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THE ORINDA NEWS

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February 2015

Local Girl Scouts Send 500 Stuffed Socks to Soldiers Overseas



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Girl Scouts from Orinda and Moraga worked together to help soldiers.

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

What better way to begin 2015 than with a tribute to our local Girl Scouts and a project that honors our soldiers serving overseas?

This past Veteran's Day, more than 200 Girl Scouts from Orinda and Moraga came together to stuff 500 pairs of new socks with handmade cards and lots of candy. The girls ranged in age from kindergarten through 12th grade. "The socks were delivered to the Blue Star Moms, Chapter 101, in Danville," says

Orinda resident Mary Friese. "The socks were then shipped to Afghanistan to arrive in time for the holidays."

According to Friese, one of the Blue Star Moms had previously received socks from the Orinda Intermediate School's Others First volunteer program.

"She noted it was very difficult for her to express how important a simple gesture of socks, treats and a message from home is for the soldiers who are enduring such harsh conditions," Friese says. "She said her son still has the cards he received and still reads them."

RxSafe Battles Prescription Drug Abuse



MICHAEL SAKODA
Members of the new RxSafe Lamorinda meet at Orinda's City Hall.

By MICHAEL SAKODA
Staff Writer

Between 2008 and 2012, there were 408 overdose fatalities in Contra Costa County. More than half involved prescription drugs. As a nation, we lost 41,502 people to overdoses in 2012 alone; 22,114 of those deaths involved prescription drugs. Prescription drug abuse and its consequences are a national epidemic that affects Orinda, just like the rest of the country.

Last October, the Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition initiated RxSafe Lamorinda, joining San Ramon Valley, Marin, Martinez and Brentwood in educating community members about the dangers of prescription drugs in order to reduce the rates of overdoses and addiction.

April Rovero, who launched RxSafe San Ramon five years ago, spoke at the meeting of her own loss. Rovero's son, Joey, 21, died on Dec. 18, 2009 of a prescription drug overdose just one day before returning home from college for winter break. Joey was found with a combination of benzodiazepines, opiates and alcohol in his system.

"I'll have conversations with parents where they'll say, 'Well, my son is a straight A student; he's a football player,' and I'll say, 'My son was too,'" said Rovero. "This

Miramonte High School's Exam Jam



SALLY HOGARTY

Students at Miramonte High School eagerly pick up healthy snacks provided by the Parents' Club before studying for exams at the school's first Exam Jam, the brainchild of Principal Julie Parks. The two-day event held the week before finals encouraged students to stay after school and study with teachers available to help.

problem crosses all boundaries, it doesn't matter. Anyone is at risk."

Addiction isn't a disease of the poor or downtrodden. It knows no race, gender or

age; it doesn't discriminate. The goal of Rx-Safe is to break through these stereotypes and reach people who wouldn't actively

[SEE DRUGS page 6]

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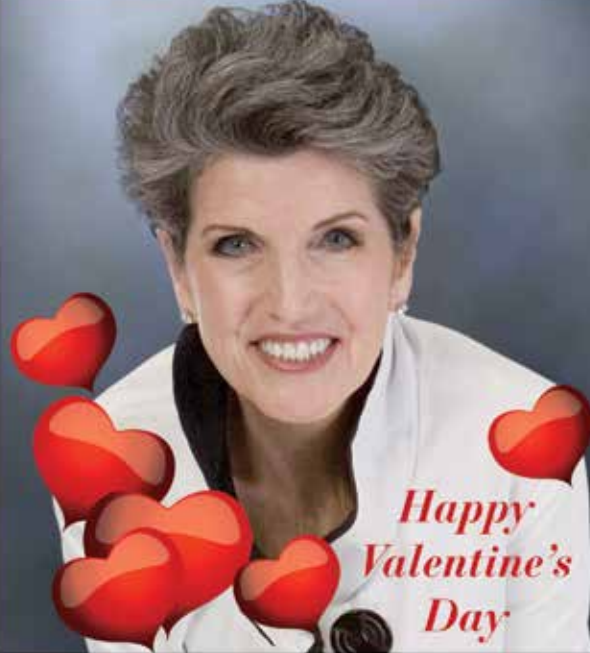
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Happy Valentine's Day

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Library Gallery Features Four Women in Love with Creating

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

The Orinda Arts Council presents the work of four women artists at the Orinda Library Gallery during February. Stop by to view Carla Gelbaum's paintings, Joan Ibarolle's ceramic works and porcelain dolls, Shirley Sanderson's exotic wildlife photographs and Cynthia Whitchurch's fused glass works. Meet them at their artist reception on Sunday, Feb. 8, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. when light refreshments will be served.

Carla Gelbaum of Moraga is showing about 20 paintings and a sampling of her monotypes. She has been making art her entire life and says that her paintings are a way to connect her dreams to her reality. Look for two large panels: *Brunch at Brita's One* (55" x 80") and *Brunch at Brita's Two* (72" x 93"). She painted on individual sheets of un-stretched canvas and sewed them together like a quilt on her late mother's Featherlight Singer sewing machine. They portray an imagined brunch hosted by her mother, Brita, so she could meet her granddaughter, Julia. Guests include her mother, her daughter and her mother's mother. Other interesting guests include two women who are Nobel Peace Prize recipients from Myanmar and Kenya, Queen Nefertiti (who had six daughters) and Indira Gandhi. The menu is one her mother would have made and the table is set with name cards for each guest. Gelbaum says, "Each person in this world has infinite potential as vast as the universe, and I hope



SHIRLEY SANDERSON

This photo of a male lion with an unusual black mane in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve in Botswana is part of the February exhibit at the Library Gallery.

that through my art people can feel the infinite potential of life, especially as we all face the many difficulties and struggles in today's world." See <http://cwgelbaum.com> for more of her work.

Joan Ibarolle of Walnut Creek is 83 years old and has been creating ceramics for 38 years. She started as a painter, but when her daughter went to college, she decided to try clay and fell in love with it. At first, she did functional pieces but eventually branched off into sculpture. Joseph Campbell's dictate, "follow your bliss," reminded her how she was always branching off to make faces; and that she has a love of children and of dolls. Ergo, she learned how to create re-

[SEE GALLERY page 8]

Moraga Gallery Displays Lisa Gunn's Impassioned Art

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Orinda resident Lisa Gunn's exhibit, *Art Passionata*, is being shown at the Moraga Art Gallery through March 21. The term describes an impassioned classical sonata – no accident, as Gunn has taught music for 29 years. However, here she applies the term to painting with passion as well, be it landscape, portrait, figurative or

still life. As a professionally trained pianist, she discovered a delightful transference between her ear and her eye - playing a piece of music, and creating a painting. The comparisons are innumerable, so many of the same terms apply: bright sounds/bright colors; minor tones/dark tones. Just as composers use music to connect with

[SEE GUNN page 8]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Persimmons on the Windowsill will be among the works in Lisa Gunn's shows at the Moraga Gallery.

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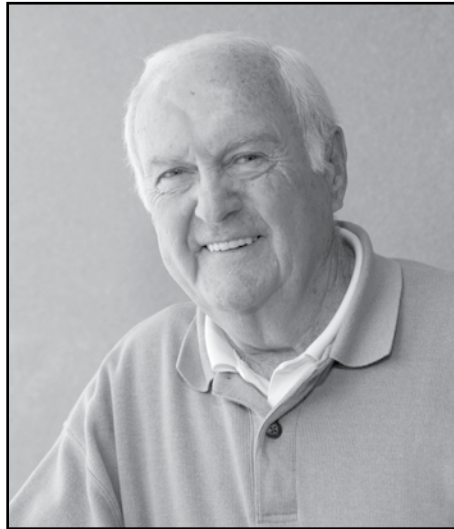
ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
Meet OA Board Member Joe Garvey!



Bill Waterman

The Orinda Association recently had two new members join the board – Joe Garvey and Maura Aars. I thought it would be nice to introduce them to you in my column beginning this month with Joe (who jumped right in and agreed to be our new vice president) and, in March, profiling Maura.



CHARLIE JARRETT

Vice President **Joe Garvey**

Joe and Linda, his wife of 51 years, moved to Orinda 28 years ago. They are the proud parents of a son and daughter who have blessed them with four grandchildren, all boys. Their children graduated from Miramonte High School and went on to earn degrees from California universities.

Joe served in the Navy after graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy. After leaving the service, he earned his MBA in

marketing from New York University and enjoyed a career in the travel and hospitality industries where he advanced to senior management positions as a vice president with United Airlines, Royal Viking Cruise Lines and Hyatt Hotels. In the remaining years of his career, he and colleagues from these companies formed their own enterprise and were consultants to such hotels as the Ritz Carlton Hotels, Destination Hotels and various independent hotels and resorts throughout the United States, Europe and Asia.

Joe and his family resided in NYC, Chicago, Portland, Denver and Orinda. Joe says that, without question, Orinda has been the most enjoyable community in which they've lived. He thinks Orinda offers a unique and fulfilling quality of life where residents are friendly, caring and involved in our beautiful city. By serving on the board of the Orinda Association, Joe wishes to express his gratitude to Orinda residents by contributing to the enhancement of the beauty, character and security of our community.

If you are interested in serving on the OA board, please contact me at b.waterman354@gmail.com.

Gala Award Dinner
February 8 at 6 p.m.
Orinda Country Club
Volunteer of the Year
William Penn Mott, Jr.
925-254-0800

Perlmutter Gallery Showcases
Schumer's *Without Hesitation*

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Julie Schumer's solo *Without Hesitation* exhibit displays work in the *alla prima* painting style which the artist was drawn to because it conveys a great sense of movement and energy. Schumer raised two boys in Orinda and spent 20 years in the Bay Area before moving to Santa Fe a dozen years ago. She has maintained many friendships in the area and is thrilled to be showing her work at the Perlmutter Gallery in Lafayette, where it is on display until Valentine's Day, Feb. 14.

Instead of building colors up with layers of glazing over an underpainting, an *alla prima* painting is completed while the paint is still wet; sometimes it is started and finished in one session. The literal translation from Italian is "at once," which conveys a direct, expressive style with minimal preparation. Stop by to see *Landscape Composition 40*, a 40" x 50" acrylic



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Julie Schumer exhibits her acrylic and cold wax painting entitled *Landscape Composition 40*.

and cold wax painting on panel, which conveys Schumer's joyful encounter with the style. See www.julieschumer.com for more information.

The gallery is located at 3620 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, CA 94549 and is open Tuesday - Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and by appointment. For more information go to www.jenniferperlmuttergallery.com or call 925-284-1485.

Volunteer Opportunity

The 7th Annual NorCal Kid's Triathlon needs volunteers to help organize its popular sporting event scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 29, from 7:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Volunteer will help a few hours a month between now and the August event and then on the day of the event. Organizers are looking for help with the following:

1. Marketing and promotions;
2. Social media management (Facebook, twitter and Instagram);
3. Sponsor and fundraising efforts;
4. Awards and clothing orders.

Sponsored by the Orinda Community Foundation, the Kid's Triathlon introduces sports to young people in a safe and supportive environment that encourages healthy competition between friends and family.

For more information on volunteering, contact coordinator Charlie Vollmar



SALLY HOGARTY

A volunteer offers a drink to one of the young participants as she begins her run.

at 925-368-4181 or via email at Charlie@epicureanexchange.com.

The group is also looking for volunteers to serve on a planning committee for Orinda Action, the annual day where the community comes together to clean, weed and more. Go to www.orindafoundation.org for more information.

The Orinda Association

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

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

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Volunteer of the Year and
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SALLY HOGARTY

Dick Burkhalter in Mexico distributing Orinda soccer uniforms and equipment to needy young players.



MARY FRIESE

OIS students (L-R) **Louie Giles**, **Chinmai Srinivas**, and **Juliet Adam** at Glide Memorial Church.

Join us for dinner to honor Dick Burkhalter as the Volunteer of the Year and Orinda Intermediate School's Others First program as the William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award winner.

February 8 at 6 p.m.
Orinda Country Club

Cocktail hour and dinner followed by the awards ceremony. Call 925-254-0800 or go online to www.orindaassociation.org to make your reservation and dinner selection.

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A Member Of Real Living

Corrections...

In the January 2015 issue, the photograph for the Children's Health Guild on page 19 should have been credited to Jenn Fox Photography.

Also in the January 2015 issue, the page 1 story on Monteverde stated the City of Orinda issued a Request for Proposals in 2008. It should have said a Request for Qualifications.

Editor's Note: While a well-informed reader noted other points in the page 1 Monteverde story that he felt

needed additional clarification, the story focused on the finished project and current residents rather than the hotly contested development.

We apologize for not having the space to include all the various issues during the project's planning stages. These were covered in various stories at the time. For more information on the Monteverde project, go to the city's website at www.cityoforinda.org and click on Departments, then Planning Department.

Letters to the Editor

Vote Afloat

It has happened. At the Dec. 15 Orinda Council meeting, Councilmember Eve Phillips made a motion to have Orindans vote for open public discussion pertaining to major land-use changes consequent to Orinda's Housing Element plan. Open public discussion. That is worlds apart from how the council heretofore chose to address public concern re Orinda's Housing Element issues. No citizen question was answered straight and simple, often not at all, in a public hearing. The previous process amounted to endorsing overzealous policies, prohibiting interactive public discourse and subordinating citizens' concerns to the desired gains of non-profit advocates and project developers. Mayor Glazer, ultimately, seconded Councilmember Phillip's motion; Councilman Orr voted in favor. Astoundingly, Councilmembers Smith and Worth opposed a vote for open public discussion.

In Jennifer Modenessi's January 1 *Contra Costa Times* article, Councilmember Worth stated that [voters] elected city councils to govern and make decisions after a long, thoughtful, open process, and that placing the housing element on the ballot isn't a legal option. Ms. Worth seems to make no distinction between the legality of having an Orinda housing element and holding a vote for open public debate on the substance of Orinda's housing element. And her statement regarding the council's previously "open process" is manifestly untrue. If Ms. Worth's assertion was the case, citizens would not have elected a virtually unknown candidate, Eve Phillips, who supported a voting initiative, as the first among six vying for council positions.

Ms. Worth's conclusion that election to office translates into absolute rule is inimical to governing according to the will of the electorate, whose duty it is to actively participate in public discussions on major issues that directly affect their schools, protective services, private property values and community character. Councilmembers Worth and Smith apparently can find no demonstrable difference between the decision-making process in contracting

for Orinda's garbage service and enacting a General Plan Housing Element that will fundamentally and irretrievably determine the direction of Orinda's land-use agreements now and into the future.

Perhaps the question to be asked in the next Orinda City Council's public forum is "What are Councilmembers' Worth and Smith's arguments in opposition to having a substantive interactive debate on major land-use changes?" A community cannot continue to be vibrant and healthy when it concedes control to brazen bureaucratic regional powers. Such negates the very purpose of a city council.

— Charlie Brown

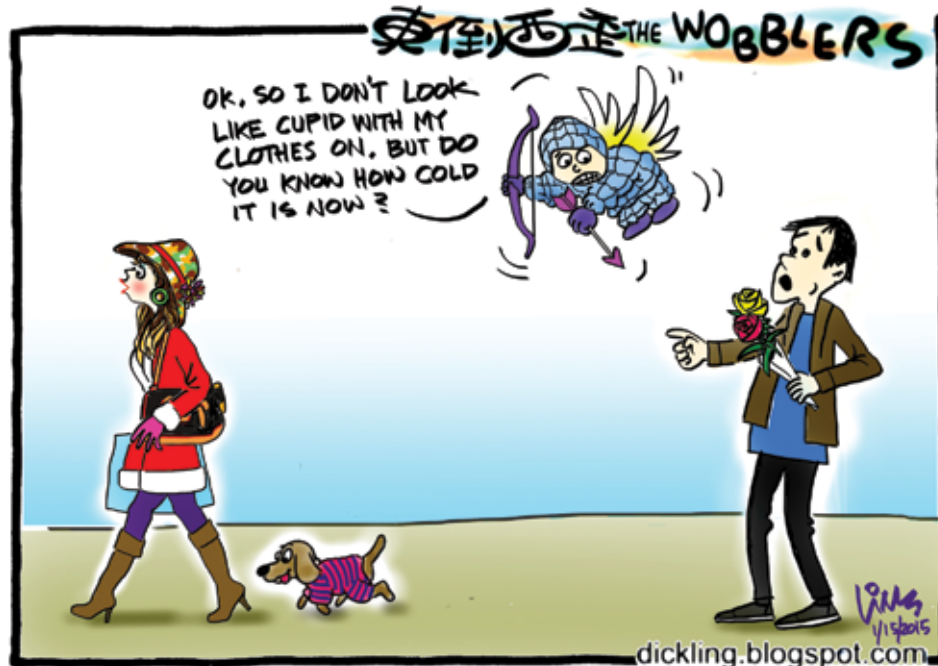
A Practical Housing Strategy for Orinda

The housing element process has been one Orinda has been obliged to complete in 2014, but the conversation about affordable housing needs to expand to the renewal of downtown and the role of housing in its future development.

The city, acting in its own best interests - not because it may be required by the state, should pursue the development of housing, some of which should be affordable. The most feasible location for new housing development is in the city's commercial districts, particularly in Orinda Village where there are several underdeveloped properties.

Over 70 percent of the land area in Orinda Village is devoted to surface parking - not an appropriate way to utilize valuable downtown land. The city correctly proposes higher density and underground parking for mixed use - housing in this area. However, current land values and costs associated with underground parking would preclude affordable housing except for some small percentage.

The various underdeveloped properties in Orinda Village provide opportunities for more intensive development of mixed-use retail and office as well as housing, all of which would benefit the city financially through enhanced property and sales taxes. Equally important, development that is well planned, well designed and which creates



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a charming "village" character would enliven the area making it more attractive to businesses and shoppers as well as future residents.

Chapter 17.1 of the city's Municipal Code cites the specific purposes of the "downtown district regulations", which could further the intent of revitalizing downtown areas. These include the following:

"...regulate development to achieve a vibrant community center over time; provide for multifamily housing, including affordable housing in downtown areas; establish

incentives, such as additional building height, higher floor area or broader range of permitted uses to help achieve a vibrant community center."

These are laudable objectives, which the city should accept as an obligation.

In order to "achieve a vibrant community center," the city needs to develop an implementation strategy to accomplish it.

Orinda does not need a grandiose downtown plan. All that is required are some basic zoning modifications together with some modest development studies of spe-

[SEE LETTERS page 16]

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

POLICE / WASTE SERVICES

License Plate Readers Not a Done Deal



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

License plate readers similar to this one are being discussed for use in Orinda.

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

At its Jan. 13 meeting, the Orinda City Council once again heard a report by Police Chief Nagel on the feasibility of using license plate readers to deter crime and help catch criminals. City Councilmembers and many local residents, however, continue to question how data retrieved from the cameras will be used and stored.

Chief Nagel had initially reported to the council at its Nov. 18 meeting on the various types of camera technology – motion-activated cameras and license plate readers – used by various Bay Area police departments. The interest in camera technology dates back to an August community meeting held by residents in North Orinda who were experiencing an upswing in crime. Orinda Downs installed three Reconyx motion-activated cameras on private roads in early 2014.

At the January council meeting, Chief Nagel presented additional information including how the Piedmont Police and the Lafayette Police used these devices. In his presentation, the Chief included a statement from Lafayette Police Chief Eric Christensen that stated, “In 2014, our investigations team solved 100 percent of our armed robberies through some type of camera system. Without the cameras, at least 60 percent of those crimes would not have been solved.”

While the statistics from Piedmont

and Lafayette included in Nagel’s report were impressive, information supplied by Capt. William Duke had even more effect on councilmembers and the public in attendance. Capt. Duke noted that all fixed cameras and automatic license plate readers used by sheriff’s deputies fall under the county’s new body camera policy and that audio and video data not booked as evidence must be kept for two years. Capt. Duke oversees police services in cities that contract with the Contra Costa Sheriff’s Department for police services, which includes Orinda.

“The license plate readers are entirely different than other equipment listed in the county’s policy,” said Chief Nagel, who noted that the county would work with the City of Orinda on a policy for the motion-activated cameras.

While many in attendance at the Jan. 13 meeting still expressed support of the camera technology, others expressed concern about privacy issues. The privately-owned cameras in Orinda Downs only give photos to the Orinda Police when there has been a crime or suspicious activity.

The City Council asked Chief Nagel to return with more information on the cameras as well as alternative options. City attorney Osa Wolff will also meet with the county’s lawyer to go over the new camera policy and how it would pertain to Orinda if and when the city incorporates camera technology.

New Year, New Services

Beginning in March 2015, Republic Services (formerly Allied Waste Services) will be the collection company for local trash, recycling and yard trimmings/food scraps carts. The company will also make some changes, including new low-emission, state-of-the-art collection trucks, different-colored collection carts and an expanded range of services. In addition, the Contra Costa County Solid Waste Authority’s next issue of its quarterly newsletter “Diversions” will arrive in mailboxes in

February and March and will provide a complete review of the new services.

Businesses and multi-dwelling bins will change from blue to gray and be delivered beginning in February. New residential carts (black for landfill, green for organic waste, and blue for recyclables) will be delivered the day before your regular collection day beginning in March.

For more information, call CCCSWA at 925-906-1801 or email - authority@wastediversion.org.



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POLICE BLOTTER

December 2014 through Jan 3, 2015

Burglary, Auto: 4 incidents: Charles Hill Rd., Wilder Rd./Rabble Rd., Oak Dr. and Los Amigos.

Burglary, Commercial: 1 incident: El Gavilan Rd.

Burglary, Residential: 7 incidents: La Vuelta, Hillcrest Dr., Estates Dr., Claremont Ave., Hall Dr., Moraga Way, and Eastwood Dr.

Fraud/False Pretenses: 1 incident: Camino Sobrante.

Forgery: 1 incident: Counter Report at Orinda PD.

Grand Theft: 2 incidents: Bates Blvd. and Bear Ridge Rd.

Hit and Run Misdemeanor: 1 incident: Knickerbocker Ln.

Identity Theft: 8 incidents: Brookwood Rd., Lost Valley Dr., Crescent Dr., Orinda Way, Daryl Dr., and Counter Report at Orinda PD (3).

Petty Theft: 7 incidents: Canon Dr., Tara Rd., Coral Dr., Fallen Leaf Ter., Oak Dr., Woodcrest Dr. and Beverages & More.

Petty Theft from Vehicle: 1 incident: Scenic Dr.

Theft Access Card: 1 incident: Glorietta Blvd.

Threats: 2 incidents: Orchard Rd. and Theatre Square.

Arrests

Drunk in Public Arrest: 1 arrest: Glorietta Blvd.

In Custody Theft Arrest: 3 arrests at Safeway.

Suspicious Subject Arrest: 2 arrests: Orinda Way and Orinda Library.

Traffic Accident Arrest: 2 arrests: Camino Pablo/Brookwood Rd. and E. Altarinda Dr./Harran Circle.

Traffic Stop Arrest: 3 arrests: Vashell Way/Moraga Way, Camino Pablo/Miner Rd. and Hwy. 24/Fish Ranch Rd.

Warrant Service Arrest: 1 arrest: Wilder Rd.

Orinda BART Station

No reported incidents.

– Compiled by Jeanette Irving,
Orinda Police Department

Free E-Waste Recycling Events at DVC

Saturday, Feb. 7 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Diablo Valley College

321 Golf Club Road (overflow parking lot #7)
Pleasant Hill

Visit www.NoEwaste.com for accepted and non-accepted electronic items and event info.

Don't Miss the First Chamber Luncheon

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Everyday Changes**Relax With Valentine's Date at Spa**

Bonnie Waters



Saint Valentine's Day, also known as Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is celebrated around the world.

According to Wikipedia: "St. Valentine's Day began as a celebration of one or more early Christian saints named Valentinus. A popular account is that of Saint Valentine of Rome which states that he was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers who were forbidden to marry and for ministering to Christians, who were persecuted under the Roman Empire. According to legend, during his imprisonment, he healed the daughter of his jailer, Asterius. An embellishment to this story states that before his execution he wrote her a letter signed 'Your Valentine' as a farewell."

The day was first associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the Middle Ages, when the tradition of courtly love flourished. In 18th-century England, it evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering sweets and sending greeting cards (known as "valentines"). In Europe, Saint Valentine's keys are given to lovers as a romantic symbol and an invitation to unlock the giver's heart. Since the 19th century, handwritten valentines have given way to mass-produced greeting cards.

Modern-day traditions now involve special shared experiences by couples. Valentine's Day is a special time at Changes Salon and Day Spa. We love creating mem-

orable experiences and couples have chosen to make a Valentine's visit to Changes an annual tradition. Our dual suite is perfect for those who want to enjoy the tandem gift of relaxation. Sharing experiences can also begin together with our relaxing footbath and lead to a variety of options including our OM4 Facial for gentlemen and a Changes Signature Facial for ladies. Since Changes Salon and Day Spa is walking distance to most of Walnut Creek's fabulous restaurants, the relaxed experience can continue with a leisurely stroll to your favorite eatery.

More and more men are taking advantage of the ease of giving a spa gift card and women who love to receive them are now reciprocating with gift cards for the men in their lives, redeemable for a sports massage, men's facial and/or a men's manicure. For the ultimate shared relaxation experience, try a dual spa three-month Massage Membership.

This Valentine's Day give someone you love something they will love with the gift of a relaxing experience. Remember that Valentine's Day falls on Saturday, Feb. 14 so call ahead and make your plans.

Parks and Rec Fair
February 28 - 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Orinda Community Center
925-254-2445
www.cityoforinda.org

Parks & Rec Hosts Activity and Camps FairBy KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

Are you curious about what is actually done at a Mad Science Camp or hesitant to start a Zumba class? Perhaps you're wondering if your child would like the Lego Play-well Technologies camp? Then, according to Parks and Recreation Department supervisor Jennifer Weiss, "the Orinda Recreation and Camps Fair is a must-do."

The fair will be held Saturday, Feb. 28 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Orinda Community Center.

According to Weiss, Parks and Recreation director Michelle Lacy introduced the event to Orinda after seeing its success in other communities. Weiss calls it, "a unique opportunity for residents to meet instructors, ask questions, maybe watch a demo, view or create a sample project or participate in an activity that would be part of the program they are interested in."

Fair participants might also find themselves surprised that they, "may even gain interest in another program that they previously did not consider."

According to Weiss, Parks and Recreation will be offering more than 225 camps and 250 classes this summer. She attributes the popularity of the classes to "a long history with great instructors, popular programs and fantastic staff that work diligently on offering new and exciting events and programming."

Weiss said programs will include Skyhawks sports, Italian and French programs, dog obedience, Orinda Ballet, art programs, mad science, computer classes, Orinda Karate-do, chess, tai chi, tennis, carpentry, bridge and pickleball.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
This camper tries out his basketball skills at one of the Community Center's many camps.

Weiss, who began working with the department in June of last year, says that they strive to create a community, which includes offering activities for people 1-109 years old. "We offer programs beginning with Kindergym classes for crawlers to wobbly walkers to senior programs like lunch n' learn and senior trips for individuals 50 and over."

Weiss said the upcoming fair "offers opportunity for instructors to get face-to-face interaction with participants and community members as we help them to plan their spring and summer recreation choices."

For more information, visit cityoforinda.org or call 925-254-2445. Attendees who sign up for classes at the fair will receive 10 percent off registration fees.

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**◆ DRUGS** from page 1

seek this information.

Tom Gilmore, a 21-year Lafayette resident, told the group that Lafayette has lost seven young men in the last 3-1/2 years (six in the last 2-1/2 years) to prescription drug overdoses. His son Daniel, a 23-year-old Acalanes and University of Oregon graduate, was one of them.

Four other former Acalanes students aged 23, 21, 27 and 17 and two former Campolindo students, aged 25 and 20, tragically lost their lives since 2012, and the numbers don't necessarily account for former Lamorinda residents who lost their lives elsewhere.

"These were not kids living under freeway overpasses. These were kids from good families, in good academic standing," said Gilmore. "They passed through the institutions in Lafayette, and there's heavy evidence that suggests their drug use began in middle school."

Gilmore believes that parents and students need to be educated while the children are still within the institutions of their hometowns such as schools and churches.

"I've often thought how a couple of people were hit by cars and injured crossing the street by the Lafayette Park Hotel, and they put up traffic lights," said Gilmore. "We need to do the same about this."

Also at last October's meeting were representatives from Lamorinda police and fire departments, local hospitals, schools and drug treatment centers, as well as parents and teachers from the Lamorinda community.

"In 2005, 25 percent of our juniors admitted to using prescription drugs recreation-

ally," said one of the school representatives. "These were drugs like Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet, Xanax and Lortab."

Drug treatment counselors told the group that prescription pill addicts are often forced to seek their high through street drugs, which in turn leads to more deaths.

In 2010, Purdue Manufacturing stopped the production of OxyContin, frequently referred to as "hill-billy heroin," a narcotic opiate intended to be used for pain management. They stopped making the "OC" marked pills, which could be snorted, smoked and injected intravenously, hoping to put a stop to the pills popular abuse, replacing it with a time-released, supposedly impossible to abuse pill marked "OP." Unfortunately, OxyContin users aren't stopping, many are simply turning to heroin.

"We're seeing teenagers and people in their 20s from this area," said Jordan from New Leaf Treatment Center. "They start out at 15, 16 with pain killers and their habit grows to \$200 a day. So we've seen a trend where they're turning to heroin because it's cheaper."

The 2014 transport log from local paramedics reads like a warning: 19-year-old female, drug overdose, Prozac in Moraga; 14-year-old male, drug overdose, Vicodin and Tramadol in Orinda; 15-year-old female, unknown drug overdose in Orinda; 17-year-old female, unknown drug overdose in Moraga; five heroin overdoses in the last year, all male, all early 20s, two survivors; two over-the-counter drug overdoses, two survivors.

RxSafe Lamorinda meets Feb. 11 at 10 a.m. in the Sarge Littlehale Room at Orinda City Hall. For more information, contact Jaime Rich, jaime@chd-prevention.org.

SOVIET AFFAIRS / CARS

Expert on Soviet Affairs Speaks at First Friday Forum

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

“Russia, Ukraine, and the West in 2015” is the subject of the First Friday Forum (FFF) on Feb. 6 at 1:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. The speaker will be Dr. George Breslauer, author of 12 books on the USSR and Russia and editor since 1992 of the scholarly journal, *Post-Soviet Affairs*. Some of the topics on which he has written include “The Global Dynamics of Cold War,” “Gorbachev’s Efforts to Transform the Union,” “Boris Yeltsin and the Invention of the Russian Nation-State” and “Leadership and Nation Building.”

“The crisis in Ukraine has brought relations between the United States and Russia to a low level not seen since the end of the Cold War,” says Breslauer. His talk will focus on how this came about and the prospects for a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Breslauer recently retired from his positions as professor of political science and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost at U.C. Berkeley where he had taught since 1971. In 1997, he was presented with the Distinguished Teaching Award of the Social Sciences Division at U.C. Berkeley and, in 1998, he received the Chancellor’s Professorship in recognition of outstanding achievement in research, teaching and service to the university. In 2014, for his contributions to both scholarship and educational leadership, he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He now holds the emeritus title of Professor of the Graduate School, U.C. Berkeley.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Dr. George Breslauer will speak on “Russia, Ukraine and the West” at the February forum.

“We are proud to be presenting this distinguished scholar with such outstanding credentials to discuss this subject of vital importance to the United States and the world,” says FFF chair Darlene James. “Attending the lecture should help all of us have a better understanding of the many complexities of the issue.”

Refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m., prior to the talk. Call 925-283-8722 for additional information.

Forum
February 6, 1:30 p.m.
Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church
925-283-8722

CAR TIME

Visual Inspection Needed for Proper Diagnosis



By JOHN VANEK

When it comes to vehicle repair and maintenance, the top concern these days is cost. As soon as there are signs of trouble with the family hauler, the anxiety level goes up. How much now? A car care professional is not going to know how much the problem will cost without checking the car in person. Over the phone or on-line information can’t provide a realistic diagnosis for your car. Price shopping for an unknown repair is usually a waste of time for you and the repair shops you are calling. Calling around finding a shop that is experienced with your car is a better idea – and researching the car shop’s reputation.

Routine maintenance can be estimated as long as you know what you are due for. What was done last? What service is due according to the manufacturer? Half of our customers have no idea what their vehicle is due for. Knowing is half of the battle. Maintenance intervals are described in the owner’s manual. The schedule will describe the type of service required at what mileage

interval. Most required interval services are inspections. What work needs to be done is a result of the inspection. Let’s say you have an Acura MDX with about 90,000 miles. You are calling around trying to find the best price for a 90K service. The person on the phone is not going to be able to tell you about the condition of your car over the phone. Once again, the vehicle needs to be looked over to understand its condition and potential costs. Ideally, you should be shopping for a repair facility that you can trust, instead of shopping for price. A worthy repair shop will look out for you and give you a good value. A repair facility that always fits you in, takes care of your emergency flat tire or dead battery and gets you back on the road is what you need.

What is your time with your car worth anyway? Probably quite a bit. Having a budget for your vehicle is a good idea. Spending money maintaining or repairing your older car is a reality. Your car is

[SEE CAR TIME page 13]



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OBITUARY

◆ GALLERY from page 2

productions of porcelain dolls. Ibarolle was so good at it that Ashton Drake offered her a contract, and she worked for them creating porcelain children's dolls for 10 years. They are collectible and treasured by those lucky enough to own one. About a decade ago she stopped making the dolls, and now just creates whatever interests her; she doesn't plan ahead, just goes with her instincts. "I am basically self-taught and have always had the feeling that if you really want to do something and are determined, that you can do it," says Ibarolle. Look for *Pedestal Pot*, a 14" tall and 14" in circumference reduction fired clay planter and *Little Boy With Pigs*, a 6" tall and 7" in circumference reduction fired porcelain sculpture.

"Wild" is the theme for Shirley Sanderson of Kentfield's photographs in the show. "It refers to both the animals that are the subject of my photos as well as the places where they live; I believe we need both wildness and wilderness in our 21st century urban-centric world," she says. The 27 photographs Sanderson is showing are from safaris and expeditions she and her husband have traveled to all over the world for the last 10 years. The photographs are taken with long lenses and fast response cameras in protected reserves. Many are of animals whose conservation status is endangered or threatened. She hopes that showing these photographs will raise awareness about these threats and help bring about solutions to ensure their continued existence in the wild. Look for *Black-Maned Lion Drinking*, an 18" x 12" photograph, and *Polar Bear Mother and Cub*, a 12" x 18" photograph. All proceeds from the sale of her photographs go to Wilderness Trust by way of Resources First Foundation for their conservation and education programs in southern Africa. Wilderness Trust protects over eight million acres of wildlife habitat and involves all the local African communities in their projects and business. See www.wanderingeye.net for more information about her work.

Cynthia Whitchurch of Lafayette is an ex-Fortune 200 executive who is living her dream as an artist and entrepreneur. The sparkle and color of glass, crystal and gemstones has always fascinated her, and for the past 10 years she has been creating all kinds of fused glass works. She studied with the late Dan Fenton, a famous Bay Area glass teacher who she considers a walking encyclopedia of glass. She is showing about 50 pieces including panels, bowls, platters, jewelry and coasters. Getting the fused glass to look stretched, as if it is blown glass, is her current challenge. She keeps up with advancements such as

a technique where you take glass powder, mix it and put it in a kiln where you can cut it with scissors. "Pendants and earrings are made from dichroic glass which is fun to work with because you don't know what's going to happen till the heat hits it – you look in one direction and it's green, another and it's purple," says Whitchurch. Look for *Two Become One*, a 19.5" x 14.5" fused glass panel and "*Pick up the Pieces*," an 18" x 4" fused glass bowl. She hopes viewers will be inspired to try new things. For example, she goes through a lot of glass to learn how to make new pieces and likes this style of learning. See www.whitchurch-glassdesigns.com for more information.

As to the value of art in the community, Gelbaum believes that, "It has been said that art is for our soul what food is for our body. Through the arts, we can express our common humanity and the energy and vitality of life. We need to ensure that the



Joan Ibarolle's *African Mask* adds to the February exhibit at the Orinda Library.

arts are available in our schools and communities." Ibarolle says, "I've been part of Clay Arts Guild of Walnut Creek since 1976. I love the people there. Through the creativity we share, we enrich each other's lives and that spills over into the community." Sanderson says, "I believe that art broadens our horizons, may alter our perceptions (or strengthen them) and enriches our emotional lives. In that way, it is much like the value of visiting other cultures." "I love what Orinda has done with community art," says Whitchurch. "The bicycle sculpture, the fish in front of Nations, the wall in restaurant square; it feeds my creativity as an artist, and I'm sure it feeds others."

Visit the gallery at 26 Orinda Way during normal library hours – Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m.; closed on Presidents' Day, Feb. 16. Call 925-254-2184 for more information or visit <http://ccclib.org>.

Remembering Jean Thomas Lyford, a Dedicated Educator

Born December 20, 1929, in Philadelphia, PA, Jean Thomas Lyford died after a fight with breast cancer, on December 8, 2014, at her home in Orinda.

Jean was born and raised in suburban Philadelphia, the first child of Lewis and Margaretta Thomas. She had two marriages, the first to Jerry McKee, and the second to Joseph Philip Lyford. She and Joseph had two children, Amy and Joseph, Jr.

Jean was an educator, writer and gardener and connected these as vocations and avocations throughout her life. Jean earned a degree in Business Administration from Drexel University in Philadelphia and did graduate work in Victorian literature at Columbia University in New York. She earned a teaching credential from Teacher's College at Columbia University, after which she taught kindergarten at the Dalton School in Manhattan and junior high school in Brooklyn. Jean taught 7th grade science at both Pine Grove and then Orinda Intermediate School in Orinda. She later earned an MA in School Administration at St. Mary's College in Moraga and served as principal of Orinda Intermediate and interim principal of Del Rey Elementary School.

Following her professional work in the Orinda schools, Jean served as a trustee on the Board of the Orinda Union School District. She was a member, and the first female president of the Orinda Rotary Club; a member of the Orinda Woman's Club; and an active participant in the Hummingbirds Writing Workshop. She wrote four books of poetry, all published with Azalea Art Press: *Waves of Time* (2011), *Remembrances* (2013), *Waiting for the Wind* and *Opening* (both 2014). Jean's love of nature and dedication to gardening were reflected in her poetry. She nurtured her plants as she did every person in her life, with deep compassion and generosity of spirit.

Jean was remarkable for her empathy



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Jean Lyford spent many years as a teacher and administrator in the Orinda Union School District.

and caring regard for her friends, family, students and community. Her natural ability to view problems from many perspectives made her a sympathetic ear, a natural mediator, problem-solver and leader. Throughout her long life, her devoted passion and enthusiasm for community service never left her, and she will be missed by all whose lives she has touched. Among the many legacies she leaves behind are a small garden at her Orinda home, and a larger one that is the Orinda school district she helped so lovingly to shape.

Jean Lyford was pre-deceased by her husband, Joseph Lyford, in 1992. She is survived by her brothers, E. J. Baylis Thomas III (New York, NY) and Lewis J. Thomas, Jr. (St. Louis, MO); her children Amy Lyford (Altadena, CA) and Joseph P. Lyford, Jr. (Orinda, CA); her grandchildren Eve and Willa Lyford (Orinda, CA); her daughter- and son-in-law, Stephanie Brown (Orinda, CA) and David Clegg (Altadena, CA); and her sister-in-law, Norma Hurlburt (New York, NY).

A celebration of Jean's life was held on January 12 at the Brazilian Room in Tilden Park. Donations can be made in honor of Jean Lyford to the Educational Foundation of Orinda: orindaefo.org.

◆ GUNN from page 2

listeners' emotions, painters use color, form and composition to do the same.

In the past five years, she has studied with several teachers including Camille Przewodek, who "taught me to worship the light" and Kristen Le who helped her instill a crucial awareness of edges and shapes. Gunn hopes the strong love of painting she experiences communicates to those viewing her work. Look for *Crockett Cows*, 20" x 20," and *Persimmons on the Windowsill*, 24" x 20," both oil on canvas. There are other painters who were also musicians. American portrait painter John Singer Sargent comes to mind. Sargent (1856 – 1925) was an accomplished musician as composers Percy Grainger and Gabriel Fauré, close

friends of his, said that his musical ability was as great as his painting skills.

Her guest artist, Carol Tarzier, is a teacher at the Academy of Art in San Francisco and at Oakland's Studio One Art Center. Tarzier is showing California beach and coastal scenes that make you want to get the sand between your toes and the wind in your hair.

The show also includes works by 16 resident artists and several guest artists. Visit the gallery at 522 Center St., Rheem Shopping Center, Moraga 94556, call 925-376-5407, or go to <http://moragaart-gallery.com> for more information. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. For information on Lisa Gunn, visit www.lisagunnart.com.

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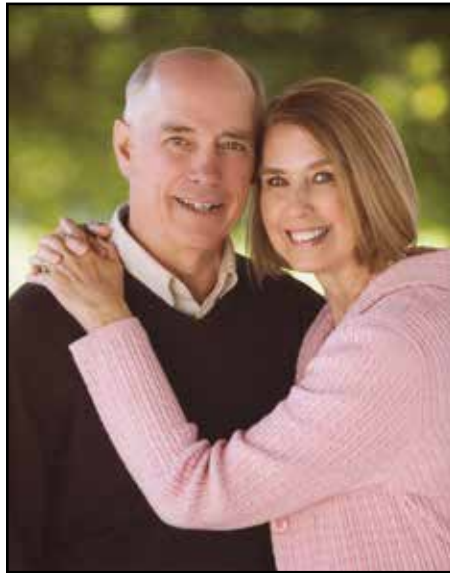
Sue Severson Retires After 16 Years of Dedicated Service to City

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Sue Severson, who is retiring from the Orinda City Council after eight years of service, says the people are what she'll miss most. "The city has an excellent staff, advisory committees and council members," said Severson. "It's always been gratifying to serve with them and the people of the community to move things forward in a positive way."

Severson said she's probably most proud of her accomplishments while serving on the Orinda School Board. "We worked on a strategic plan that included improving the core curriculum which I think continues to have positive benefits," said Severson, who was on the board for eight years. "Also, we made major facility improvements including the reopening of Wagner Ranch Elementary School."

While on the Orinda City Council, Severson said she suggested forming a finance advisory committee, tapping the skills of citizens with financial expertise. "Also,



Ralph and Sue Severson

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

we formed a revenue enhancement task force with citizens reviewing all options for increasing revenues to repair our roads and faulty drains," said Severson. "No one

[SEE SEVERSON page 13]



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OCF Celebrates Fifth Birthday



RICHARD WESTIN

There will be cake and more on Feb. 26 at 4:30 p.m. as the Orinda Community Foundation celebrates its fifth year of service to the community. The non-profit has enhanced local life through its support of local garden clubs, music in the park, the Orinda Association's July 4th parade, Lamorinda Idol and so many more local organizations and projects.

To learn more about this dynamic organization, come to the party or go to www.orindafoundation.org.



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Roving Reporter Do you Celebrate Valentine's Day?

Charlie Jarrett



Asked at Peet's Coffee and Geppettos in Orinda

Bryce, Aaron and son **Shane Zuzack** live in Orinda and recently stopped by Peet's for coffee. "Valentine's Day might be a bigger deal to singles - it's harder on them I think," said Bryce. "For us it's just another day, because for us, every day is Valentine's Day! He tells me he loves me every day. Every time we hang up the phone we say 'I love you.'" Aaron chimed in, "And every night we say 'I love you' before we go to sleep."

Aaron was born in Orinda and attended Glorietta, Orinda Intermediate and Miramonte High. He works in Walnut Creek for a commercial real estate firm. Bryce ran an aquatics program for 7 years, is a former Peninsula girl, and today is devoted to raising Shane. The couple met 7 years ago and married just over 2 years ago.

Lynn Danille Sugayan and her husband **Eliot Kenin** talked about the importance of celebrating love and building sound relationships and said they celebrate Valentine's Day every year. They first met in the late '70s when Lynn and Eliot's wife (at the time) were both coffeehouse poets. Lynn and Eliot subsequently ran into each other over the years but never really connected until New Year's Eve in 2000. They became better acquainted while attending various events in which they had a common interest.

During this period both of their spouses
[SEE ROVING page 11]



CHARLIE JARRETT
(L-R) Bryce and Aaron Zuzack with son Shane.



CHARLIE JARRETT
Lynn Danille Sugayan and Eliot Kenin.

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ROVING REPORTER

◆ ROVING from page 10

had died. They became interested in each other, but felt stymied for a time, worried that they might be dishonoring the love they had for their deceased spouses. They finally decided it was okay to date and, with the spirit of their former partners still firmly in tow, they eventually found it comfortable to hold hands while dating. They eased their insecure feelings by describing their dates as “double dating,” keeping memories of their deceased spouses close at hand. Finally, they gave themselves permission to fall in love. So, said Lynn, the “double dating” experience, although very taxing, did work out after all. Lynn and Eliot have been happily married since 2004 and rejoice that it is never too late to once again find true companionship, friendship and eventually love.

Eliot and Lynn live on a farm in nearby Briones Park but are well known to Orinda residents. Eliot and his Spirit of '29 Dixieland Band play early jazz on his Model “A” Ford truck in the Orinda Fourth of July Parade every year, driven by Lynn.



CHARLIE JARRETT
(L-R) Jose Bolanos and Michael Ziadeh

Dr. Jose Bolanos and associate Michael Ziadeh were discussing marketing plans for a revolutionary new health enhancement product, a compact uni-structure toothpaste and toothbrush called the EZebrush, when they overheard the discussion on Valentine’s Day and chimed in. Dr. Bolanos said that his wife, Cameron Barnhart, will, without question, be receiving a dozen roses and that he will take her to dinner at one of their favorite restaurants in Orinda or Lafayette. She might even receive one of the new EZebrush prototypes as a Valentine’s gift! “She has a truly beautiful smile and will

surely appreciate EZebrush’s ‘carry with you’ convenience,” said the doctor. Ziadeh is the inventor of the EZebrush and is working with Dr. Bolanos to secure funding for the product through one of Dr. Bolanos’ companies, Venture-Med., an Orinda-based Angel Investment Group.

Tom Taed and Carl Eggers, stalwart



CHARLIE JARRETT
Tom Taed and Carl Eggers

members of the Orinda Coffee Grinders group, which frequents local coffee shops practically on a daily basis, said they love *The Orinda News* and find special interest in the excellent coverage on community and safety issues. The coffee group originally started gathering at Royal Grounds Coffee shop before it went out of business. Carl said that Valentine’s Day has special meaning to him and that he plans to bring his wife flowers and, perhaps, even go out to dinner to celebrate the occasion. Tom plans to send flowers to his wife at work while he cooks a special dinner for them both at home. Tom, originally from Michigan, has lived in Orinda for about 14 years after moving here from Pinole. Carl was born in the Panama Canal Zone, where his father worked for the Federal Aviation Administration. He and his wife moved to Orinda in 1979.

Just prior to Valentine’s Day, the Rev. Jim Brommers Bergquist, senior minister at Orinda Community Church, is hosting a special workshop to explore some new tools to enrich couples’ relationships – whether strained or not. There will be opportunities for attendees to learn about a variety of communication tools, including the benefits of non-violent communication. The work-

[SEE REPORTER page 16]

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Sleepy Hollow’s Annual Walk a Howling Success

On December 20, 2014, Sleepy Hollow neighbors held their 12th Annual Sleepy Hollow Holiday Walk. Held at Pam and Gary Schroeder’s house, the walk attracted over 70 families as well as their dogs, children, friends and guests.

The event involves neighbors walking around the one mile plus Sleepy Hollow loop with their dogs and children. The Neighbors who cannot walk participate by hosting watering stations along the route – and stand-by with treats and greetings for the participants. This year Santa took a break from his busy schedule to participant in the event as well.

– Kaye Chavalas



DAVID DIERKS
Joining **Santa Claus** at the dog walk were Mayor **Steve Glazer** and Chief of Police **Mark Nagel**.

Something to Howl About... Animal Tales

“Let Me Call You Sweetheart”

Jennifer Conroy



What’s in a name? As Shakespeare wrote – “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” But is that really true? Psychologists have studied names and have done some interesting experiments with names. In one study at McGill University in 2008, different odors were presented to subjects with names that were positive and negative. For example, “carrot juice” was used as a positive naming of an odor while “moldy vegetables” was used to represent a negative. It turned out that the odors given positive names were perceived as more pleasant, regardless of what the actual odor was.

We all know how names can affect people. A negative nickname or an obscure formal name can be problematic. So what about names for companion animals?

Names affect animals in a number of ways, from how we feel about the animal

to how the animal responds to us. On an emotional level, the care with which we name our companion animal evokes a certain level of attachment and commitment to that animal. Selecting the name of a loved one or choosing a name that we have always favored brings a personal element of closeness to the relationship we share with the animal.

A name that reflects a positive trait of the animal serves as a reinforcement of what it is that we cherish in that animal. On the other hand, names that are disrespectful or dismissive only create distance and disaffection. I know there are times when we humans think we are being cute when we name a dog “Dog” or a cat “Cat” but that would be like naming a child “Boy” or “Girl.”

Giving an animal a long, complex name
[SEE TALES page 14]




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LOCAL RESIDENT

Anti-Crime Activist Promotes Safe Kids Now Network

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

It's difficult to imagine the affluent bedroom community of Orinda experiencing a crime wave. However, in 1969, two years after moving to Orinda, Stephanie L. Mann found herself in the thick of it all.

"Children were victims of gangs and violence in Oakland and Richmond," said Mann. "Orinda had a crime wave and we didn't have a local police department."

Mann knew she had to do something.

She joined 10 other residents in a group called the P-4 Committee. "P for police," Mann explained, adding that at the time Orinda had only one and one-half sheriff's deputies, sharing an officer with El Sobrante. "We got organized, focused on strengthening citizen involvement and reduced crime by 48 percent within two and one-half years."

Now, almost five decades later, Mann continues her work helping the Orinda community be safer for its families, and she is enlisting Orindans for help.

Mann said that when she began, she had, "No prior experience, just a desire to help stop the drug and crime problem. The committee learned by making change happen."

Her focus in the early '70s led her to the work she currently does as founder of Safe Kids Now National Network, which seeks to empower communities to help create neighborhoods where children feel safe and protected.

"We got together because we were concerned about the new police Neighborhood Watch program assuming too much control over cities," said Mann, who raised three children in Orinda with her husband Doug.

"All the people I met, starting in Orinda, have been my teachers and stepping stones to launch my life's work," Mann said. "Today I encourage teens to get involved in their community to learn new skills, develop confidence and become leaders."

Mann has worked as a consultant for the Office of Criminal Justice Planning, Oakland PD and Contra Costa County as West County coordinator. She has been a guest speaker at cities throughout the country, and has been featured on many interviews including the Bill Moyer's special, "Solutions to Violence: Making Our Neighborhoods Safe."

Mann said her work has allowed her to witness the transformation that can happen with citizen involvement and referenced Barbara Vigil. Mann said Vigil came to her office because she was upset that the San Pablo City Council had decided to close Davis Park due to criminal activity.

Mann and her office made suggestions that helped Vigil and her neighbors stop



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Orinda resident **Stephanie Mann** worked to strengthen the Orinda police in the late 1980s and now works to keep children safe.

drug dealers from frequenting her local park and, 12 years later, Vigil became Mayor of San Pablo.

An accomplished author, Mann has written four crime prevention books, some of which are available on the Safe Kids Now website. She has a Tuesday podcast series, which offers advice to those concerned about child and teen safety. The shows are

"All the people I met, starting in Orinda, have been my teachers and stepping stones to launch my life's work," said Stephanie Mann.

available for free on iTunes.

"I love reaching out with podcasts to parents," Mann said, adding that she also hosts workshops around the country, including one with Dr. Barbara Williams for Bay Area Church Conference in Castro Valley. Past podcast themes include bullying, creating resilient children and child abuse prevention.

Mann, who has enjoyed a 35-year career as a crime and violence prevention consultant, lives by the words of anthropologist Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

She invites community members who are interested in youth, home, neighborhood and community safety to join the Safe Kids Now National Network. "Our goal is to strengthen family and communities. We can stay safe if we know what to do and how to do it."

To learn more about how to volunteer with the program, visit www.safekidsnow.com.

Registration for Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten

Children entering Orinda public schools for the 2015-16 school year as kindergartners or transitional kindergartners can register between 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the appropriate elementary school on the following dates:

Mon, Feb 2, 2015
Tue, Feb 3, 2015
Wed, Feb 4, 2015
Thu, Feb 5, 2015

Those needing assistance to determine which school a child should attend can go to the OUSD website at www.orindaschools.org or call 925-258-6211.

Kindergarten students must have their fifth birthday by September 1, 2015 and students whose fifth birthday falls between Sept. 2 – Dec. 2 will be eligible for transitional kindergarten.

◆ SEVERSON from page 9

thing fixed the problems but we instituted a phased approach resulting in the passage of measures L and J. I'm also proud of Orinda Action Day when many Orindans get out and work in the community to clean up and beautify. It's a great family day."

When Severson moved to Orinda in 1978, it was natural for her to volunteer in the schools since she had five children. She was president of the Parents' Club at Miramonte High School; she was involved with the emergency preparedness program at Orinda Intermediate School, which she extended to all Orinda schools. "At this time, Orinda formed a disaster committee and I was asked to serve on it, representing the schools. I was never one for politics, but when I was urged to run for school board I did because I like to serve and help. I stepped down after two terms as my youngest daughter was entering Miramonte, and I wanted to take more time to be there for her. It was when she graduated that I was encouraged to run for City Council."

Accolades for Severson's involvement in the city abound. Richard Westin said she knows how to get things done. "Sue is willing to do anything with great energy and extreme conscientiousness. I especially commend her for working with me to form the Orinda Community Foundation (OCF) in 2010." The OCF now helps fund numerous art and music performances in the city. "In the last five years, we've given around \$150,000 back to the community to fund events such as these," said Westin.

Pat Rudebusch served with Severson on the Orinda School Board. "It's clear to me that our schools are still benefitting from Sue's leadership," said Rudebusch. "She's a tireless advocate for children, families and

the community she loves. There's hardly a facet of community life that hasn't been made better by Sue's indomitable spirit."

Current Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer adds, "Sue's leadership inspires. She rolls up her sleeves and makes good things happen. There are few who have had a bigger impact on the well being of Orinda than Sue. We are very grateful."

Some of Severson's achievements include: Orinda Citizen of the Year, 2004; City of Orinda, Emergency Preparedness Committee; Cub Scout and Boy Scout Leader; President of the Latter Day Saints (LDS) Relief Society, Young Women Advisor, Relief Society teacher; host of the first Interfaith breakfast; Rotary International, Paul Harris Fellow; and Special Congressional Recognition by then Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher.

Severson is a Northern California Area Family History Advisor in the LDS Church and hopes to now devote more time to her family genealogy. "I've completed a 300-page book about my father's side of the family so now my brothers and sister are urging me to do our mother's side. I do want to stay involved in some ways in the community."

Then, there are the 18 grandchildren. Severson is very happy that she'll have more time to spend with them.

◆ CAR TIME from page 7

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Between the Lines New Books for a New Year

Marian Nielsen, Orinda Books



In January and February, there is a wonderful flavor of “new beginnings” in the publishing world and Orinda Books always catches that excitement. Publishers’ catalogs have promised tempting offerings for 2015, both from favorite established authors and first-timers hoping for their own share of the reading public.

In the world of fiction, readers who enjoyed Rachel Joyce’s wonderful novel,

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry and were caught up in Harold’s adventures, walking the length of England to visit his old friend Queenie before she died, will be delighted to know that Joyce has written a sequel due March 3, *The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessey*, (Random House \$25). Reviewers in the U.K. have called this the “perfect companion piece” to Harold’s story – darker, but with the same subtle, emotional depth.

When Jeffrey Archer began his *Clifton Chronicles* in 2011, the publisher had indicated a trilogy. Whether Archer’s story grew in the telling, or his characters – and possibly the publisher – begged for more, we don’t know, but the series has blossomed into a quintet. The fifth volume, *Mightier than the Sword* (St. Martin’s \$27.99 – Feb. 24) begins with a literal bang – an IRA bomb aboard the maiden voyage of a Clifton family-owned luxury liner. This saga of the United Kingdom’s rich and famous has all the twists and turns for which Archer, who writes with authority about this territory, is known. If you need to catch up, *Be Careful What You Wish For* (No. 4 in the series) is available in paperback in February.

Debut novelist Paula Hawkins is making a splash this month with a new thriller, *The Girl on the Train* (Riverhead \$26.95). Hawkins takes the unreliable narrator, like those in Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl*, a step further but with similarly murderous consequences. Her heroine, Rachel, an alcoholic with a failed marriage and a failed job, fantasizes the perfect life for a couple she sees each day from her commuter train window until that woman goes missing and Rachel becomes involved in the investigation.

If contemporary issue-related fiction is to your liking, Amanda Eyre Ward’s novel *The Same Sky* (Ballantine \$25) stands front and center. The immigration debate continues in the news and Ward has written a moving story that focuses on the wave of unaccompanied children journeying from Central America, through Mexico, to Texas. She spent many months visiting shelters in Texas and California listening to immigrant children, and she has crafted heart-wrenching fiction from the true stories that she heard.

Highly anticipated in the world of non-fiction this year is Alexandra Fuller’s

Youth Ink Applications Due Feb. 18

The Orinda Junior Women’s Club is accepting entries for its annual Youth Ink writing contest for middle school students through Feb. 18. Entries may be a story (fiction or non-fiction), poem or other form of creative writing and must be 750 words or less. Submissions will be evaluated on content, clarity, structure and originality.

This year’s writing “prompt” is “Choices.” Participants need to be Orinda residents or attend school in Orinda. To enter, applicants must download the entry form at www.orindajuniors.org. Prizes include: 1st place - \$250; 2nd place - \$125 and 3rd place - \$75.

– Sally Hogarty, Editor

Accepting Applications for Major Awards

Orinda Woman’s Club is accepting applications for its major beneficiary awards of 2015. Accepted applicants will reach the criteria: 1) serving youth and women and children primarily in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties; and 2) be a 501c 3 organization with an income no greater than \$2 million annually. Application forms can be acquired from Orinda Woman’s Club, Beneficiary Chair, 925-254-1162 or via email to adeline@mcclatchie.com. Applications are due March 2 by 7 p.m.

◆ TALES from page 12

works only if a shorter nickname is used consistently. This is what happens in the show dog world. Dogs have registered names that reflect their lineage but are rarely called by that name.

How do animals respond to a name and can you change the name of an animal that has already lived with a particular name? The reality is that animals respond to tone, pitch and sound more than they do to a word. Syllables are important in naming because they establish a rhythm. For example, if you adopt a cat that has been named Jerry and you prefer the name Henry, go for it. Names beginning with the letter S can be confusing to an animal trained in commands of Sit, Stay and Stand. If you name your dog Sam when you call him, he

may think you are telling him to stand all the time! Since many canine commands are single-syllable words, a two-syllable name typically works best. Sam can become Sammy, and the dog will learn to listen for that second syllable.

What are some of the popular names given to cats and dogs in past years? For dogs, Bella, Bailey, Max, Lucy, Molly, Buddy, Daisy and Boomer have ranked high. For cats, Chloe, Smokey, Shadow, Tiger, Charlie, Penny and Katniss have been popular. Interestingly, many of them follow the two-syllable rule.

Whatever you decide to name your companion animal, try giving it a name that is positive and helps solidify your relationship every time you utter it. And remember, Sweetheart is only two syllables!

Leaving Before the Rains Come (Penguin \$26.95). Orinda Books readers have been Fuller fans since her 2002 debut, *Don’t Lets Go to the Dogs Tonight* and its 2011 follow-up, *Cocktail Hour Under the Tree of Forgetfulness*. We can all empathize with her attempt to create for her own family a far different life in the Rockies than the chaotic childhood she experienced in Zimbabwe. Even in chronicling the dissolution of her marriage, she remains an engaging and moving memoirist.

Another favorite non-fiction author at Orinda Books is Erik Larson, who, with his exemplary research into the intimate details of a period and the lives of his protagonists, has brought world-shaking and world-changing events into clearer focus. Larson’s previous book, *In the Garden of Beasts* took us into the heart of Nazi Germany in the run-up to WWII. In his new title, *Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* (Crown \$28 - March 10) we journey back to 1915 when the sinking of the Lusitania by German U-boats became an important factor in the subsequent entry of the United States into World War I. Larson brings the details of the infancy of submarine warfare brilliantly to life and armchair historians will be fascinated by this narrative of the 100-year-old maritime tragedy so freshly told.

Finally, for book groups who select

their lists early in the year, there are some highly praised 2014 titles making recent paperback debuts. Three of the *New York Times*’ top five novels for 2014 are out in paperback and each one offers acute literary perceptions of contemporary issues: *Family Life* by Akhil Sharma (W.W. Norton \$14.95) brings a new intensity to the immigrant experience; *Dept. of Speculation* by Jenny Offill (Vintage \$15) tells the story of a contemporary marriage that you can read in an afternoon but will think about for days; *Redeployment* by Phil Klay (Penguin \$16 – Feb. 24) is a collection of short stories that takes the reader uncomfortably close to the sights and sounds of the Iraq war. Klay served as a public affairs officer in Iraq and has translated his wartime experiences to painfully unforgettable fiction that won the 2014 National Book Award. In the *New York Times*’ top five non-fiction titles and now in paperback is Elizabeth Colbert’s *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (Picador \$16). Colbert makes it grimly apparent that man has created the potential threat to the earth’s survival.

So whether it’s the environment, submarine warfare, family affairs, financial skull-duggery, recent battlefields or the immigration debate, there is thought-provoking, informative, entertaining reading coming your way in February and March.

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YOUTH SPORTS

Miramonte Fencer Wins Silver at World Cup Competition

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

Miramonte sophomore Gabriel Bronfman describes fencing as “very different than what you imagine fencing is from the movies. There’s no spinning or jumping - it’s more controlled and strategic. It’s more like playing chess at 100 miles an hour.”

That speed, skill and agility helped Bronfman bring home the silver medal at the World Cup Fencing Competition held in December in Copenhagen, Denmark

“It felt really great to be part of Team USA, representing my country,” said Bronfman, who explained the competition included nearly 500 men’s and women’s Cadet (under 17) Epee fencers from around the world.

in San Francisco, as well as at George Platt’s Swordplay in Concord and credits his coaches, Maureen Griffen, Paul Soter (GGFC), Ryan Arieta and George Platt (GPS) for mentoring him. “I learn a ton from them.”

Bronfman lives with his parents and three siblings in Orinda. Byrne said that while her other children are not fencers, Eavan, 13, and 10- year-old twins Leo and Hollis “all enjoy horseback riding, soccer, baseball, tennis, swimming and rugby.”

Byrne described watching her son’s competition as not only “wonderful” but “pretty nerve-racking.” She added that she focused on how her son was fencing, rather than how he was doing in the competition. “I didn’t actually know for sure that he’d earned a medal until after it was over,” she said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Orinda’s **Gabriel Bronfmann** (2nd from left) with (L-R) coach **Maureen Griffen**, **Joe Taylor** (Chicago, IL), **Wolf Crouse** (Houston, TX) and coach **Tsenko Hantov**.

Each country can send just 20 fencers; Bronfman qualified for a spot through participation in U.S. national fencing competitions over the past year.

Bronfman said he enjoyed his first trip to Europe. “Everything was new and different. The competition felt very official, with fencers from all over the world - Europe, North America, South America, some folks from Africa.”

According to Bronfman’s mother, Kasey Byrne, the fencer earned his medal in the Cadet Team event. He partnered with two other U.S. fencers, both from Texas, beating the top seeded team at the tournament, the Russian national team, which also upset the Norwegian and Italian national teams to gain a spot on the podium.

Byrne added that her son also finished 83rd (out of 240) in the Men’s Individual Cadet Epee event, held at the same venue.

Bronfman discovered fencing in 4th grade when he attended a summer camp which offered the sport. He said he soon dropped out of other sports in order to focus on fencing. “I loved it and nagged my mom to sign me up for lessons.”

He trains at Golden Gate Fencing Club

Bronfman says that training as much as six days a week keeps him fit. “I compete at Bay Cup events once or twice a month - all day fencing competitions - and compete at regional and national events once a month or so during the year. I also go to a few fencing camps in the summer. The last two summers, I’ve gotten to train at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs.”

Bronfman sees his fencing career going well into his future. “I definitely plan to fence in college,” but he added there is uncertainty about what the future after that holds. “Fencing isn’t really a lucrative professional sport.”

The unpredictability of the sport is what Bronfman said he enjoys. “Fencing is a really fast, dynamic, combative sport. Every match is different – everyone’s style, tempo, distance is unique.”

Bronfman says that he has learned skills while fencing that benefit him in other aspects of life. “I have learned not to lose my cool,” he said. “In fencing, if you lose your cool, you lose the match, even if you’re a better fencer. I feel like I’m much more able to handle frustration or disappointment, without getting rattled.”

School Calendar

Note: Schools closed Feb. 13 and 16 for Presidents Day weekend. For more info on Miramonte events, go to <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte>.

- 2 **Elementary Schools’** Kindergarten Registration through Feb. 6. (See page 13.)
- 4 **Acalanes Union High School** District Governing Board Meeting, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette, 7:30 p.m. Also, Feb. 18. Visit www.acalanes.k12.ca.us.
- 5 **Del Rey Elementary School** Parents Club Executive Board Meeting, Library, 7 to 8 p.m. Visit <http://dr-orinda-ca.schoolloop.com>.
- Miramonte High School** Open House with iMats Showcase. Reception, gym, 5:45 p.m.; program, 6:15 p.m.
- 7 **Miramonte High School** Shakespeare Showcase, Theatre, 7 to 9 p.m.
- Miramonte High School** 8th Grade Parent Information Night, Gym, 6 p.m.
- 10 **Miramonte High School** NCAA presentation, Theater, 7 p.m.
- 11 **Del Rey Elementary School** Parents Club Meeting, Library, 7 to 9 p.m. Visit <http://dr-orinda-ca.schoolloop.com>.
- 13 **California Round Robin National Debate Competition**, College Preparatory School, 6100 Broadway, Oakland, 7 p.m.
- 18 **Miramonte High School** Parents Club Meeting on college and careers, 9:30 to 11 a.m.
- Miramonte High School** AAUW information session for parents, 6 p.m.
- 19 **Sleepy Hollow Elementary School** Site Council meeting, Library, 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. Visit <http://sh-orinda-ca.schoolloop.com>.
- 20 **Del Rey Elementary School** Science Fair, all day. Visit <http://dr-orinda-ca.schoolloop.com>.
- 24 **Miramonte High School** Senior Parent Meeting, Cafeteria, 7 to 9 p.m.
- 26 **Miramonte High School** CASE Study Night, mock college advisory committee evaluation applications, 5 to 9 p.m.

Basketball Team Wins Championship



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The **Miramonte Frosh** basketball team spent its holiday vacation winning its division championship at a tournament in Napa. **Andrew Logan** received the MVP award for the game with **Tyler Zwahlen** receiving the MVP for the entire tournament. (L-R) Coach **Terry Juergens**, **Chase Callister**, **Benjamin Kao**, **Henry Marken**, **Fraser Burch**, **Andrew Logan**, **Tyler Zwahlen**, **Jimmy Foley**, **Bryce Radlow**, **Paul Bakshi**, **Liam Glynn**, **Spencer Lang**, **Asim Khan**, **Coach James Bell**, **Ryan Ford**, and Ball Boys: **Nicolai Bell** and **Kenny Kostermans**. Not pictured: **Mark Mezody**.

Orinda Aquatics Swimmers Shine at Junior Olympics



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

With nearly 100 teams represented at the Pacific Swimming 14 and under Winter Junior Olympics in Morgan Hill, CA, **Orinda Aquatics** swimmers earned an impressive 2nd place team finish. High point honors went to **Ginny Vazques-Azpiri** (9-10 girls), **Ashleen O’Brien** (13-14 girls) and **Max Cruz Costello** (11-12 boys). Aside from earning the high point, 12-year old Max Cruz Costello swam a 54.16 in the 100-yard butterfly, breaking the Pacific Swimming 11-12 boys record.



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◆ LETTERS from page 4

cific downtown sites and overall downtown economic and marketing studies to determine the feasibility of potential retail commercial, office and housing development.

Orinda's effort on the Housing Element will soon be completed and submitted to the State. Once accepted, the City Council should devote its attention and energy to pursuing efforts to revitalize its downtown, including affordable housing in the process. It has the opportunity and indeed the obligation to do so without delay.

- Michael Kaplan

Amy Worth and Britney Spears?

What do Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) chair and Orinda Mayor Ms. Amy Worth and a young Britney Spears have in common? Like OMG, decision making. The Beale-street SF palace to house several unelected regional bureaucracies, including the MTC, will cost at least twice original estimates (your bridge tolls). To which, Worth remarked, "I wish we had more information going into the deal." Indeed. She could have said, "oops, I did it again." Britney?

At least Ms. Worth has an ample chorus, including all the decision makers in the new Bay Bridge fiasco. The renowned engineer Tung-Yen Lin, who founded the firm that produced both the chosen design, and a different candidate design, with 40+ years of engineering expertise said of the chosen design, "this will be building a monument to stupidity" (sfgate.com June 23, 2013). Oops, we did it again! She sings the same tune as Willie Brown (2012 acknowledgment that public-sector unions were a major mistake (see WaPo September 2012 summary)). One can continue ad nauseam. Please don't. I'm already nauseated.

Principled leadership is not evident in hindsight pseudo-apologies but is grounded in the ability to infer, to analyze, to deduce. If you can't, do something else, please. Singing? Oh, that our elected officials would be subject to such a meritocracy. Britney made the 2012 "100 greatest women in music" list. If truth prevail, history would not be so kind to California's leadership. Alas, truth usually doesn't prevail; tax-funded grants to a fake Ph.D.

will serve just fine (fake Ph.D Hien Tran author of the scientific farce behind CARB diesel regulations). These are the people who are, at this very moment, plotting the day-to-day world your children will inhabit. Oops, we did it again! It's (almost) not too late to undo it.

- Michael Garrabrants

A New Year Look At Pedestrian Safety In Orinda

New Year is a time for reflection: noting past achievements and failures and doing planning. Some choose to live with those failures. This identifies significant past pedestrian safety failures and oversights of council and respectfully asks it to promptly remedy the following important safety problems, rather than allowing them to exist any longer, given the apparently-not-so-watchful eyes of established Orinda Committees and Commissions.

Pedestrian Safety: Altarinda Road: The city installed a pedestrian-activated illuminated crosswalk warning sign (PAICWS) at each side of 8 Altarinda Road. These signs show some recognition by the city of the dangers to pedestrians when active pedestrian crossing locations do not have PAICWS, including the new activity from the 73 Orinda Grove units. Good. Pedestrian Safety: Orindawoods Drive: The city installed a vehicle-activated radar traffic calming sign (VARTCS) at the bottom (west, downhill end) of Orindawoods Drive, indicating some city recognition of the dangers to pedestrians when roads, which have large numbers of speeding vehicles and which are located near active pedestrian crossing locations, do not have a VARTCS. Why then did the city neglect to install the same type of pedestrian protections at the east end of Orindawoods Drive near the entry/exit from the Orindawoods Tennis Club, for example? That entry/exit is equally-dangerous, with active vehicle entry/exit activity plus children as pedestrians. Certainly, a VARTCS on each side of that entry/exit would tend to slow down high-speed traffic passing the Tennis Club; and a PAICWS on each south and north side of the Drive (and crosswalks) would protect the youthful and other pedestrians. Note also danger at Woodhall absent crosswalk & PAICWS.

Pedestrian Safety: Orinda Way - Monte-

verde senior units recently opened despite the absence of important nearby safety measures. Apparently ignoring the precedent of the noted important PAICWSs, the new senior residents have no PAICWS (nor unlightable pedestrian signs) to protect them as they cross heavily trafficked Orinda Way (at the corner of Irwin Way). Try crossing there safely at night! Numerous other lighting deficiencies exist, e.g., the lack of illumination of the path just east of the bus stop near that corner and of that path approaching the Community Park. This senior respectfully asks for inspections of these and other pedestrian safety deficiencies, and for immediate correction of all.

- Chet Martine

Shocked by OUSD President

We were stunned by the comments of Matt Moran, president of Orinda USD Board of Trustees, printed in the January issue of Orinda News.

In his first public comments about the bungled residency case, Matt expressed concern and pity for the employees of the district, saying this ordeal has been "hurtful" to them. The comment seemed so misdirected that we initially thought the reporter either got it wrong or Matt misspoke. It's astonishing to us that Matt was given the opportunity to say something meaningful about this case, and not only did he not take it, but he managed to say things that were like pouring salt in the wound. He chose to victimize and defend the district staff members-highly compensated adult employees, most of whom do not live here and do not have children attending school here. He seems not to realize that his role as a school board member, an elected official, is to serve the families of the district, not the employees. Matt has illuminated deep dysfunction within the district.

That said, we understand that the district staff would be upset by allegations of racism in the media, as anyone should be. It is true (I hope) that we'll probably never find a memo or an email in which a district employee says explicitly that they want Vivian dis-enrolled because she is Mexican. But racism can happen, and usually does happen, in more subtle ways. It is happening when we apply policies differently from one family to the next. It is happening when we deny benefits and services based

on what we think someone deserves, rather than on how they qualify. It is happening when our perception of someone makes us more likely to shun them, and less likely to treat them with dignity. And it is happening when we believe we can go after someone, simply because we think they can't or won't fight back. These are all versions of racism, and they usually happen reflexively or unconsciously. That is why the OUSD Board of Trustees must take the lead in revising and strengthening the district's guidelines for how families are targeted for residency investigation and how those investigations are carried out. It should never be left to the whim of the superintendent and his staff to decide which families are granted a meeting, and which ones aren't, or which ones get an appeal process, and which ones don't.

We were encouraged to see Jason Kaune take the lead in launching a discussion of policy revisions at the board's most recent meeting, and we hope to see change take shape very soon.

Matt Moran and district administrators have cited "student privacy laws" as the reason that the district cannot defend itself or explain what happened. Surely student privacy laws do not prevent them from communicating directly with Maria, since she is the parent of the child in question and was herself a subject of the "investigation." Yet still the district refuses to answer her questions or explain to her the profound discrepancies between their stated policies and how her case was handled. That, perhaps, is the most incriminating evidence of all.

- Miriam Storch

New Council Member

A breath of fresh air. That's how we feel about our newest councilmember, Eve Phillips. She is young, intelligent and professional with thoughtful ideas. She is one of our own who was in the Class of '95 at Miramonte, MIT and Stanford-educated, and an entrepreneur in technology. We are fortunate to have such expertise.

Eve also received the highest number of votes out of the total of six candidates. As has often been said, receiving a majority of votes represents what residents want for our community. Congratulations and welcome, Eve.

- Nye Family

◆ REPORTER from page 11

shop will be facilitated by Judy Huston, M.A., M.Div. and Jennifer Pister, MFT, Intern, in the Fireside Room of the Fellowship Hall, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, on Sunday, Feb. 8, 4 to 7 p.m. Suggested donation is \$25/person. Financial assistance is available. RSVP to jim@orindachurch.org.

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Services

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Write your ad in the boxes below with one letter, space or punctuation mark in each box. Cost is \$5 per line: \$10 minimum.
Enclose your check payable to The Orinda Association and mail to Orinda News, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563. We reserve the right to reject any ad. Classified ads must be prepaid. Your cancelled check is your receipt.

CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 2 **Orinda Library Art Gallery** presents paintings and prints by Carla W. Gelbaum, ceramics by Joan Ibarolle, nature and wildlife photography by Shirley Sanderson and fused and stained glass by Cynthia Whitchurch through Feb. 28 with an artists' reception Feb. 8, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m., featuring light refreshments and music.
- 5 **Orinda Books**, Story Hour with Cathy Goshorn for children aged 2 to 4, Thursdays, 276 Village Square, 10 to 11 a.m. Call 925-254-7606.
Orinda Community Center, Thursdays Together features board games for seniors, 10 a.m. to noon. \$3 residents, \$4 non-residents. Call 925-254-2445 or visit www.cityoforinda.org.
- 6 **First Friday Forum** with Dr. George Breslauer speaking on Soviet affairs, 1:30 p.m., Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Call 925-283-8722.
- 7 **8th Annual Poetry Out Loud Contra Costa Competition** featuring entrants from 14 high schools in Contra Costa County, Las Lomas High School Theatre, 1460 South Main St., Walnut Creek, 11 a.m. Contact Robin Moore at poetryforac5@gmail.com.
- 8 **Orinda Community Church**, Couples Communication Workshop explores new tools to enrich relationships, facilitated by Judy Huston, M.A., M. Div. and Jennifer Pister, MFT, Intern, Fireside Room of the Fellowship Hall, 10 Irwin Way, 4 to 7 p.m. Suggested donation \$25/person. RSVP to jim@orindachurch.org.
Orinda Association Awards dinner honoring Dick Burkhalter and Others First, 6 p.m., Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante, Orinda. Call 925-254-0800 or go to www.orindaassociation.org.
- 10 **Orinda Parks and Recreation Department, Winchester Mystery House Tour** for seniors, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Residents \$30; non-residents \$38. Call 925-254-2445 or visit www.cityoforinda.org.
- 11 **Orinda Books**, Second Wednesday Book Group will read and discuss *My Grandfather's Blessing* by Rachel Naomi Remen, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. The group meets monthly and welcomes new members. Call 925-254-7606.
- 12 **Orinda Theatre**, Free Movie Night, every second Thursday, 7 p.m. Visit http://www.lamorindatheatres.com/index_orinda.asp.
- 19 **Saint Mary's College Guild** celebrates "Fun and Games Day," 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m., Soda Activity Center, 1928 Saint Mary's Rd., Moraga. Bunco, bridge and buffet luncheon with proceeds benefitting student scholarships. Call 925-376-6588.
- 20 **CAIFF Founders Night** features the best films of the California Independent Film Festival's 17-year history, Rheem Theatre, 350 Park St., Moraga, 7 p.m. Admission \$7 or free for leading role members of CAIFF. Series runs every third Friday. Visit www.lamorindatheatres.com/index_newrheem.asp.
- 21 **Rheem Theatre Live Jazz Series**, 350 Park St., Moraga, 7 p.m. \$20 general; \$15 seniors and children. Series runs every third Saturday. Visit www.lamorindatheatres.com/index_newrheem.asp.
- 27 **International Film Showcase** presents *The Verdict (Het Vonnis)* through March 5, Orinda Theatre. Visit <http://internationalshowcase.org/> for information and show times.
- 28 **Orinda Community Center**, First Annual Recreation and Summer Camp Fair, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Residents who sign up for a class or camp at the fair receive a 10 percent discount. Visit www.cityoforinda.org and click on "Upcoming Events."

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. Library closed Feb. 16 for Presidents Day. For more information, call 925-254-2184 or visit www.ccclib.org/locations/Orinda.html.

- 3 **Toddler Lapsit**. Story time 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 Feb. 4, 10, 11, 17 and 18.
Peek-A-Boo Time. Songs, stories, rhythms and rhymes for infants to 18 months, Gallery Room, 11:30 a.m. Also Feb. 10 and 17.
- 4 **Teen Advisory Group**. First Wednesday of month, Tutoring Room, 4 p.m. Make an appointment at the Information Desk. Teens meet with teen librarian to plan fun teen programs and suggest library resources, receive volunteer hours and grow leadership skills.
Free Computer and eReader Help. Wednesdays, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Also Feb. 11, 18 and 25. Call or visit the library to register.
Paws to Read. 1st- through 5th-graders practice reading with a friendly dog, Gallery Room, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- 5 **Special Monthly Book Sale**. Hosted by Friends of the Orinda Library, Book Shop and sorting room, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
English as a Second Language Conversation Circle. Practice English conversation in an informal, small-group setting, Tutoring Room, 1 to 2:30 p.m. Preregistration not required. Also Feb. 12, 19 and 26.
- 7 **Saturday Morning Live!** Story time for children aged 3 to 5, Picture Book area, 11 a.m. Also Feb. 14 and 21.
Weekend Paws to Read. 1st- through 5th-graders practice reading with a friendly dog, Gallery Room, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Call or visit the library to register.
- 17 **Lunar New Year Craft**. Kids celebrate the Year of the Sheep at the craft table. All day activity. Also Feb. 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22.
- 20 **Mystery Book Club**. Members discuss the book of the month, Tutoring Room, 3 to 4 p.m. For 18 years and up.
- 22 **Contra Costa Tale Spinners**. Adult storytelling with guest speaker, Gallery Room, 7 to 9 p.m. Tell a tale or just come to listen.
- 24 **Humanities West**. George Hammond gives a preview of the upcoming performance of *Charlemagne*, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Visit www.humanitieswest.org.

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.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks**. Fourth Wednesday, 8:30 a.m., May Room, Orinda Library, 925-253-1997.
- Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition**. Third Wednesday, 10 to 11:30 a.m., Orinda City Hall

Orinda Association Honors Local Volunteers

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

The Orinda Association (OA) will honor long-time Orinda resident Dick Burkhalter as its 2014 Volunteer of the Year and members of the Orinda Intermediate School's (OIS) Others First program as the recipient of the 2014 William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental award at a gala celebration on Feb. 8 at the Orinda Country Club.

Burkhalter has volunteered for numerous projects with the Orinda Rotary Club and has been a dedicated volunteer driver for the OA's Seniors Around Town program to name just a few of his many endeavors. Meanwhile, over 400 OIS students annually volunteer their time at local non-profits, many of which have an environmental focus.

The Feb. 8 program begins with cocktails



SALLY HOGARTY

Dick Burkhalter in Mexico distributing Orinda soccer uniforms and equipment to needy young players.

at 6 p.m. followed by dinner and the awards ceremony. For reservations, all the OA at 925-254-0800 or go to www.orindaassociation.org.

Sarge Littlehale Room, 925-687-8844, ext. 227.

Lamorinda Nature Walk and Birdwatching 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 or 925-283-8288.

Lamorinda Toastmasters. Every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Temple Isaiah, 3800 Mt. Diablo Blvd., 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. February speaker is landscape designer Susan Morrison talking on "Smart Space."

Orinda Garden Club. Fourth Thursday, 10 a.m. to noon, September through May, Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante.

Orinda Junior Women's Club community service group. First Tuesday, September through June, 7 p.m., 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 or Ian at 925-254-1465.

Orinda Historical Society. Third Tuesday, 2 p.m., 26 Orinda Way, 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.

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 mittle44@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.

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

Moraga-Orinda Fire District. First and third Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m.. Visit www.mofd.org/board/meetings, location will be posted on the agenda.

Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees. Second Monday, 6 p.m., OUSD Conference Room, 25 Orinda Way, Suite 200, Orinda, CA 94563. For the latest listing of dates, please check the website at www.orindaschools.org.

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

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

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In Forma Celebrates 20 Years of Fitness in Orinda



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In Forma staff include: (L-R) Julie Gauigan, Robin Bertelson, Natasha Hartman Colombu, owner Andrea Colombu, Dave D'Angelo, Connor Cosley and Alison Schneider.

By STEPHEN ELLIS
Contributing Writer

In Forma Integral Fitness had a party last month celebrating 20 years of bringing fitness to Orinda. “We have built a community of like minds and like hearts that is dedicated to well-being,” said owner Andrea Colombu. “If there is a theme about these 20 years, it is ‘labor of love.’ I followed my heart from the beginning and I appreciate and recognize the support of our members and staff because no one succeeds alone. It definitely took others coming on board, liking the idea, and supporting it which enabled us to grow.”

Colombu has been involved with fitness since 1989 and founded In Forma in 1995 in the studio at 23A Orinda Way. “We started in this one space. We expanded in 2008, right before the recession. Six months after the expansion, the economy crashed so we rolled up our sleeves and really got to work,” said Colombu. In 2012, he expanded the space again and added a TRX and Pilates space. “I’ve received a lot of support and I want to acknowledge that. The membership has been very loyal for 20 years, in spite of the other opportunities that have opened up in the area.”

Originally, Colombu started the facility to show people how the mind, body and spirit are interconnected. “The body to me is the most important vehicle for life, so this was the idea of honoring this beautiful gift that we have and finding a way to create a path to well-being that was more comprehensive than just getting fit, getting strong and looking good. What are the implications of what you’re doing in your life? The body and mind are integrated, so what you’re doing with your body has a direct impact on your emotional state and your well-being in general,” said Colombu. The spiritual is becoming more evident in the class schedules and workshops that In

Forma hosts. “The Mindfulness Meditation Class that is held every Monday night originally started in 2010 and was not on the schedule,” said Colombu. “At the time, I invited people to participate and I wanted to keep it separate. I made a decision last year that I actually needed to have an official class and it took off. The interest is solid with really good participation on a weekly basis. Now, it is very much a part of In Forma.” In Forma also hosts workshops on Tai Chi, stress reduction and body rolling.

In addition to the spiritual side, In Forma offers a lot of traditional fitness options. “Suspension training is a big part of what we do now. It is often advertised as TRX,” said Colombu. In Forma also offers Yoga, Pilates and Barre. “Barre classes are very popular. They are sort of a take from the dance world and are tailored for integrating exercises that are primarily focused on building core strength and overall strength, using methods very similar to strength training for ballet. Yoga has been an ongoing part of our classes.” Both forms of Pilates are offered: mat classes and Reformer classes (the Reformer machine was developed by Joseph Pilates). “Besides traditional fitness, we are doing fusion classes, which is putting two classes together, for example, suspension training with Barre. The cardio and fitness classes are also fusion. There is no one class that is only cardio or only strength. We combine a lot of those sorts of approaches. There has also been a lot of growth in personal training over the last couple of years.”

Colombu credits his membership and staff for the success of In Forma. “A dream came true for me. I really wanted to do fitness in a different way, not the typical approach. I followed my heart and people joined me. We’ve followed each other and here we are.”

For more information, visit www.informaorinda.com.



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Movie Riches – Good and Bad!

Tom Westlake



This month brings us a cornucopia of cinematic riches and a couple of pieces of good news that will delight long-time readers.

Let’s start out with a double threat from our returning champions of the foreign film, Efi Lubliner and Jo Alice Canterbury. They are offering two finds that they’ve brought back from their travels to other film festivals. The first is *Human Capital*. This award-winning Italian film is part *Nashville* insofar as it tells a multitude of stories – mostly centering around two families – and *Irreversible* or *Memento*, as it plays fast and loose with the traditional narrative structure. Starting at the end and working backwards, we are witness to this ornate drama, filled with a mysterious cause, followed (or perhaps preceded) by a series of not-so-mysterious effects. It is showing at the Orinda Theatre from Jan. 30 through Feb. 6 at 7 p.m. Visit http://lamorindatheatres.com/index_orinda.asp.

Next on their agenda is *The Verdict* (*Het Vonnis*). Not to be confused with the 1982 film of the same name with Paul Newman, this one is far more Kafkaesque as it deals with a fragile and flawed justice system and the price the innocent and guilty pay. This is a nail-biter that provides no easy answers. Save a table at your favorite local restaurant afterwards as this movie will provide plenty to talk about. It runs for one week at the Orinda Theatre beginning Feb. 27 at 7 p.m. For additional show times, visit <http://internationalshowcase.org>.

Another film that might cause confusion, as there is more than one film that bears the name, is *Sabrina*. However, as this is part of the Classics Film Showcase, it’s safe to bet that this is the 1954 version starring Humphrey Bogart, Audrey Hepburn and William Holden. Telling the classic story of “girl meets two boys,” this Billy Wilder classic finds Hepburn at her most charming, with a little petulance thrown in for good measure. The two male leads are playing against type and one might find Bogart’s pairing with Hepburn a little

odd. These are minor reservations when weighed against the sparkling script based on the play *Sabrina Fair* and the beautiful black-and-white cinematography. Who will she choose? Find out on Feb. 12 at 7 p.m. at the Orinda Theatre.

Now, let’s forget classics and prestigious foreign films and move on to plain old “bad” movies. A couple of years ago, the Rheem presented the *Leave Your Brain at the Door* movie series. Well, it’s back! Details are scant, but I have it on good authority that on the second Saturday of every month at 7 p.m., we will be treated to the very worst that cinema has to offer. This is a welcome return as the air up here has become a little too rarified and it’s time for a whole other stratosphere of just plain fun that we have had too little of lately. So keep checking <http://lamorindatheatres.com> for details.

In a rare instance of synchronicity, The Moraga Movers bring us a double dose of Bogey this month as they present *Key Largo*. This time, our leading man is in slightly more familiar territory, playing a soldier returning home from World War II. Though deeply affected by the conflict, he soon finds himself fighting the war at home when he comes in contact with Edward G. Robinson (playing to type as a gangster) and tensions arise. Add to the mix Lauren Bacall and Lionel Barrymore – with direction by John Huston – and you have the makings of a master class in what great filmmaking is all about. *Key Largo* shows at the Rheem Theatre on Feb. 18 at 1 p.m.

We’ll conclude with another welcome piece of news about the International Film Festival. On the third Friday of every month, many of the films featured at the festival will have a reprise showing. As of this writing, no final program has been announced but this is a good chance to catch movies you might have missed. Keep an eye on <http://lamorindatheatres.com> and, until next month, remember to stay in the dark for that’s where the reel magic lies.

Time to Choose Summer Movies

If you enjoyed the movies put on by the Orinda Parks and Recreation Department last summer, now’s your chance to help decide what is shown this coming summer.

An online survey has been created for those interested in ranking their top movie choices from a pre-selected list for the Summer Movie series. To complete the survey, visit the Parks and Recreation web page on the city’s website at www.cityoforinda.org. The survey will conclude on Feb. 9.

Movies will be held at the Orinda Community Center Thursday evenings at dusk on June 25, July 9 and 23, Aug. 6 and 20.

For questions, email OrindaParksRec@cityoforinda.org or call (925) 254-2445.

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BUSINESS BUZZ

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Mental Skills Training Program Offered at Living Lean

As a youngster Sheryl Cardiff experienced extreme test anxiety in school that was so persistent it followed her into adulthood, undermining her ability to attain personal goals, preventing her from demonstrating accomplished equestrian skills in English horse show events in her teen years.

“While I worked hard and prepared well, when it came to the examination, my mind was everywhere except on the test,” says Cardiff. “I became inspired to develop the skills to overcome this obstacle and help others to do so by earning a Master of Arts degree in Sport Psychology at the University of Southern California.”

Currently, Cardiff offers her Mental Skills Training Program in conjunction with Sheena Lakhotia’s Living Lean Program, located in Theatre Square. She is a member of the American Association of Applied Sports Psychology, with six years of experience as a certified mental skills trainer,

“I teach clients to understand, master and apply concepts that manage their mind, enabling them to perform to the best of their ability when it counts,” says Cardiff. “These concepts include imagery, self-talk, efficient goal setting and positive sequencing. My clients typically range in age from 14 to 19 years, and I have worked with individuals as young as 12 years of age as well as adults.”

During the initial meeting with potential clients, Cardiff meets with both parents and child to determine whether the child truly wants to be involved in the training program. “If the potential client is under the age of 18, parents are present during the intake interview, but the teen should take the initiative. All information is confidential. My expertise is in sports performance and related issues. If something surfaces

beyond my expertise related to the child’s health and wellness, I provide a referral to a licensed clinician,” explains Cardiff.

The program applies to academics and business, as well as athletics. “I am adept at taking the client from doing well, to doing better. The first step is to understand what the client needs, why it is important and how to get there. I enjoy helping people achieve what they are capable of achieving,” says Cardiff. “I work with Sheena Lakhotia because she is passionate about helping people attain fitness and wellness. Any goal, no matter how big or small, is very important.”

All three of Cardiff’s children are competitive athletes. Eldest son Dan attends Cal Poly San Luis Obispo where he plays on the men’s tennis team. Ryan plays tennis at Acalanes High School and Megan plays volleyball at Acalanes High School. In her spare time, Cardiff enjoys photography, playing tennis, running to stay fit and has competed in six half-marathons. “I know if I am physically fit then I am emotionally strong.”

For more information about Mental Skills Fitness Program at Living Lean, visit www.livingleanprogram.com and click on Programs. To learn more about Sheryl Cardiff, visit www.livingleanprogram.com.

Chamber Awards Luncheon

Feb. 20 at 11:30 a.m.
Orinda Country Club

The Orinda Chamber of Commerce will present annual awards recognizing outstanding contributions to the Chamber and Orinda business community.

Call 925-254-3909 or go to www.orindachamber.org.

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Lafayette Open Houses
Jan. 12th, Feb. 9th
984 Moraga Rd.
(925) 284-4321

Walnut Creek Open House
Jan. 27th, Feb. 23rd
55 Eckley Lane
(925) 934-1507

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

Business Buzz
Putting a Personal Face on Local Business
Valerie Hotz



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

Reliable Casual Carpool "Commutr" Launches in Orinda

After participating in the local casual carpool scene for the past couple of years, technology entrepreneur Alex Mooradian decided to improve the concept by taking the guesswork out of everything and making it more convenient. Last month, Mooradian inaugurated Commutr, an organized casual carpool operating from south Orinda serving both Orinda and Moraga residents.



Entrepreneur **Alex Mooradian**

"It's an amazing way to get to San Francisco, and I wanted to make it much more predictable and reliable for the public," says Mooradian. "We created an iPhone application to organize the system and a website, www.getcommutr.com." Plans are in the works to build it for the Android as well.

There is an added measure of security for everyone because the identity of a participant is verified when signing up. "We require passengers and drivers to submit either their LinkedIn profile, Facebook profile or a business card before accepting them in the system," says Mooradian. "The only way a person has access to this casual carpool is to use the iPhone App. This allows us to control the experience for everyone."

Individuals may sign up through the App a few days in advance and even the morning of a ride. A \$3 fee is charged for each ride. Mooradian guarantees a carpool ride to San Francisco's Financial District will be available within 10 minutes of arriving at the parking site, located at Holy

Shepherd Lutheran Church, 433 Moraga Way in Orinda. The drop-off location in San Francisco is the corner of Fremont and Howard streets.

"Commutr takes all the stress out of carpooling. It costs less money and is more convenient than existing casual carpool," says Mooradian. The bonus attraction for the return home is a shuttle bus runs every 10 minutes from BART to the Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church parking lot between 5 and 9 p.m.

"The City of Orinda and Town of Moraga embrace Commutr as a way to reduce traffic congestion on Moraga Way, not to mention the fact that it is a Green initiative that benefits the community," says Mooradian. He is in discussion with other local churches to determine where to locate another meeting point where commuters can leave their cars.

Previously a financial service professional, Mooradian yearned to become an entrepreneur, moving to Moraga from New York to start his first company Eureka Workforce, followed by Readyforce. His wife Sara volunteers locally, most recently serving as president of the Los Perales Parent Teacher Association. The couple has two children. Anna attends fourth grade at Los Perales and Jack is a second-grade student there. Mooradian enjoys spending time with his family and playing golf.

For more information about Commutr, visit www.getcommutr.com or call Alex Mooradian at 650-260-5675.

[SEE BUZZ page 19]



Living Lean's **Sheryl Cardiff**

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