORINDA TAXI

## (925) 482-7112

24/7 Airports & Local • Hybrid Vehicles

[www.orindataxi.com](http://www.orindataxi.com)

Happy Holidays

From Kattenburg Architects  
Wishing You A Joyous Holiday Season

Tom Romaneck Painting

2015 Orinda Chamber Ambassador of the Year

Meticulous preparation & finish work

Int/ ext, and deck restoration

Excellent References • Owner Operated

Free Estimates

925-323-9908

TRomaneck@yahoo.com

Lic. #922081

## ORINDA ACADEMY

PARENTS, STUDENTS & TEACHERS WORKING TOGETHER

College Prep • Grades 8-12 • Small Classes

### OPEN HOUSE

FOR INTERESTED FAMILIES  
INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND TOURS

## DECEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>

### 1-4 PM

Limited Openings in grades 8-12  
Accepting applications for school year 2015-16

19 Altarinda Rd., Orinda, CA 94563

925.254.7553 • [www.OrindaAcademy.org](http://www.OrindaAcademy.org)

Orinda Ballet Academy & Company

Artistic Director, Patricia Tomlinson

Celebrating our 7th Season!

# "A Sweet Dream Nutcracker"

Orinda Library Theater

Friday, December 11, 6:30pm

Saturday, December 12, 11:30am & 4:00pm

Sunday, December 13, 11:30am & 3:30pm

Children & Adults - General Seating

\$20 Ticketing

www.BrownPaperTickets.com

(Online Ticket Purchase)

Ticket & Show Information

(925) 254-2445

www.OrindaBalletAcademy.com

City of Orinda • Parks & Recreation • Recreation Programs • 28 Orinda Way  
Orinda, CA 94563 • [www.cityoforinda.org](http://www.cityoforinda.org) • (925) 254-2445 • fax (925) 253-7716



# Miramonte Teams Rack up Wins

By KEN HOGARTY  
Contributing Writer

With two championship trophies already claimed, Miramonte's fall athletic teams are still in the running for more hardware during NCS playoffs as of press time.

The Lady Mats' golfers defeated Justin Siena by 23 strokes to annex the NCS Division II championship. Tori James, a DFAL all league first teamer, led the Lady Mats shooting a par 72 in the final match. Franny Coronna, who will team with James as team captains for next season, earned second team all-league honors. Tiffany Shinn, Ali Ingrey, Libby Dunne and Gracie Guidotti completed the line-up that brought home the championship for coaches Jackie Birdsong and Bob Riddell.

The distaff water polo team also garnered an NCS Division 2 title, the first since 1998. Katrina Drake and Skylar Savar each had hat tricks, and goalie Paige Miller anchored an almost impregnable defense as Coach Noel Murphy's squad vanquished rival Campolindo in the final to cap a 22-5 season. The boys' team couldn't defend their 2014 championship, dropping a match to eventual NCS Division 1 victor, rival Campolindo, after clipping Washington High School, 19-7 in a first round NCS pairing. Coach James Lathrop's club was led by



MARK BELL  
JV Coach **Sekai Greer** gave an impassioned half-time speech which helped the Mats JV team beat Campo for the first time in four years.

captains Tyler Larson and Alex Zamanian.

Miramonte's girls' volleyball team (21-12) had an outstanding season before being knocked off by Bishop O'Dowd in the NCS Division 3 quarterfinals. Coach Lisa Bachtold and her charges could take solace in claiming the Concord Varsity Invitational Tournament in September and upsetting perennial D1 powerhouse San Ramon Valley during the season.

Miramonte's cross country runners look forward to the NCS finals (Nov. 21 after press time) and then, if qualifying as a team or individuals, to the state championships Nov. 28. The harriers did well in the DFAL finals with Pete Bull (10<sup>th</sup>) and Jonathan Fierro (12<sup>th</sup>) particularly distinguishing themselves among the boys. Frosh sensation Cassidy Haskell finished 2<sup>nd</sup> among all girls while Hannah Fishlow and Arden Creson finished in tandem in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> places.

The Green, Black and Silver gridironers shut out Redwood November 13, 41-0, to march into the NCS D2 quarterfinals against Casa Grande of Petaluma the week of Nov. 21. With a Mats' victory, the second seeded, one-loss team would entertain a semi-final game the weekend of Nov. 28. Clayton Stehr scored five touchdowns against Redwood after racking up 941 yards from scrimmage and 18 touchdowns during the regular season. Coach Jack Schram also saw QB Tim Tague, who threw for 28 touchdowns and 2859 yards during the regular season, open the game with a 45-yard strike to Nick Foster. The Mats' stout defense and prolific offense were abetted during the playoffs by call-ups from a JV team, coached by Sekai Greer, that came within one point of a perfect season in their season finale. The JVs also took advantage of a "Stehr-way to heaven," younger sibling Peter.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
(L-R) Coaches **Jackie Birdsong** and **Bob Riddell** with Lady Mats NCS champs **Franny Coronna, Gracie Guidotti, Ali Ingrey, Libby Dunne, Tiffany Shinn** and **Tori James**.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
The **2015 Miramonte Matadors varsity volleyball team**.



DAN TING  
The **2015 Miramonte Matador varsity football team** entered the NCS Division II playoffs as the number two seed. (Results were not available at press time.)



## Orinda Shell Auto Care

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

Celebrating Over 15 Years in Business  
Thank You Orinda!





925 254-1486 • fax 925 254-3427  
9 Orinda Way  
e-mail [orindashell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:orindashell@sbcglobal.net)





**Kurt & Kathy Bellows**  
Your Hosts *Since 1986*

Proudly serving Orinda for 29 years!



204 Village Square  
Orinda

**254-6080**

On Orinda Way Near  
McCaulou's

Fresh food.  
Clean restaurant.  
Good service.

[orindacoffeeshop.com](http://orindacoffeeshop.com)  
Menu, Directions, & More



**VILLAGE  
INN CAFE**

Monday – Friday  
5:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Breakfast Until 11:25

Saturday  
6:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Breakfast Until 11:25

Sunday  
7:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Breakfast Only All Day



SCHOOLS / STUDENTS

# Local Schools Sing in the Holidays



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The award-winning **Orinda Intermediate School Choir** performs Dec. 16 at 7 p.m.

By **KATHYRN G. MCCARTY**  
Staff Writer

Ring in the holiday season with music from Orinda elementary and high school students in performances led by music directors Christina Martin (Orinda Intermediate, Del Rey and Sleepy Hollow Elementary Schools), Ron Pickett (Glorietta and Wagner Elementary Schools) Molly Smart (Orinda Academy), Meredith Hawkins (Miramonte High School, Choral), and David Uyeno (Miramonte High School, Instrumental).

Young musicians will have the opportunity to entertain family and friends at

several concerts. Pickett welcomes the community to attend the inaugural performance of the season, the Orinda Tree Lighting on Dec. 5 at 4:30 p.m. in Orinda Village where the district's elementary school choirs will perform.

Pickett called the upcoming concerts "exciting," and Smart agrees. "I'm enjoying seeing how their hard work turns out," she said. In addition to holiday tunes, the OA band will play songs by AC/DC and the Beatles. "It's always fun to see the students' performing side come out, and to watch them experience how different performing can be from practicing in class."

## DECEMBER SCHOOL CALENDAR

Please note that schools will be closed Dec. 20 to Jan. 4 for Winter Break.

- 5 **Orinda Tree Lighting**, elementary and middle school choirs, Orinda Village, 4:30 p.m.
- 7 **Cans for a Cause Food Drive** through Dec. 18, Glorietta Elementary School, 15 Martha Road. Call 925-254-8770 or visit <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte/>.
- 9-10 **Miramonte High School**, 750 Moraga Way, presents Winter Choral Concert, Theatre, 7 p.m. Call 925-280-3930 or visit <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte/>.
- 9 **Acalanes Union High School District** board meeting, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette, 7:30 p.m. Visit [www.acalanes.k12.ca.us](http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us).
- 11 **Orinda Academy** Band Winter Concert, 7:30 p.m., 925-254-7553.
- 13 **Orinda Academy**, Open House for Interested Families, (8th-12th grades), 19 Altarinda Road, 1 to 4 p.m. Call 925-254-7553 or visit [www.orindaacademy.org](http://www.orindaacademy.org).
- 14 **Orinda Union School District** board meeting, 8 Altarinda Road, 6 p.m. Visit [www.orindaschools.org](http://www.orindaschools.org).
- 16 **Del Rey and Sleepy Hollow Elementary School** Choirs with **Orinda Intermediate School** Chorus and Winter Band Concert, 7 p.m. at OIS, 80 Ivy Drive, 7 p.m., 925-258-3090.
- 17 **Miramonte High School**, 750 Moraga Way, presents Winter Band Performance, Theatre, 7 p.m. Call 925-280-3930 or visit <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte/>.
- 18 **Miramonte High School**, 750 Moraga Way, hosts Toys for Tots, cafeteria, 8 to 11 a.m. Call 925-280-3930 or visit <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte/>.  
**Glorietta Elementary School** Winter Concert, 15 Martha Road, 10:30 a.m. (For school families) Call 925-254-8770 or visit <http://gl-orinda-ca.schoolloop.com>.

### Baseball Registration Now Open



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Various OBA teams came together for the opening of last year's baseball season.

Registration for the Orinda Baseball Association (OBA) is now open for all Orinda baseball players between the ages of 7-14. Join neighbors and friends for a fun season of competitive games

and camaraderie this spring. Registration continues through Dec. 18. For information on how to register and on OBA, go to <http://www.obabaseball.com>.



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

ADOLESCENTS · ADULTS · FAMILIES

*specializing in:*

Achievement Pressure  
AD/HD

Parenting Support

Anxiety

School Stress

Depression

954 Risa Road · Lafayette  
(925) 385-8050  
[www.brianclarkpsyd.com](http://www.brianclarkpsyd.com)

**Kristin Walker M.D., Inc.**  
**General & Cosmetic Dermatologist**  
89 Davis Road, Suite #180  
Orinda  
(925) 254-1080

Dr. Walker, board certified dermatologist, offers care in general adult and pediatric dermatology, laser surgery, skin cancer surgery, and cosmetic dermatology. Her friendly and supportive staff can assist you with diminishing the effects of nature to reveal the real you underneath. Dr. Walker and her caring staff can help return the glow to your skin with the most advanced skin care lasers and technologies. Dr. Walker is proud to announce the addition of a Nutritionist and Aesthetician to her practice.

**NEW ADDITIONS TO THE OFFICE:**

- IPL-Photo Genesis Rejuvenation Treatment for Rosacea, Sun Damage, Fine Lines
- Laser Hair Removal
- Microdermabrasion
- Waxing

**COSMETIC PROCEDURES AVAILABLE:**

- Botox Cosmetic    Restylane    Sclerotherapy
- Collagen            Peels

**AVAILABLE SKIN RESTORATION SYSTEMS:**

- Procyte                    Jan Marini
- MD Forte                Glyquin



**Maureen Wilbur**

Success is Earned ~



**Maureen Wilbur**  
known for her  
superior service!



Earning High Marks From Clients



**Maureen Wilbur**  
*Previews Property Specialist*  
**Top Individual Producer**  
2012 - 2014!  
**International Presidents**  
*Premier*

**Coldwell Banker**  
Orinda, CA 94563  
925-253-6311 Direct  
[www.MaureenWilbur.com](http://www.MaureenWilbur.com)  
DRE# 01268536





# ArtSpace Orinda: The New 3-R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

By ELANA O'LOSKEY  
Staff Writer

Old timers will recall hearing about "Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic." But the new trifecta is "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" in the worlds of sustainability and art. Where do these worlds intersect? Right here in Orinda, through the efforts of the city's Art in Public Places Program (APP), ArtSpace Orinda, which has been placing outdoor sculpture in the community since 2007. The program aims to recognize artists as important cultural resources and to introduce the community to a wide variety of artistic expressions.

You may have noticed new public art pieces popping up in Orinda. Across from Theatre Square near 14 Moraga Way two new works by Lafayette artist Colin Selig were installed on Nov. 10. Selig's turquoise *Nouveau Victorian Chair* and bright yellow *Small Chaise Cylindrical Loveseat* were placed by Selig, his friend Vladimir

Aksenoff, and APP committee members Ted Urban and Rich Thompson.

Selig's signature pieces are a synthesis of sustainable design and sculpture made of 99 percent powder coated recycled steel which is impervious to weather. He upcycles salvage propane tanks into functional sculptures by carefully dissecting the tanks and reassembling the pieces. No additional forming of the metal is done. The result is an object which is playful, comfortable, durable and ecologically responsible. Since there are a lot of old propane tanks, and they are tightly regulated, running out is not a problem. Selig's favorite placement for his artwork is in LEED platinum buildings, which require a minimum of 40 percent recycled materials. See [www.colinselig.com/](http://www.colinselig.com/) for more information and his list of awards.

Selig's pieces are not the only artwork in compliance with the new 3-R's. Orindan Patricia Vader's 16' x 13' x 3' *Whirly Wheel Peacock* is made from 28 recycled bicycle



(L-R) Vladimir Aksenoff and artist Colin Selig position Selig's turquoise *Nouveau Victorian Chair* across from Theatre Square near 14 Moraga Way in Orinda. The sculpture is made from 99 percent recycled materials and is part of Orinda's Art in Public Places Program.

wheels. It is a wind-driven kinetic sculpture with spinning and rotating windmills that move in even the slightest breeze. In 2009, it was installed in the Orinda Library Plaza, 26 Orinda Way. See [www.patriciavader.com](http://www.patriciavader.com/) for more information and her list of awards.

There are currently 35 artworks circulating around Orinda in the APP program; most are from Bay Area artists. The artists enter into a detailed agreement with the city which includes loaning their work for a minimum of one year; the city helps with installation but at no cost to the city. From time to time the city has purchased art after the community indicates they want to keep the piece. Out of the 35 pieces on view, the city currently owns 10. To view the artwork and its locations, or to learn about the artists, go to the APP website, [www.artspaceorinda.org](http://www.artspaceorinda.org), or call 925-254-2495.

Created by the Orinda City Council, and administered by the Parks and Recreation Dept., the APP is funded by numerous community-based organizations including Friends of the Orinda Library, Lamorinda Arts Council, Orinda Park and Recreation Foundation, and others. The Art in Public Places Committee (APPC) is appointed by the City and oversees the APP. The APPC consists of seven members: Michelle Lacy, Director of Orinda Parks and Rec.; Susan Mautner of the Lamorinda Arts Council; Jane Zuercher of the Friends of the Library; and four other representatives selected by the City - Ted Urban, Richard Weston, Joy Pierce Bullen and Rich Thompson.

Some ideas that could appeal to the APPC in 2016 include murals to brighten up any number of blank walls around town and working with local businesses to place outdoor sculpture on their property.



Wishing Everyone  
a Happy Holiday  
Season and a  
Prosperous New  
Year.



Lisa Shaffer  
Realtor®

(925) 528-9278

Lisa@LisaShaffer.com

www.LisaShaffer.com



89 Davis Road, Suite 100, Orinda, CA

## ◆ GALLERY from page 2

don't think I could ever run out." Look for *Chateau-Chinon*, an origami tessellation folded from one 12" square piece of paper, and *Icosahedral Frame*, an origami module made from forty-two 6-inch-square papers that are folded into modules. Meckes will also demonstrate various origami techniques at the artist reception.

As to the value art for the community, Lechner says, "It is nice to remind people that there are two sides to our brain: Art nourishes the creative side. It reflects the world around us and gets us away from our electronic screens." Coffee adds, "I applaud the Orinda Library Gallery, and others like it, for providing the opportunity for local artist to display their work in frequently changing shows." Sanchirico says, "Art breathes life to a community. It engages and challenges every member from the youngest to the oldest. Art allows ALL of us to deeply explore our own expressions



Karin Lechner's beaded necklace is part of the December exhibit at the Orinda Library Gallery.

of self, whether public or private. With art, a community is whole." Meckes believes that "Art is important because it can create a sense of wonder."

Visit the gallery at 26 Orinda Way during normal library hours: Mon. - Thurs., 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Fri. - Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sun., 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The library is closed on Dec. 24, 25 and closes at 5 p.m. on Dec. 31. Call 925-254-2184 for more information or visit <http://ccclib.org>.

## Introducing your dedicated travel consultants!

5 REASONS  
TO CONTACT US TODAY!



### KNOWLEDGE & DESTINATION EXPERTISE

We've traveled the world. Benefit from our first-hand experience and insider connections.

### EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGES

Enjoy a wide range of exclusive benefits when you reserve your cruise, hotel or resort vacation with us.

### GLOBAL NETWORK

Worldwide partnerships enable us to create unique, tailor-made travel experiences that will exceed your expectations.

### BEST VALUE FOR YOUR TRAVEL DOLLAR

Visit our website to easily search and compare multiple options. Plus, sign up to receive our latest offers and travel tips. Our pricing is highly competitive.

### PEACE OF MIND

Leave the planning to a professional who will be there for you before, during & after your trip.



Valerie O'Connell and Colleen O'Connell

CRUISE ADVENTURES UNLIMITED  
1610 Locust Street, Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
925-935-7447 • 800-788-0193  
M-F 9 - 5:30, Saturday 10:00 - 2:00  
[www.cruiseadventuresunlimited.com](http://www.cruiseadventuresunlimited.com)

Family Owned & Operated

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



Billy and Sherrie Perlstein

Thanks for a Great 2015

Sherrie 925.766.3030

[www.OrindaHome.com](http://www.OrindaHome.com)

Billy 925.383.1477

[www.BillyPerlstein.com](http://www.BillyPerlstein.com)





ROVING REPORTER / FORUMS

## Roving Reporter

What was your best Christmas, Thanksgiving or holiday experience ever?



Charlie Jarrett



CHARLIE JARRETT

Cole (L) with dad Tim Westphal.

**Cole Westphal:** “The best Christmas was about two years ago in Orinda at my house, when we did a thing called White Elephant, where we exchanged presents with our guests. Then a round of stealing takes place where each guest can decide that if they like someone else’s gift better than the one they have, they then can steal that person’s present from them, and the person just relieved of their present can in turn steal another guest’s gift. The same gift can only be stolen twice and then it stays in the last person’s hands.”

**Tim Westphal:** “Cole, what did you wind up with, do you remember?”



CHARLIE JARRETT

Amy Lund with sons Oliver (L) and Gabriel.

**Cole:** “Not what I wanted most, but I did get a neat Darth Vader action man.”

**Tim:** “My favorite Christmas was a trip to Africa when I was about 13 over the Christmas break, and we celebrated Christmas morning and Christmas day on the Serengeti Plain in Tanzania and I remember

that experience being pretty cool. We didn’t have a Christmas tree, but we got to see some pretty neat animals, including lions and giraffes – pretty unique for a guy who is normally in Orinda for Christmas, that is!”

**Oliver Lund:** “My best Christmas was last year ... I think we got 400 presents. No, not me, I mean all of us, the whole family! I got a skateboard, a Nike backpack and a lot of other neat things.

**Gabriel Lund:** My best Christmas ever was probably two years ago when I got tickets to go to a post-season Giants game! It was sort of an early present, but it was the best ever!



CHARLIE JARRETT

Andrea Akel with daughter Reese.

**Amy Lund:** I would say it was when the boys were ages 2 and 4. Santa brought a bunch of sparkly things to decorate the house and we got to go to Tahoe for Christmas, had some Santa time and even played in the snow!

**Reese Akel:** Thanksgiving is my favorite, because I get a lot of presents and get to spend time with my family!

**Andrea Akel:** Most of our family lives down on the Central Coast of California, near San Luis Obispo, and we visit them there. We play a lot of games at Thanksgiving, including “Turkey Bowl.”

**Reese:** Grandpa sets up these “Turkey Pins” and we roll a ball to see if we can knock them over. If we bowl them over, we get money. Also, we sometimes go for a drive to a drive-on beach and play football.

**Andrea:** Yes, family football games every Thanksgiving morning and, in addition, we get out and play tennis at some time, have a nice family dinner, go swimming and even play bocce ball.

## Friday Forum Rings in 2016 With Local Speakers

By BOBBIE DODSON  
Staff Writer

Three speakers for the 2016 First Friday Forum series at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church hail from Lamorinda.

Tia Kratter, who works for Pixar, will speak on “How Do They Make Their Movies” on April 1. Kratter started at Pixar in 1993 and worked on its first feature film, *Toy Story*. She has helped produce almost every film since and was the art director for *Brave*. She is the daughter of Clark and Gerry Wallace of Orinda.

On May 6, Dr. Glenn Robinson, professor of defense analysis at the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, where he has taught since 1991, will talk on “Syria: The Long Civil War.” Robinson grew up in Lafayette and is the son of the late Mardy and Ned Robinson.

Dr. Peggy Hellweg, who also grew up in Orinda, will talk on June 3 on “They are Our Faults: Living in Earthquake Country.” She is the daughter of Betty Karplus and the late Dr. Robert Karplus. Following in her father’s footsteps, Hellweg is on the faculty of U.C. Berkeley, where she works in the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Local resident artist Tia Kratter from Pixar.

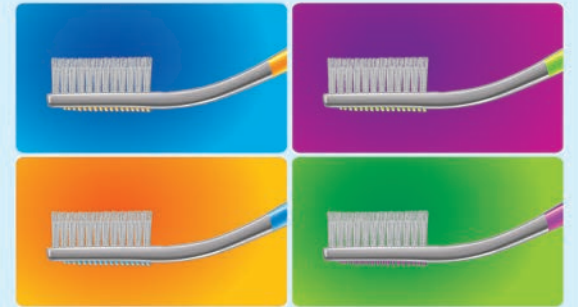
department of geophysics. She is project manager for CISN Shake Alert in California and Operations Manager for the Berkeley Seismological Laboratory.

First Friday kicks off the New Year on Jan. 8 (since the first Friday falls on New Year’s Day) with a talk on “Fire and Climate Change in the Sierra Nevada: There is

[SEE FORUMS page 14]

### Family & Cosmetic Dentistry

Now accepting new patients!



Kristi L. Doberenz, D.D.S., Inc.  
8 Camino Encinas, STE #110, Orinda  
(925) 254-3725



When it's TIME to CHANGE your LIFE



### Are you and your student reaching your full potential?

Intensives at ATC during school breaks provide Neurofeedback to optimize Brain Function for Peak Performance.

Training programs designed from QEEG assessment are targeted to address issues that may have arisen from:

- Head Trauma (sports concussions)
- Personal Trauma
- Fever
- Stress
- Nutritional Issues
- ADD/ADHD and Anxiety

Have fun Brain Training to your favorite movies!  
Special pricing for parent/student packages.

Call for details: 925 254 7823  
AdvancedTherapyCenter.org



Laura Abrams  
laura@lauraabrams.com  
www.lauraabrams.com  
510-697-3225  
CALBRE#01272382



International Presidents Elite 2015  
Top 100 Coldwell Banker Bay Area 2015

Exquisite Presentation



Wishing all a Wonderful Holiday season  
with Family and Friends.



PERFORMING ARTS / FILM

Sing-It-Yourself Messiah on Dec. 4



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The choir from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church adds to the richness of the music.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church will once again offer a sing-it-yourself version of Handel's Messiah on Dec. 4 at 7:30 p.m. Directed by Minister of Music Robert Train Adams, the Messiah sing includes the Festival Choir, soloists, chamber orchestra and audience.

"While we concentrate on the Christmas portion of Messiah, we'll also sing the 'Hallelujah Chorus,' 'The Trumpet Shall Sound' and other favorite arias," says Adams. Listeners are also welcome. For more information, go to [www.ststephen-sorinda.org/messiah-sing](http://www.ststephen-sorinda.org/messiah-sing).



THE REEL LESS TRAVELED

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE PRESENTS – REALLY!



Tom Westlake

I'm feeling a little guilty about writing this last column of the year because I have so little to offer. At this time of year when "Abundance rejoices, Want is keenly felt," cinematically speaking, I clearly didn't bring enough presents with me. It's not all bad news though. Even if there's no International Film Showcase this month, I have it on good authority (<http://internationalshowcase.org>) that Jo Alice and Efi have something "brilliant" in store for January. I'm just as confident that there will be tons of good stuff from the imaginative programmers at the Rheem in 2016. So even though there may be a small letdown once the holiday season is over, there is still plenty to look forward to.

But we're concentrating on December and, though scant, the two confirmed film showings are notable and more than worthwhile. We'll start off with the Classic Film Showcase and its monthly free movie. For the most part, the films in this series are fairly recent, dating back to the '70s or '80s. However, in observance of the season, the showcase is going all the way back to 1954 this month with *White Christmas*. It's a film that's often overlooked in the pantheon of Christmas movies. Though feather-light with atypical casting, it has persisted as a favorite for decades, especially for those who truly appreciate the enormous talent on display. Bing Crosby, the legendary Danny Kaye and Rosemary Clooney are all stellar here. There is wonderful music by Irving Berlin and expert direction by Michael Curtiz, who also directed such light classics as *Casablanca* and *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. I really wonder why this film is often overlooked and urge everyone to

make up for this oversight by showing up at the Orinda Theatre on Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.

Next, we have another musical with a kind of fragmented place in people's hearts. Those familiar with *On the Town* will doubtlessly single out its most famous song "New York, New York" or the stars (Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Ann Miller, even Betty Garrett), the city in which it was shot, or even the two directors (Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen). The film itself resembles an anthology: Three separate stories with only the loosest reason to tie them together. The movie is also notable for its progressive stance on women. However, the one thing that everyone can agree on is *On the Town's* exuberance. It's nearly impossible to be passive while watching this film. Even afterwards, you might just want to leave the car at the theatre and dance home. In any case, thanks to the Moraga Movers, all you have to do for your own personal shore leave is show up at the Rheem Theatre on Dec. 16 at 2 p.m.

And that's nearly it. Of course, I would be remiss if I didn't mention that the day after *On the Town* is shown, the latest *Star Wars* film will be loosed upon the general populace – but don't let that affect your decision to see these other fine classics. I'd also like to wish y'all the best of the season and thanks for reading this column for the past year. Until January then, remember to stay in the dark for that's where the reel magic lies.

◆ FORUMS from page 13

Hope for our Future Forests" by Dr. Scott Stephens, professor of fire science at U.C. Berkeley. On Feb. 5, Dr. Bertram Lubin, president and CEO of U.C. San Francisco Benioff Children's Hospital, Oakland, will talk on "The New Way to Approach Health Care for Children." March 5, Dr. James Allan, who works in the department of anthropology at Saint Mary's College, will speak on "On Land and Sea; Ships and Shipwrecks of the San Francisco Bay."

"We hope many will mark their new calendar with these dates now," said Nancy Holtzapple, chairman of the First Friday Forum. "We predict an outstanding series and you won't want to miss any of the lectures. All are free and open to the public."

The lectures begin at 1:30 p.m. preceded by a social hour with homemade cookies at 1 p.m. For more information, call 925-381-8722. The church is located at 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette.



**SOHEILA SMITH, BROKER, SRES**  
RELOCATION SPECIALIST

CELL 925-963-1284  
OFFICE 925-253-0786

SOHEILASMITH@EARTHLINK.NET  
BRE#01179226

BUYING OR SELLING?

- ▶ LOCAL EXPERTISE
- ▶ PROVEN TRACK RECORD
- ▶ CLIENT RECOMMENDED



**Baan Thai RESTAURANT**  
Eat Healthy, Live Healthy

ORGANIC SALADS MADE FRESH DAILY.  
MANY VEGETARIAN OPTIONS.  
WE COOK FROM FAMILY RECIPES.

FOOD TO GO, CATERING & GIFT CERTIFICATES ARE AVAILABLE

Open for Lunch:  
Mon. - Sun. 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Dinner: Sun. - Thurs. 4:30 - 9:30 p.m.  
Fri. - Sat.: 4:30 - 10:00 p.m.  
99 Orinda Way, Orinda  
(925) 253-0989





**La Mediterranee**  
CAFE . RESTAURANT . CATERING

"For your next special occasion  
try our Party Platters and  
our Chicken Pomegranate!"

**Free Delivery to Lamorinda**  
(within 10 miles, with \$300 min. order)

**(510) 540-7773**  
[www.cafelamed.com](http://www.cafelamed.com)

2936 College Ave. at Ashby . Berkeley . CA 94705



McCaulou's

and

Hollyhock

always

FREE Gift Wrap!

on items 15.00  
or more.

Orinda Village Square



ANN SHARF

When you need:

- a strong negotiator
- proven results for both buyers & sellers
- professionalism & service
- a top producer

Call ANN at (925) 253-2525

she comes highly recommended...

Website: [www.annsharf.com](http://www.annsharf.com)  
Email: [ann@annsharf.com](mailto:ann@annsharf.com)  
93 Moraga Way, Orinda



I can help you navigate through this ever changing real estate market. Be certain your largest asset is in the hands of a professional who represents both buyers and sellers daily.



ATHLETICS

Lamorinda Rugby Season Begins in December.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lamo vs. Saracens, Allianz Stadium, London, England, March 29, 2015.

Fresh off winning the Nor Cal Silver division in this year's summer 7's league, Lamorinda Rugby is excited to start its new winter/spring season. This year, the Lamorinda Rugby Varsity and JV teams have been asked to join a new premier league, combining some of the best programs of the Bay Area and Sacramento Valley. This will be certain

to catch the eye of top collegiate programs. The club welcomes newcomers and has an exciting tour to Italy planned for spring break. Practices start in early December. For high school ages, contact [stevepeterhome@yahoo.com](mailto:stevepeterhome@yahoo.com), and for K-8th, contact [adam.browne6@gmail.com](mailto:adam.browne6@gmail.com) or go to the website, [www.lamorugby.com](http://www.lamorugby.com).

Oakland Strokes Makes a Good Showing in Challenging Regatta



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Oakland Strokes Men's and Women's teams at the prestigious "The Charles Regatta" in Cambridge, MA.

By CHERYL RICHARDS  
Contributing Writer

Once again, Oakland Strokes' young men and women rowers demonstrated their expertise on Oct. 18 at the 51st Head of "The Charles Regatta" in Cambridge, MA.

The varsity men's youth 8+ took silver and the varsity women's youth 8+ placed fourth, both in event fields of 85 national and international entries.

"The Head of The Charles" is one of the world's largest rowing competitions featuring races for U.S. and international rowers of all ages and abilities – it consistently attracts over 11,000 competitors and 400,000 spectators.

Oakland Strokes' women's varsity 8+ from bow to stern: Limor Dubrovsky – Acalanes HS, Raleigh Long – Alameda HS,

Jenny Hosler – Piedmont HS, Riley Eversole – Miramonte HS, Megan Cvitanovic – Alameda HS, Quincey Mulligan – Head Royce, Maryse Suppiger – Piedmont HS, Jillian Lundstrom – Miramonte HS, Coxswain: Caroline Rickson – Miramonte HS.

Oakland Strokes' men's varsity 8+ from bow to stern: Brendan Purtill – Miramonte HS, Rhys Daniel – Piedmont HS, Cole Ortiz – Campolindo HS, Nikita Lilichenko – Miramonte HS, Luke Lawler – Las Lomas HS, Michael Cuellar – St. Joseph's Notre Dame HS, Connor Olson – Granada HS, Spencer Dettlinger – San Ramon Valley HS, Coxswain: Benjamin Garrison – Burlingame HS.

For more information, contact: Brian DeRegt (men's coach) at [coachderegt@yahoo.com](mailto:coachderegt@yahoo.com) or Allison Dobb Ray (women's coach) [h.allisonray@gmail.com](mailto:h.allisonray@gmail.com), or go to [www.oaklandstrokes.org](http://www.oaklandstrokes.org).

◆ LETTERS from page 4

of Orinda if government intrusion into local matters does not stop and if the drought continues.

Several major unelected, unaccountable governmental agencies are telling Orinda how to use its precious land, almost all of which is developed.

On July 1, 2015, the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), Orinda's water supplier, ordered Orinda households – in the wake of a four-year drought – to limit water use to 1,000 gallons per day or face a penalty.

If the drought continues, the water allocation could go from 1,000 gallons per day to 500, 300, or zero gallons per day. If Orinda homes lack water, these homes will be impossible to sell and, hence, will become worthless.

Currently, Orinda has about 18,000 people in an area of 12.7 square miles.

Yet, the California Department of Housing and Community Development is demanding that Orinda build additional housing under what is called the Housing Element. Under the most recent version of the Housing Element, 227 additional homes are to be built between 2015 and 2023. Some of these homes can be guest residences – sometimes called Second Units or

in-law cottages – built on a homeowner's existing land.

Under the Housing Element, some newly built structures must be set aside for low-income people.

In July 2013, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), two regional governmental agencies serving the nine-county Bay Area, passed Plan Bay Area, a scheme to put high-rise, high-density housing in the region's 101 cities. The directors of MTC and ABAG are not elected directly by voters.

Assemblyman Marc Levine (D-San Rafael) has introduced a bill to eliminate MTC and replace it with a new Bay Area Transportation Commission. Levine's bill calls for the direct election of the new commission's members.

New development in Orinda, if the drought continues and excessive real-estate development forges ahead, can only bring ruin to Orinda, one of the nicest places to live – anywhere in the world.

On November 3, the Orinda City Council discussed water conservation but took no action. Conceivably, Orinda could become the body odor capital of the United States. Now may be a good time to stock up on deodorant.

– Richard S. Colman

Are you considering buying?  
Do you want to know what your home is worth in the current market?  
Are you wondering what is happening to home prices in the area?

For current information, give me a call about your real estate needs.




LEILA SCHLEIN

925.899.7927 [Leila@LeilaSchlein.com](mailto:Leila@LeilaSchlein.com) [www.LeilaSchlein.com](http://www.LeilaSchlein.com)




A Member Of Real Living



*Serving the real estate needs of clients, friends and family in your neighborhood since 1989.*

DEDICATION □ DILIGENCE □ RESULTS

**DEXTER HONENS II**  
Real Estate Broker  
Office: (925) 253-2148  
Cell: (510) 918-8911  
Email: [honens@pacbell.net](mailto:honens@pacbell.net)



BRE # 01029372



**DR. NICOLLE IONASCU**



Clinical Neuropsychologist  
CA PSY 20312  
925-588-3592  
[nicolle@drnicolleionascu.com](mailto:nicolle@drnicolleionascu.com)  
[www.drnicolleionascu.com](http://www.drnicolleionascu.com)

Neuropsychological Testing

- Comprehensive Evaluation & Treatment
- ADHD and learning disorder evaluations
- Measurement of cognitive impairment following concussion or brain injury
- Qualified Medical Examinations

**McDonnell Nursery**

Free Local Delivery

family owned since 1933

Christmas Trees • Wreaths • Garland • Ornaments • Poinsettias  
Holiday Décor • Gifts

[www.mcdonnellnursery.com](http://www.mcdonnellnursery.com)  
196 Moraga Way • Orinda • (925) 254-3713 • Open Daily







## CALENDAR

## ON THE CALENDAR

## DECEMBER

- 1 Lafayette Art Gallery's** Holiday Boutique through Dec. 26, 3420 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Visit [www.lafayettegallery.net](http://www.lafayettegallery.net) or call 925-284-2788.  
**Moraga Art Gallery** presents *Yellowstone: Beauty, Beasts and Boneyards*, oil paintings by Orinda resident Lisa Gunn, through Jan. 9, at 510 Center St., Moraga. Visit [www.moragaartgallery.com](http://www.moragaartgallery.com) or call 925-376-5407. See article p. 2 for details.  
**Orinda Library Gallery** presents *Jewels, Paintings and Origami* through December. Artist reception with light refreshments and demonstration of origami paper art on Dec. 4 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. See article p. 2.
- 3 Orinda Chamber of Commerce** Hilton House Chamber Holiday Party and Mixer, 21 Orinda Way, 6 p.m. Visit [www.orindachamber.org](http://www.orindachamber.org) for details.  
**Maria's Book Group** will read and discuss *Mrs. Engels* by Gavin McCrea, 11 a.m. Group size is limited. Call 925-254-7606 if you plan to attend.  
**Story Hour** with Cathy Goshorn for children aged 2 to 4, every Thursday, Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, 10 to 11 a.m. Call 925-254-7606.
- 4 It's A Wonderful Life Holiday Celebration**, Plaza Park, Moraga Road at Mt. Diablo Blvd., Moraga, 4 to 7 p.m., with tree lighting, refreshments, entertainment, children's activities and Santa.  
**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church** Sing-It-Yourself Handel's Messiah, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda, 7:30 p.m., featuring the festival choir, soloists, chamber orchestra and audience participation. Admission \$20 (in advance or at the door). Visit [www.ststephensorinda.org/messiah-sing](http://www.ststephensorinda.org/messiah-sing).
- 5 Hospice of the East Bay** Hospice Tree Lighting, Bank of America parking lot, Orinda Village, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Visit [www.hospiceeastbay.org](http://www.hospiceeastbay.org). See article p. 9 for details.
- 6 Orinda Books** hosts Leslie Darwin O'Brien celebrating her new holiday CD with a party at the store, 276 Village Square, 1 p.m. Call 925-254-7606.
- 9 Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church** Night in Bethlehem, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette, 4 to 7 p.m. Explore what a marketplace looked like on the night Jesus was born. Visit [www.lopc.org](http://www.lopc.org).
- 10 California Independent Film Festival** presents *White Christmas*, Orinda Theater, 7 p.m. Free. Visit [www.caiff.org/#!/events/c17as](http://www.caiff.org/#!/events/c17as).
- 11 Orinda Books** hosts ceramic artist Gerry Wallace in a holiday exhibit and sale of her whimsical works in clay, 276 Village Square, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 925-254-7606.
- 12 Holy Shepherd Women's Book Club** will discuss *What Alice Forgot* by Lianne Moriarty. Visit [www.holyshepherd.org](http://www.holyshepherd.org) or call 925-254-3422 for time and location.  
**Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church** Divorce Options Workshop, an informational seminar about the legal, financial, psychological and social issues of divorce, 49 Knox Drive, Room 201, Lafayette, 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. No charge for therapists, \$45 for others. Visit Collaborative Practice of the East Bay at [www.cpeastbay.com](http://www.cpeastbay.com).
- 13 Women Helping Women** Holiday Bazaar of East African Crafts, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., featuring handcrafted baskets, jewelry, batiks, carvings and clothing. See article this page.  
**Orinda Community Church** Christmas Concert, 10 Irwin Way, 4 p.m., featuring U.C. Berkeley Gospel Choir, Campolindo High School Chamber Singers and more. Free. Offering benefits Winter Nights Family Shelter.
- 19 Sleepy Hollow Holiday Walk**, annual walk for dogs and their two-legged friends. Santa arrives at 9 am and the walk runs 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Meet at 76 Tarry Lane. Holiday refreshments.

## AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. Note that the library is closed Dec. 24 and 25 for Christmas. The library will close Dec. 31 at 5 p.m. and Jan. 1 for New Year's Day. For more information, call 925-254-2184 or visit [www.ccclib.org/locations/Orinda.html](http://www.ccclib.org/locations/Orinda.html).

- 1 Toddler Lapsit.** Stories and songs for children aged 1 to 3 and their caregivers, Gallery Room, 10 and 10:30 a.m. No registration required, but attendance limited to once per week. Also Dec. 2, 8, 9, 15 and 16.  
**Peek-A-Boo Time.** Storytime for children ages 0 to 5, 11:30 to 11:55 a.m. Also Dec. 8 and 15.
- 5 Saturday Morning Live!** Story time for children aged 3 to 5, Picture Book area, 11 a.m. Also Dec. 12 and 19.
- 22 Toddler Dance Party.** Geared for toddlers and preschoolers but all ages welcome, Gallery Room, 10 to 11 a.m. Also Dec. 23.
- 28 Holiday Movie Matinee.** Enjoy the second adventures of *The Boy Who Lived*, Gallery Room, 2:30 p.m.
- 29 Tech Toy Time.** Make music with a banana, explore electricity and more, Gallery Room, 3 to 4 p.m.

## CLUB MEETINGS

- Diablo Star Chapter #214,** Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m. Orinda Masonic Center, Karen Seaborn, 925-689-0995.
- Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe.** Third Monday, 7:30 p.m., Gallery Room, Orinda Library, [www.moragaadobe.org](http://www.moragaadobe.org).
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks.** Fourth Wednesday, 8:30 a.m., May Room, Orinda Library, 925-253-1997.
- Guided Meditation.** Wednesdays, 9 a.m., St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way, Orinda, focuses on health, harmony and wholeness, 925-254-5965
- Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition.** Third Wednesday, 10 to 11:30 a.m., Orinda City Hall Sarge Littlehale Room, 925-687-8844, ext. 227.
- Lamorinda Meditation.** Every Monday and Thursday, 10:30 a.m., Career Wisdom Institute, 1036 Country Club Drive, Moraga, Suite 100. Meditate in silence for 30 minutes, \$5 donation. Contact Gaby Mozee at [gcmzee@gmail.com](mailto:gcmzee@gmail.com).
- Lamorinda Nature Walk and Bird Watching for Seniors.** Wednesdays, 9 to 11 a.m., free. Call 925-254-2445 for weekly meeting place.
- Lamorinda Sirs** for retired men. Second Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga, Pete Giers, 925-254-4667.
- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary.** Every Friday, 7 a.m., Lafayette Park Hotel, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, [www.lamorindasunrise.com](http://www.lamorindasunrise.com) or 925-283-8288.

## Holiday Bazaar of East African Crafts on Dec. 13

Handcrafted baskets, jewelry, batiks, carvings and clothing will be featured at an African Bazaar from 11 a.m. -12:30 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 13, at Orinda Community Church (OCC), 10 Irwin Way. OCC's Women Helping Women is sponsoring the holiday sale in conjunction with Asante Network, a Fair Trade Association member, which helps Women's Groups in East Africa find markets for their crafts. Women Helping Women is committed to taking action on issues affecting women both globally and domestically and supports Asante Network in their efforts to provide dignity, hope and a better future for the women of East Africa. For more information, call 925-254-4906.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rwenzori Mountain women weave earth-tone baskets.

- Lamorinda Toastmasters.** Every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Temple Isaiah, 945 Risa Road, Lafayette, <http://lamorinda.toastmastersclubs.org>.
- Montelindo Garden Club.** Third Friday, 9 a.m., September through May, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephen's Drive, [www.montelindogarden.com](http://www.montelindogarden.com).
- Orinda Garden Club.** Fourth Thursday, 10 a.m. to noon, September through May, Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante.
- Orinda Juniors Women's Club** community service group. First Tuesday, September through June, 7 p.m., [www.orindajuniors.org](http://www.orindajuniors.org).
- Orinda Rotary.** Every Wednesday, noon, Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante, 925-254-2222.
- Orinda Association.** Second Monday, 7:15 p.m., Orinda Library, May Room, 925-254-0800.
- Orinda Hiking Club.** Every weekend and first Wednesday, [www.orindahiking.org](http://www.orindahiking.org) or Ian at 925-254-1465.
- Orinda Historical Society.** Call 925-254-1353 for times and location of meetings 925-254-1353.
- Orinda Job's Daughters.** First and third Monday, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 925-283-7176.
- Orinda/Tábor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation.** Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m., social, 7:30 p.m., meeting, call 925-254-8260 for location.
- Orinda Teen Advisory Council.** Second Wednesday, 4 p.m., Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, email [orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com).
- Orinda Woman's Club.** Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. to noon, call Jean Barnhart, 925-254-3881, or <https://sites.google.com/site/orindawomansclub/>.
- Walnut Creek Garden Club.** Second Monday, 9:30 a.m., Camellia Room, Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Road, Walnut Creek, <http://californiagardenclubs.com/content/walnut-creek-garden-club> or [mslittle44@gmail.com](mailto:mslittle44@gmail.com).

## 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](http://www.cityoforinda.org).
- Historic Landmarks Committee.** Fourth Tuesday, 3 to 5 p.m., Library Garden Room. Call 925-788-7323.
- Moraga-Orinda Fire District.** First and third Wednesdays of the month, 7 p.m. Visit [www.mofd.org/board/meetings](http://www.mofd.org/board/meetings) - meeting location will be posted on the agenda.
- Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees.** Second Monday, 6 p.m., OUSD Conference Room, 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda, CA 94563. For the latest listing of dates, please check the website at [www.orindaschools.org](http://www.orindaschools.org).
- Planning Commission.** Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, [www.cityoforinda.org](http://www.cityoforinda.org).

Send calendar items to Maggie Sharpe at [m.sharpe66@gmail.com](mailto:m.sharpe66@gmail.com)



## Authentic Cuisine of Thailand

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

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

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

home/made kitchen  
café & bakery

Friday Night Dinners  
Catering  
Place Holiday  
Orders Now

337 Rheem Blvd.  
Moraga 925-388-0841  
[www.homemadekitchen.com](http://www.homemadekitchen.com)



**Everyday Changes**

**Give Yourself Life-Changing Gifts on the 12 Days of Giving**

Bonnie Waters



**Day 1 - Give Yourself the Gift of Peace:** Even though most of us enjoy the holiday season, it can be an extremely stressful time of the year for many. Holiday stressors are unique to each individual but generally include over-indulging, over-spending, over-worrying and/or over-committing. Taking the time to contemplate and mitigate your unique stressors will better equip you to minimize holiday stress.

**Day 2 - Give Yourself the Gift of Personal Wellness:** When you overindulge in rich foods and drinks, you invite stress and guilt into your life. Enjoying a healthy snack before attending a holiday party and continuing to get enough exercise and plenty of sleep helps to reduce stress.

**Day 3 - Give Yourself the Gift of Enough:** At the beginning of the holiday season, take time to establish a game plan. Who will you shop for and what is your budget for each? When and who will you entertain and again what is your budget?

What needs to be done to prepare your home for the holidays? With your game plan clearly established, you will know when it is time to start “gearing down” on preparations and “gearing up” on enjoyment!

**Day 4 - Give Yourself the Gift of Acceptance:** Getting together with family and friends can sometimes cause discord. Accepting friends and family as they are encourages harmony. Equally important to accepting others is to love and accept yourself.

**Day 5 - Give Yourself the Gift of “Me” Time:** The holiday season can be hectic and leave you feeling exhausted. Spending as little as 15 minutes alone can help you feel refreshed and restored. Stock up on spa products and turn your bath into a home spa. Take a long, hot, aromatic bath by candlelight as you listen to soothing music. Only you can manage the chaos and challenges that accompany the holiday season.

**Day 6 - Give Yourself the Gift of Boundaries:** Saying “Yes” when you need to say “No” can leave you feeling overwhelmed and resentful. Setting reasonable boundaries will help you manage your rest, your health and your emotional state.

**Day 7 - Give Yourself the Gift of Patience:** Give yourself some additional patience this holiday season. Take a deep breath and remind yourself that good things happen in good time. The moment you get impatient...bad things can happen.

**Day 8 - Give Yourself the Gift of Relaxation and Reflection:** The adrenaline rush of the holidays can be addictive and can contribute to poor sleep and poor health. Relaxation and reflection add meaning to life anytime and especially during busy holiday times. What things did you accomplish this year that you were really proud of? Count your blessings. Who really influenced you this year? What things do you have to be thankful for? Reflecting on these things can bring you moments of inner peace.

**Day 9 - Give Yourself the Gift of Beauty:** Get your nails and hair done, get a facial or massage. Buy those new Smash-box cosmetics you’ve been yearning for. Indulge yourself in beauty experiences that you wouldn’t normally splurge on without feeling the slightest bit of guilt.

**Day 10 - Give Yourself the Gift of Manifesting:** There is a saying ... “Where

your attention goes, energy flows.” You can choose to focus your attention on what you are not achieving, on how much time you don’t have and what is missing in your life. What will manifest is more of what is lacking in your life. Focus on what you do intend for your life. Be grateful and live your life with an attitude of gratitude.

**Day 11 - Give Yourself the Gift of Giving:** Have you heard the term “pay it forward?” When something good happens to you, pay it forward by doing something good for someone else. It can be as simple as holding the door for someone or paying for coffee for the person behind you. Before the advent of Fastrak, I had someone pay my bridge toll. I then paid it forward by paying for the person in the car behind me. Such a simple act made me giddy with joy. Make it a daily habit to look for opportunities to “pay it forward.”

**Day 12 - Give Yourself the Gift of Joy:** Do not mistakenly believe it is disloyal to the suffering of the world to honor the happiness you have been given. Be joyful. Cultivate joy as your way of being. As your joy grows, you will discover happiness without cause. Don’t worry, be joyful!

May the holiday season bring you and your loved ones a bounty of gifts – the gift of Peace, Wellness, Enough, Acceptance, Time, Boundaries, Patience, Relaxation, Reflection, Beauty, Manifesting Giving and Joy! May 2016 be your best year yet!

**TAXI BLEU**  
 Dispatch:  
**925-849-2222**  
 Direct:  
**925-286-0064**  
[www.mytaxibleu.com](http://www.mytaxibleu.com)  
[mytaxibleu@gmail.com](mailto:mytaxibleu@gmail.com)

All Airports Served 24/7

live better live lean

living lean.  
by Sheena

**I Lost 30 lbs. of Fat and I Love It!**

I am SO happy with the Living Lean program!

I began the program in mid June and I was feeling a little negative as my weight was spiraling out of control. I finally made up my mind that I could do it, and do it the hard way by changing my eating habits and working out. Sheena created a meal and workout plan for me that has really increased my metabolism.

I started to see results so I just kept going and now I’m almost 30 lbs lighter and feeling great.....thanks Living Lean and Sheena, Braudy & Courtney!

– Christine Muhawieh

Before

After

Contact us for more information:  
**(925) 360-7051**

**Personal Training, Nutrition and Group Classes**  
**Locations: Orinda and Lafayette**

Read Client Testimonials at  
[www.livingleanprogram.com](http://www.livingleanprogram.com)

**Move of the Month**

**Preacher Bicep Curl**

Grab a dumbbell in each hand and lean your torso over the top of an exercise ball on the ground. Just like a regular preacher curl, simply curl the weights up towards your shoulders and squeeze for a one-count at the top. Lower the weight to the starting position in a slow and controlled fashion and repeat 12 times.

For more information, contact Sheena with Living Lean personal training and eating for elite fitness, at 925-360-7051 or [www.thelivingleanprogram.com](http://www.thelivingleanprogram.com).

Best wishes to you and yours  
 this Holiday Season!

*Clients Are Always First*

Suzanne Toner Geoffrion  
[suzanne.geoffrion@camoves.com](mailto:suzanne.geoffrion@camoves.com)  
 925-699-4832  
[myagentsuzanne.net](http://myagentsuzanne.net)  
 CalBRE# 01878803

**COLDWELL BANKER**  
 RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

©2015 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office is Owned by a Subsidiary of NRT LLC. CalBRE License #01908304.



BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 20

ing Presentation High School in Sonoma. Daughters Amanda and Emily Horne also graduated from Miramonte High School.

In her free time, Horne enjoys exercising to keep fit and healthy and especially likes practicing Pure Barre at her local studio. She encourages customers to come by Cheryl's Closet often. "We are very selective and carry items that are in excellent condition. You never know what you will find and inventory changes rapidly," she says.

Cheryl's Closet is open Tuesday - Saturday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Consignment appointments are available on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, typically between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. For more information call 925-254-4442 and talk with Brenda or Stacy.

**Virginia H. Ellis, D.D.S. at the Crossroads**

With college children returning home for the holidays, it is time to schedule those twice-a-year dental cleaning and exam appointments. You may be too late to get an appointment in December, but the timing is good to line it up for next May or June. Practicing family and cosmetic dentistry above the Mechanics Bank at 77 Moraga Way, Virginia H. Ellis, D.D.S. offers her state-of-the-art services to Orindans at this convenient location.

After an interior renovation in 2013 - there has been a dental practice at this site since 1963 - Dr. Ellis began offering her patients the highest rated digital X-ray system and laser technology to identify cavities on the surfaces of teeth. "Some people do not realize their dentist can provide pre-screening for important aspects of one's medical health care. We are a small practice offering excellent, personal service to people who value their health," says Ellis. "For example, I take a patient's blood pressure at every check-up, in addition to checking gum health and the usual exam that a patient expects."

After graduating from the University of California at Los Angeles, Ellis attended dental school at the University of California at San Francisco. She makes it a priority to know and understand her patients' life-

styles and activities, which in turn, have an influence on their well-being. "We look at a patient's diet and nutrition. If a child or teenager is in a contact sport, we give them a Save-A-Tooth kit. I advise them if a tooth is knocked out, handle it only by the crown, never by the root, and place it in the Save-A-Tooth case. In this way, the tooth can be saved," explains Ellis, who is assisted by Kristi Holstein.



PHOTO BY?

Dentist **Dr. Virginia Ellis** is located above Mechanics Bank.

Office manager Karen Forland oversees this small, friendly full-service dental practice. Dr. Ellis emphasizes using the best materials and best laboratory services and provides sports guards and night guards to protect teeth. "I have a family member living with celiac disease and we are sensitive to gluten-free needs. We carry gluten-free dental products and are a latex-free practice," explains Ellis.

A resident of the East Bay since 2003, Ellis and her husband George have three children, Alex, 14, Stephanie, 13, and Eric, 11. "I understand what mothers are coping with, their schedules and what motivates children to go to the dentist and develop good oral hygiene habits," adds Ellis.

In addition to hitting the gym to swim and lift free weights, Dr. Ellis has a passion for dancing because it is so social and especially enjoys Zumba. "Most of my free time I spend taking care of my children and cooking," she says.

Virginia H. Ellis, D.D.S., accepts most PPO plans and will assist with billing. "If you have no insurance, please do give us a call," says Ellis. For more information call 925-254-4043.

Morrison's Trunk Show Packed Great Values for a Good Cause



SALLY HOGARTY

Guests looked over the beautiful items displayed at **Morrison's Jewelers'** annual Trunk Show held this year on Nov. 14. The afternoon also featured delicious appetizers and champagne. Ten percent of the proceeds went to the Children's Health Guild.



SALLY HOGARTY

Morrison's **Chris Jorgensen** and owner **David Berryhill**.

Small business & home  
**Computer Help**

Mac • Windows  
Phones • WiFi • Printers

Setup & repair • Patient & professional  
Timely appts. • Great local references

**510-932-4021**  
May Technology • maytc.com

**PILATES**

**CoreKinetics**  
www.CoreKinetics.com

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

Visit our website for great offers.  
**Take control of your health.**

**The Well Balanced Workout**  
**925-708-3279**  
Please call for an appointment  
50 Vashell Way, #120, Orinda, CA 94563

Unique Gifts by US Artisans

**FREE Gift Wrapping**

Orinda Theatre Square

**ECHO Grove**  
A Natural Place for Gifts

**Saint Mary's College Guild Luncheon**

The holidays will soon be here and the Saint Mary's College Guild begins its celebration with a festive Christmas luncheon. Open to the public, the luncheon takes place on Thursday, Dec. 10, at the Soda Activity Center on the Saint Mary's College campus, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, in Moraga.

The fun begins at 11 a.m. with a social hour that includes a very creative bake sale, a money tree raffle and festive holiday baskets. Pianist Sharon Lee Kim and the Saint Mary's College award-winning chorale will entertain guests. Lunch will be served at noon.

The cost is \$45 per person with proceeds benefiting the Saint Mary's College Scholarship Fund. Checks should be made payable to the Saint Mary's College Guild Fund and sent to Dee Humm, 780 Camino Richard, Moraga, CA 94556. For more information, call 925-376-3306.

**BLUE RIDGE**

**LANDSCAPE CO. INC.**  
LICENSE # 818633

Phone **925 258 9233** Cell **510 847 6160**

**BLUERIDGELC.COM**

DESIGN  
INSTALLATION  
IRRIGATION  
DRAINAGE  
STONE WORK  
CONCRETE WORK  
DECKS  
FENCES  
PATIOS  
LAWNS  
PONDS  
CLEAN UP & HAULING

CLCA  
LICENSED INSURED.

**Patti Camras**

**PATTI CAMRAS**  
REALTOR®  
DRE# 01156248

925-899-9282 CELL  
patti.camras@camoves.com

5 Moraga Way  
Orinda, CA 94563  
www.patticamras.com

**COLDWELL BANKER**  
RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

**THE ART REAL ESTATE**

*I believe in the art of living well.*  
Whether helping first-time home buyers & move-up buyers or downsizing empty nesters & seniors, I want my clients to live well at every stage of their lives. I'll do whatever it takes to help them enjoy a seamless transition from one of life's passages to the next. This is my promise.

©2014 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage office is owned by a subsidiary of NRT LLC. CalBRE License # 01908304



BUSINESS BUZZ

# Business Buzz Putting a Personal Face on Local Business

Valerie Hotz



To send items for consideration, email Hotz at v.hotz@att.net.

**Shop Orinda this Holiday Season**

Your friends at the *The Orinda News* encourage shopping in town this holiday season for all gift-giving needs. Theatre Square offers delightful fine boutiques featuring hand-made items, including EchoGrove and Sanvitalia Home & Garden, and you will find toys galore for both grown-ups and the children in your life at Sweet Dreams. Not to mention precious jewels for your love may be had at Morrison's Jewelers, and household treasures at Hilton House Design and Consign and McCaulou's, where they offer free gift wrap for purchases over \$15.

Thank you to those who support our local merchants by shopping here on Small Business Saturday. Let's not restrict this concept to Saturday, but instead make it every day of the week.

**The Fourth Bore Unveils in Theatre Square**

Local restaurateur Michael Karp

brought us new delicious, savory fare at Table 24 and Barbacoa. In partnership with J.J. Phair of E.J. Phair Brewery and Restaurants, Karp is pleased to present The Fourth Bore Tap Room and Grill, an American pub concept that introduces craft beer, pub fare and a year-round beer garden at the former Barbacoa location in Theatre Square.



VALERIE HOTZ  
**Michael Karp**, owner of Table 24 and the new restaurant The Fourth Bore.

The Fourth Bore will continue to feature the two beautiful fire pits for outdoor din-

ing. "I have had this concept for a while and ever since the fourth bore was built, I have wanted to incorporate that name. Jonathan Williams, formerly chef at Table 24, is moving over and will be preparing the pub style American comfort food here. We feature 30 beers on tap," says Karp.

Williams' American pub menu includes ribs, burgers, specialty sandwiches, entrée salads and wood-fired grilled sausages. Homemade pretzels, chicken pot pie and cheese curds add to the comfort food theme at The Fourth Bore.

Carefully crafting the beer program with partner J.J. Phair, Karp is pleased to feature primarily American brewers, with a rotating selection of seasonal beers and handcrafted artisan cocktails. A monthly beer club, the Caldecott Club, will introduce seasonal offerings, beer-making seminars and educational programs.

"The Fourth Bore is inspired by the ingenuity of the people who envisioned and built the Caldecott Tunnel. By connecting Alameda and Contra Costa counties, opportunities increased for everyone in this region," says Karp. The décor features historic photos of the area from the 1900s through today, depicting the construction of the Caldecott Tunnel and the evolution of this area over the years. The interior includes reclaimed materials, pendant lighting and custom-made steel fixtures.

"We offer a lively neighborhood gathering place for friends and family, featuring seven large screen televisions for Bay Area sports fans to enjoy. Live music contributes to the special ambience," says Karp.

The Fourth Bore is open for dinner daily. Drop by Thursday - Sunday starting at 11 a.m. for lunch. Happy Hour is Monday through Friday, 2 - 5 p.m. For more information or reservations call 925-254-1183 or visit [www.thefourthbore.com](http://www.thefourthbore.com). For sales and catering call 925-254-1143.

**Find Treasures at Cheryl's Closet**

This consignment shop featuring women's clothing has been a local favorite for 17 years. Native Orindan Brenda Horne took over ownership of the exclusive boutique, located at 21 Orinda Way, in 2010 and is tickled to offer fabulous prices on everything from high-fashion garments to blue jeans. You will find gently-used jewelry, shoes, scarves, designer hand bags; and all necessary accessories for the well-dressed woman at Cheryl's Closet and your bank account won't suffer.

"I like the concept of recycling items," says Horne. "It is a really good feeling to find a new home for gently-used clothes and accessories rather than throwing them away. Our customer base is growing all the time. At this point, we have to sched-

ule appointments for consignors, which is great. We do not advertise and customers find us because their friends have recommended us."

When consignors bring in their items, the stock is priced, tagged and delivered to the sales floor on the same day. "We accept consignments for a two-month period," says Horne. "As a result, items move very quickly. Some kind of energy develops around items in our store. I can't describe it exactly, but I tell people if they really like something, they should make the purchase. If they leave to think about it for a while and come back, the item is gone. Some kind of energy gets thrown into the item and stays there. It happens a lot."

Clients find high-quality current fashion styles and designer labels. Naturally these are one-of-a-kind items that you won't find anywhere else, a true treasure trove. Everything from accessories to leather jackets and overcoats are in stock on a seasonal basis. With the holidays in sight, you can shop for yourself and not suffer pangs of guilt. Horne's cousin Stacy Frasier works at Cheryl's Closet assisting customers with their selections.

"We tend to get attached to our clothing, the special memories they may represent, and I have felt it is always preferred to pass along gently used items for someone else to enjoy. I have discovered a lot of people appreciate the value of recycling these days," says Horne.



SALLY HOGARTY  
(L-R) **Stacy Frasier** and owner **Brenda Horne** with Brenda's daughter **Sidney** in the cool sunglasses.

Originally from Orinda, Horne has relocated to Sonoma, where she and her husband Gary are building their "forever" home together. Gary, a consultant, is currently serving as foreman of the construction project. "It is fun and exciting," adds Horne, who has three daughters from a previous marriage - Megan and Emily Staue graduated from Miramonte High School and youngest Sidney is currently attend-

[SEE BUZZ page 19]

**CHANGES**  
SALON & DAY SPA

1475 N. BROADWAY | WALNUT CREEK | 925-947-1814 | WWW.CHANGESSALON.COM

- HAIR
- NAILS
- SKIN
- MASSAGE
- STORE
- GIFT CARDS

2015 BEST OF W.C. CREEK  
2015 BEST OF W.C. CREEK

**December 5 / 7:30 pm**  
**TREE LIGHTING**  
Santa Visits + Horse & Carriage Rides  
Free Gourmet Coffee Drinks & Hot Chocolate  
Lamorinda Theater Academy Performance / 7 pm  
Kids Ornament Workshop

**December 12**  
**FAMILY DAY**  
Horse & Carriage Rides / 6:30-8:30 pm  
Face Painting & Photo Booth / 5:30-7:30 pm

**FREE FAMILY FUN!**  
BRING A TOY TO DONATE  
TO TOYS FOR TOTS

Law Office of  
**VICTORIA ROBINSON SMITH**

**Real Estate, Contracts  
Easements, Loans, Leases  
Title & Escrow**

320 Village Square  
Orinda, CA 94563  
Tel: (925) 253-1844  
Fax: (925) 253-8478  
[www.orindarealestateattorney.com](http://www.orindarealestateattorney.com)  
[vrslaw@pacbell.net](mailto:vrslaw@pacbell.net)