



THE ORINDA NEWS

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Congratulations to 2016 Volunteer of the Year and Environmental Award Winners



PHOTOS BY SALLY HOGARTY

The Orinda Association has named the **Fix Orinda Roads** organization as the 2016 Volunteer of the Year and **Brian Waters** of the Friends of Orinda Creeks as the 2016 William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award winner. The recipients will be feted at a gala awards dinner on Feb. 26, 2017 at the Orinda Country Club. Shown above on the left is **Brian Waters** and on the right representing Fix Orinda Roads are (L-R): **Mark Roberts** – Co-Chair of 2014 and 2016 campaigns; **Carol Penskar** – Treasurer of 2012, 2014, 2016 campaigns; **Bob Burt** – Co-Chair of 2014 and 2016 campaigns; **Sue Severson** – Co-Chair of 2016 campaign; **Cassandra Forth** – Communications Director for all campaigns and Chair of 2012 campaign and **Brad Barber** – Co-Chair of 2014 campaign.

City Council Says Goodbye to Long-Time Elected Official



SALLY HOGARTY

Newly elected City Councilmembers **Darlene Gee** (L) and **Inga Miller** are sworn into office.

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Smith noted that “Orinda truly has a wonderful city staff” as she acknowledged all their help throughout her 12 years on the council.

Smith, who was completing her term as mayor at the December meeting, also presented the annual Mayor’s Awards for Excellence in Architecture and Community Building. Eric and Amy Stuffmann’s home at 11 Cascade Lane (architect Gary Parsons; general contractor Northington Innovations, Inc.) received the award for innovative design and use of natural light and materials. The second recipient was Monteverde Senior Housing at 2 Irwin Way. Eden Housing, which has received many awards for the project, received praise for developing a very challenging site into attractive, affordable units for seniors and creating a community that has become an important part of Orinda. “The residents

[SEE SMITH page 3]

The Dec. 13 Orinda City Council meeting was an emotional one as a capacity crowd welcomed new City Councilmember Inga Miller and returning City Councilmember Darlene Gee and gave accolades to 12-year City Council veteran Victoria Smith.

Among those congratulating Smith on her years of service were Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board President Steve Anderson, County Supervisor Candace Anderson and State Senator Steve Glazer’s Chief of Staff Stephen Whittaker, who also represented Assemblywoman Catharine Baker.

Smith was praised by her fellow councilmembers as a role model and mentor who always did her homework prior to meetings and approached council business with an open mind. “I am in awe of her,” said City Councilmember Dean Orr. “She is so selfless in her giving and dedication and has a staggering list of achievements.”

Reaching for Kleenex more than once,



SALLY HOGARTY

Contra Costa Supervisor **Candace Anderson** congratulated retiring Mayor **Victoria Smith** on her 12 years of service on the Orinda City Council.



SALLY HOGARTY

New OUSD Board Members **Hillary Weiner** (L) and **Cara Hoxie** are sworn in by State Senator **Steve Glazer**.

Changing of the Guard at OUSD

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

It was standing room only at Orinda Union School Board’s (OUSD) reorganizational meeting on Dec. 12 as retiring school board members, Sarah Butler and Matt Moran, were honored and new members, Cara Hoxie and Hillary Weiner, introduced.

Students in attendance patiently waited to taste the cupcake cake and other refresh-

ments while out-going board members received accolades from OUSD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carolyn Seaton, California State Senator Steve Glazer and representatives for California State Assemblywoman Catharine Baker and U.S. Congressman Mark DeSaulnier.

Seaton praised Moran for his eight years

[SEE OUSD page 4]

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OUSD Registration in February

Registration for Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten for the 2017-2018 school year will be held at each of Orinda’s elementary schools starting Feb. 6 – 9 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

A child must be at least five years of age on or before Sept. 1, 2017, to be eligible for enrollment in Kindergarten. A child is eligible for Transitional Kindergarten if their fifth birthday is between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2, 2017.

Additional information is also available through the district website: www.orindaschools.org.



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GALLERY

Library Gallery Serves Up Vegetable Art, Sculptures and Paintings

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

The Lamorinda Arts Council presents paintings and sculpture by Bill Carmel, vegetable parchment art by Margaret Dorfman, watercolors by Charlotte Huntley and oil paintings by Diana Monk from Jan. 3 through the end of the month at the Orinda Library Art Gallery. Join them at an artist reception on Saturday, Jan. 7, from 3 to 5 p.m. when light refreshments will be served

and Lee Waterman will play jazz guitar. Bill Carmel of San Ramon has been painting for 40 years and loves it. He says, "As a child, my parents took me to see the Rembrandts at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. When I walked into that room, the paintings came alive. Later, I discovered that I saw paintings differently from other people. As a student at U.C. Santa Cruz, I applied to paint at the Legion to copy the Rembrandts, which I did. I am still fascinated by painting and art in

general." Carmel is showing a total of 28 works. Six works are sculptures cast from bronze, pewter or epoxy resin. There are six acrylic paintings and 16 giclées printed with archival inks on polypropylene, a new technology. These giclées are archival and will last 1,000 years longer than any art paper. His

life or some part of the world they have visited. Collaborating with other artists and community groups is also part of Carmel's oeuvre, such as his Veil Tapestry project for the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County. He brings a 12' x 6' canvas to places of worship along with paints and brushes so that



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bill Carmel's acrylic on canvas *Things Evolve* will be shown at the Orinda Library Gallery in January.

work displays three themes: Wild Animals, Calligraphy and Landscapes. Utilitarian pieces in pewter are from his Designs of the Vine set. He hopes viewers experience some kind of connection with his work such as something that occurred in their

congregants can paint the sacred words of their faith on the canvas, which then circulates around the tri-county area.

Margaret Dorfman of Oakland has spent the last 13 years transforming ordinary fruit [SEE GALLERY page 6]

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The Orinda Association thanks our membership for their support in 2016.

With their financial and time contributions, we were able to provide wonderful events and services for Orinda. If you are not already a member, go to www.OrindaAssociation.org/membershiponline and join us!!

- ✓ Four Community Forums -- political and safety oriented
- ✓ 33rd year sponsoring 4th of July parade and celebration in the park
- ✓ Seniors Around Town's 45 drivers provided 637 rides for 103 seniors
- ✓ One Warm Coat drive yielded 165 coats in just six weeks
- ✓ Selection of 2016 Volunteer of the Year and William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental award winners
- ✓ Orinda Classic Car Show and Dancing with the Cars benefited Volunteer Center and senior ride program
- ✓ Volunteer Center provided helpers for Orinda Action Day and other local non-profit events
- ✓ *The Orinda News* published monthly and delivered free to Orinda businesses and residents

Fitness Tip of the Month

Emotional eating habits can be difficult to break.

As you eat well and workout you become super sensitive to what you are consuming. The more fit you become the more obvious the difference is between eating well and not. Eventually your attachments switch to optimized energy, fitness and feeling awesome. Tune in to your fitness experience and your emotional eating habits will fade away.

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

live better
live lean

"I Dropped Four Dress Sizes for My Wedding!"

I joined Living Lean in January of 2016 to get in shape before my October wedding. When I started, I was at the heaviest weight I had ever been and was unhappy with the lifestyle I was living. After six months of Sheena's training sessions, personalized eating plans, weekly measurements and step by step encouragement I lost 30 lbs. of body fat and went from a size 12 to a size 8.

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Victoria Selway

Before

After

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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
Wishing You a Healthy New Year!



Cindy Powell

Jan. 1 is New Year's Day, a time to set goals or resolutions. Or ask, "What needs to be done?" or "How can I help?" in our town. Join us at The Orinda Association and make your community better. Also on Jan. 1 at the Linden tree in Orinda Park, we ring in the 2017 Year of the Czech in Orinda.

Tree-cycling (recycle your tree) will begin Jan. 11 and run for two weeks. Put your clean tree out on your regular pick-up day. Cut it in half if it is over 10 feet tall ... or cut it into small pieces if you put your tree out after Jan. 23 because you need to fit it into the green bin.

If the weather outside is frightful, on Jan. 12, come to the Orinda Theatre and see *Young Frankenstein* (rated PG) for free.

Jan. 13 is the first Friday the 13th of the year. Do you consider the number 13 unlucky or are you a contrarian and use the day to test your luck? Miramonte girls' basketball team will be testing their skill, not luck, against Campo at the Rivalry Game in the evening. Although this is a preview game, the excitement around the girls' B-Ball season will be fierce ... BEAT CAMPO!

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Civil Rights Day, Jan. 16) celebrates one of the greatest social activists ever known. At 35, he became the youngest person to win the Nobel Peace Prize (as of 2014 he became the second youngest) and remains the most popular/most-researched recipient as of today. Consider this day as an incentive to serve your community.

Jan. 18 is Thesaurus Day. No, a thesaurus

is not a dinosaur, it is a list of synonyms and antonyms used by writers. This day celebrates the birthday of the author of *Roget's Thesaurus*, Peter Roget. Now the computer provides a replacement word, but most of us remember keeping this important reference book next to our typewriter (a machine that prints letters or figures on a sheet of paper when a person pushes its keys, no memory or spellcheck, and often not electric).

On Jan. 19, comedian Will Durst, one of my favorite political satirists, will return to the Orinda Theatre. He has joined the chamber's Orinda Comedy night in the past and will surely have a few political jabs. The next day, Jan. 20, is Inauguration Day. The term of the new president and vice-president officially begins at noon in Washington D.C. Usually the vice-president is sworn in first and the president at exactly noon, or 9 a.m. Orinda time.

National Pie Day is celebrated annually on Jan. 23 to simply celebrate the pie. It is a day for all to bake or cook their favorite pies. Or maybe you are cutting back on desserts this month and will donate to the food bank instead.

Jan. 25 is Opposite Day when everything you say and do is opposite. Have fun with this. Use your opposite hand to brush your teeth and fire up your brain synapses. When all your synapses are firing, you are focused and your mind feels electric. Not to be confused with Jan. 31, Backward Day, a day to do everything backwards, especially popular with school-aged kids.

Chinese New Year, Year of the Rooster, begins Jan. 28, the first day of the new moon and the celebration lasts 15 days.

Ten years ago, National Seed Swap Day was born. Seed swaps across the nation have joined in celebrating each year on Jan. 28. The practice is old but is getting more interest. Time to think about the healthy food you want to plant in springtime.

Put on a coat and get outside to walk and play and say hello to your neighbors. Happy, healthy 2017 to you!

◆ SMITH from page 1

at Monteverde not only shop locally and attend classes at the Community Center, some of them are teachers there as well," said Smith.

Following the many tributes to Smith from a variety of community members, new City Councilmember Inga Smith and returning Councilmember Darlene Gee were sworn in by City Clerk Sheri Spedacci. The council then elected Eve Phillips as mayor and Amy Worth as vice mayor.

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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Coats Distributed at Oakland Social Services



SALLY HOGARTY

(L-R) OA Membership Chair **Kate Wiley**, Alameda County Social Services Administrator **Adriana Murray**, Alameda County Sheriff's Deputy **Hoang** and Deputy **Hopkins** and OA Volunteer **Carolyn Palmer** stand in front of the over 165 coats donated by Orinda residents to those in need.

Holiday Luncheon for Seniors Around Town



SALLY HOGARTY

The Orinda Association's Seniors Around Town program held a festive holiday luncheon for its volunteer drivers and senior riders in the Library Garden Room on Dec. 13. Shown above are (standing) SAT ride coordinator **Cathy Goshorn** and (seated) riders **Antica Odabashian** (L) and **May Poon**.

It's April in Lamorinda for Real Estate

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CAR TIME / POLICE BLOTTER

CAR TIME

How Important is it to Replace Strut and Shocks?

By JOHN VANEK



Keeping one's vehicle maintained and serviced is important. The struts or shocks are one of those silent failures that go on in the background while life goes on. It is not like a battery failure or a leaking water pump that require immediate attention. We can ignore worn struts, but it will affect things like tire and brake wear and cause additional suspension issues.

Is it true that there is a significant price tag for this service and many owners will put off the repair? The job of the shock/strut is to dampen the ride and soak up the bumps. The shocks and struts are two different styles of strut. The strut version includes the shock absorber inside the strut assembly. The automotive manufacturers

build new vehicles with strut assemblies for ease of manufacturing. Shocks and struts are essentially the same thing.

A properly working strut will keep the tires firmly in contact with the road while driving and keep a good contact patch with the pavement. When the shock absorber loses its dampening abilities, it no longer keeps good contact with pavement which in turn makes brakes work harder and wear out faster, causing longer stopping distances.

The worn strut has too much travel and causes the wheels to bounce too much. This excessive travel will cause extra wear and tear on bushings and other front-end components, which typically results in a cupped-wear pattern on the tire tread.

Struts fail slowly and drivers may not notice that the ride control is not like it once was. They may notice steering shudder after hitting bumps, poor cornering and a general rough feeling when driving. Many customers report the vehicle feels better after replacing the struts. They often do not realize how badly worn they were. New struts will give drivers confidence that their vehicle is safe and won't wear out tires and brakes prematurely.

The strut job is a significant repair but it is a good investment if you plan to keep the vehicle for more than three years. On top of that, drivers save money on tires and brakes.

John Vanek can be reached at john@orindamotors.com.



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◆ OUSD from page 1

of service and Butler for her four years on the board, noting how both had been so supportive during her interview process and initial months as OUSD's new superintendent.

OUSD board president Julie Rossiter commended Butler for going over the budget with "a fine-tooth comb" and hoped to continue her vigilance. Rossiter thanked Moran for being a mentor to her when she first came on the board. "I really appreciated that even though we didn't always agree," she added. Board member Carol Brown said she appreciated Butler's

tenacity and noted Moran's kindness and compassion.

When asked about advice for new board members, Moran responded, "Don't be afraid to ask the difficult questions," while Butler encouraged all to value diversity and to take advantage of the California State Board training workshops.

State Assemblyman Steve Glazer thanked the outgoing board members for their service and gave the oath of office to the two new board members. "I've had two children go through the Orinda schools, and I have a greater appreciation for what goes on," he said. "I am so pleased at the commitment of teachers, staff and the leadership."



Retiring School Board Members Sarah Butler and Matt Moran display one of the many presents they received at the Dec. 12 OUSD reorganization meeting.



POLICE BLOTTER

October 30 through December 10, 2016

Calls for Service

- 911 Hangup: 13 incidents.
- Abandoned Vehicle: 3 incidents.
- Accident Injury: 1 incident.
- Accident Property: 12 incidents.
- Alarm, False: 116 incidents.
- Barking Dog: 3 incidents.
- Burglary: 2 incidents.
- Burglary, Auto: 1 incident.
- Burglary, Commercial: 1 incident.
- Burglary, Residential: 5 incidents.
- Civil Disturbance: 19 incidents.
- CVC Moving Violation: 142 incidents.
- CVC Non-Moving Violation: 60 incidents.
- Dependent Child: 1 incident.
- Disturbing the Peace: 1 incident.
- Drunk in Public: 1 incident.
- DUI Misdemeanor: 1 incident.
- Fire/EMS Response: 1 incident.
- Forgery: 1 incident.
- Fraud Credit Card: 2 incidents.
- Grand Theft: 3 incidents.
- Grand Theft Bicycle: 1 incident.
- Grand Theft from Building: 1 incident.
- Grand Theft from Vehicle: 1 incident.
- Hailed by Citizen: 1 incident.
- Hit and Run Misdemeanor: 2 incidents.
- Identity Theft: 7 incidents.
- Illegal Entry: 2 incidents.
- Juvenile Disturbance: 12 incidents.
- Lost Property: 4 incidents.
- Loud Music: 1 incident.
- Loud Noise: 7 incidents.
- Loud Party: 1 incident.
- Medical Hospital: 4 incidents.
- Missing Adult: 2 incidents.
- Motorist Assist: 2 incidents.
- Neighbor Dispute: 2 incidents.
- Occupied Stalled Vehicle: 2 incidents.
- Ordinance Violation: 5 incidents.
- Outside Assist: 43 incidents.
- Parking Detail: 119 incidents.
- Patrol Request: 72 incidents.
- Petty Theft: 9 incidents.

- Petty Theft from Vehicle: 3 incidents.
- Phone Harass: 1 incident.
- Public Assembly Check: 1 incident.
- Public Nuisance: 6 incidents.
- Reckless Driving: 25 incidents.
- School Check: 18 incidents.
- Security Check: 28 incidents.
- Service to Citizen: 213 incidents.
- Suspicious Circumstances: 40 incidents.
- Suspicious Person Stop: 17 incidents.
- Suspicious Subject: 17 incidents.
- Suspicious Vehicle: 18 incidents.
- Suspicious Vehicle Stop: 19 incidents.
- Traffic Collision Property Damage: 1 incident.
- Threats: 1 incident.
- Tow: 12 incidents.
- Traffic Hazard: 10 incidents.
- Uncontrollable Juvenile: 1 incident.
- Unwanted Guest: 1 incident.
- Vacation House Check: 55 incidents.
- Vandalism: 3 incidents.
- Vehicle Theft: 1 incident.
- Verbal Dispute: 9 incidents.
- Welfare Check: 21 incidents.

Arrests

- Assault w/Deadly Weapon: 1 arrest.
- Drunk in Public: 1 arrest.
- DUI: 1 arrest.
- DUI Misdemeanor: 3 arrests.
- Possession of Illegal Weapon: 1 arrest.
- Possession of Paraphernalia: 1 arrest.
- Possession of Stolen Property: 1 arrest.
- Stolen Car Recovered: 1 recovery.
- Warrant Arrest: 1 arrest.

BART Statistics

- Catalytic Converter Theft: 1 incident.
- Vehicle Theft: 1 incident.

– Compiled by David Dierks
Assistant Editor

For more incident details, visit www.crimereports.com

CITY MANAGER / AWARDS

City Manager Retiring in February

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

After 11 ½ years of early morning conferences and late night meetings, Orinda's City Manager Janet Keeter is retiring. The well-respected administrator has provided leadership to the city during challenging times as Orinda grappled with a failing infrastructure, contentious housing requirements from ABAG (Association of Bay Area Governments) and several large capital projects.



SALLY HOGARTY

City Manager **Janet Keeter** retires from her position in February.

"When I started in Orinda, infrastructure was my biggest challenge, but it also became one of the highlights of my tenure here," says Keeter. "The community has approved three out of five phases in the city's plan to improve local roads. Momentum has really picked up, and we're actually ahead of schedule which means the costs may also be less."

Such often contentious capital projects as Wilder, City Hall, Monteverde and Orinda Grove also loom large on Keeter's list of

highlights.

"Neither the ranch house nor the sports fields had been built at Wilder when I arrived. It's been wonderful watching them take shape and seeing the community make such good use of them," Keeter comments.

One of Keeter's fondest memories during her almost 12-year tenure in Orinda is interacting with community members. "If you work at a higher level of government, you're really removed from the people you serve. But at the local level, and with a community the size of Orinda, you get to work with and know various community groups, volunteers and residents. That's a big plus for me," she adds.

With a strong work ethic and a personality that embraces collaboration, Keeter's retirement caps a 33-year career of public service ranging from helping put the 911 call system in place to being part of a Hazmat Response Team to economic development for the cities of Tracy and Lodi and Deputy City Manager and Interim City Manager for Lodi.

"But my job in Orinda is really the cake-topper," says Keeter. "It is truly the highlight of my career."

Keeter's last day as city manager will be Feb. 3. Although the city staff has seen quite a few new faces this past year, Keeter feels that she is leaving the city in good shape.

"We have a wonderful new City Clerk, new Public Works Director, new Planning Director and new Director of Parks and Recreation. They all have great experience and have seamlessly fit into their new positions."

Keeter hopes to take a year off following her retirement with Orinda and take advantage of the good ski season. "I'm looking forward to having a leisurely schedule and then maybe look at doing some consulting," she says.

Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Architecture and Community Building



SALLY HOGARTY

Eden Housing's Monteverde Senior Housing received a Mayors Award for its design on a very difficult lot and for how the project has created a community that is now an important part of Orinda. Shown above: (L-R) Architect **Sean Southwick**, Eden's **Woody Karp**, City Councilmembers **Amy Worth** and **Victoria Smith** and Dahlin Group's Director of Design **John Thatch**.



SALLY HOGARTY

The Stuffman's home at 11 Cascade Lane won the Mayor's Award for its innovative design and use of natural light and materials. Shown above: (L-R) architect **Cecil Lee**, **Amy** and **Eric Stuffman** with their children, architect **Gary Parsons**, Mayor **Victoria Smith** and builder **Jeff Northington**.



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Letters to the Editor ...

Stop the Name Calling

I read Ms. Penskar's letter to the editor last month with deep disappointment. By calling those who disagree with her naysayers and curmudgeons (defined as "miser, crusty, ill-tempered, old man"), the letter brings to the local discussion the bullying and insults we unfortunately saw in our presidential election.

When it comes to development of Orinda's downtown, the "naysayers" in my mind have been those that have opposed opportunities to develop dilapidated properties such as the Phairs property which was to be replaced with a state-of-the-art privately funded pre-school plus several new storefronts. Additionally some of these same folks tried to stop development of an old gas station site downtown that will now be replaced with new commercial facilities. Most cities would salivate over adding a

privately funded preschool with new storefronts and developing a long vacant old gas station property. But, instead of calling those that opposed these projects names, I prefer to empathize and try to understand we all have different perspectives and priorities. We also have many things in common – we all want a better downtown for all our generations. We all want to ensure that development is done in a manner that we can be proud of, and some of us want it to be consistent with our general plan.

If we come together, we surely can support developments that are focused on local businesses that can thrive and be part of our community like the ones that have been here for so long. Let's build on what we have to better the community for all. And let's focus on what we have in common and stop the name calling please.

– Ed Jajeh

◆ GALLERY from page 2

and vegetables into objects of unexpected beauty. "Rather than creating something new, I am only uncovering what was always there," she says. Her studio follows sustainable practices by using reclaimed water, recyclable packaging, no toxic products, leftovers are composted and unused produce is donated to her local zoo.

All of this came about when she was slicing vegetables for dinner one night and saw the light come through a thin piece of zucchini. The structure and color of the vegetable looked so beautiful that she immediately started thinking of ways to hold and preserve the beauty. Over time she came up with a process that works. Selling only wholesale, her work is sold in 16 states, some with multiple locations. She has never taken an art class.

Dorfman is showing enough work to fill the four-tiered glass cabinet: vegetable parchment bowls; food safe glass platters, trays, bowls and dishes; and a variety of earrings, cuffs and necklaces. Look for "Vegetable Parchment Vessel – Thai Green Papaya with Beet Spiral," 3" expanding to 7" x 4" made of fruit, vegetables and natural fiber. See www.MargaretDorfman.com for more of her creations.

Charlotte Huntley of Lafayette has been painting with watercolors all of her adult life and has received many national awards. As she usually exhibits nationally, we are fortunate Huntley is exhibiting locally. She is showing 20 paintings, most are 22" x 30" on paper, all are watercolors. Her book, *Painting: A Quest Toward Xtraordinary*, will be available for review and sale at the reception.

She paints realistic imagery that has positive messages. Huntley says, "I am a colorist and love to see the brighter side of life. A gray day never excites me." A color-

ist can be described as a painter skilled in achieving special effects with color. Each of her paintings tells a story, with great variation in the stories and the paintings. She and her husband, Neal, have been active in the world of watercolors through the American Watercolor Society.

Look for *God's Hand*, a 22" x 30" watercolor on paper. It came about when a pile of rocks caught her attention inside a volcanic crater on the Big Island of Hawaii. Viewed from just the right angle, the rocks looked exactly like a giant hand coming out of the earth. As she was painting, a man came up and said, "That's God's hand." She hopes that when people view her work they walk away with an inkling of the delight and happiness she experiences when painting.

Diana Monk of Santa Rosa has been painting in oils since age 13 and hasn't stopped yet. She graduated from California College of Arts and Crafts and has exhibited at the de Young, the Crocker in Sacramento and Le Salon de Nations in Paris. Monk's *vitae* shows a life immersed in all aspects of painting including much community involvement.

The centrifugal force of her life as a painter is the natural world – landscapes are her passion. If you look at the work on her website, www.monkfineart.com, you will enjoy a dizzying array of nature's beauty. She is showing about 20 works that could be described as imaginative realism – a little representational, a little abstract but always recognizable. Monk hopes that her work inspires others to experience beauty, to paint something themselves or take a painting home.

As a teacher she always taught others to work as she does, "wet on wet." This is because one can sit for an hour and figure out what to do next without the paint dry-



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ing. Monk says, "Through the exacting application of many layers of colors over days and weeks, my paintings gradually emerge, each one a gateway into a more luminous and rarefied vision of nature's loveliness. A painting is so much more than color on canvas." Monk's daughter, Anne, says her favorite in the show is *Autumn Mountain*, a 10" x 12" oil painting on canvas.

Regarding the value of art to the community, Carmel says, "The arts provide a vital means of communication between individuals and add vitality to every facet of community life." Dorfman says, "In regard to the work I make from fruit and vegetables, the value is in turning something seen as common and ordinary into something of beauty; and how important it is to stop and see real value in the humble,

everyday natural world surrounding us." Huntley says, "The arts are as important to our community as our children are to our families. Through the arts we are inspired by sights, sounds and movements displayed by the passion of others who have the gift of communication." Monk says, "In all the arts – dance, music, applied arts – the community receives a lot of richness; the more art the better!"

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. The library is closed on Jan. 1 and Jan. 2 for New Year's Day holidays and Jan. 16 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Call 925-254-2184 for more information or visit <http://ccclib.org>.

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For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 (jill@aspenconsult.net) or Elana O'Loskey at 925-984-1751 (elanao@mac.com). The deadline for the February issue is January 8, 2016.

CELEBRATING SOLAR POWER / DIVERSITY

Turning on the Sun's Power

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Partially funded by a Proposition 39 grant, solar power is now an important new resource for the Orinda Union School District. Benefits of the new solar system will save the district more than \$3 million in electricity costs over the next 25 years as it generates nearly 19 million kilowatt-hours of electricity over that time period.

Superintendent of Schools Carolyn Seaton also noted that the new system will eliminate the emission of more than 19,000 metric tons of CO2 over the contract's lifetime as well as save approximately 25 million gallons of water that would have been used to power the school facilities using the U.S. grid of thermoelectric power plants.

OUSD worked with Sun Light and Power and Terra Verde Renewable Partners on the project. Rick Brown of Terra Verde noted that his company will be managing the solar power on behalf of the school district. "We will issue reports on savings, and people can go online to see how the system is operating," he said. In addition, kiosks will be on the various campuses so that students and teachers can monitor the



SALLY HOGARTY

Orinda Union School District Board Members (L-R) President **Julie Rossiter**, **Sarah Butler** and (hidden) **Matt Moran** along with Superintendent of Schools **Carolyn Seaton** throw the switch to turn on the solar power at the district's four elementary schools and Orinda Intermediate School (OIS). Held at OIS, the "on-switch" was designed and built by OIS students.

usage and savings. "Teachers will be able to make this an educational component and have the students do science and math exercises," he added.

In Wake of Election, Orindans Form Action Alliance in Support of Diversity, Equality



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

(L-R) **Nicole Reader**, **Rebecca Verity**, **Monika Pitchford** and (not shown) Ksenija Olmer formed Orinda Progressive Action Alliance to support the rich diversity of the Bay Area.

By MAGGIE SHARPE
Staff Writer

The day after Donald Trump was elected the next president of the United States of America, Orinda resident Rebecca Verity posted a short note on the city's Nextdoor website, reaching out to people who might feel vulnerable or afraid and reassuring everyone that she, for one, is grateful that they live in Orinda.

Her Nov. 9 message read: "So many times we don't speak, out of fear of say-

ing the wrong thing. Today I want to put that aside for a moment, because this feels important to say. If last night has left you reeling, if last night has left you feeling that our country has said to you, 'you don't belong' or 'you are less,' if the last months have left any mark of fear on you for yourself or your children or your family, because of your skin color, your religion, your country of origin, because of who you love or who you feel yourself to be, what I want to say to you is this: I am glad you

[SEE ELECTIONS page 12]



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30th Annual Festival of Trees Funds Monument Crisis Center



SALLY HOGARTY

Staff members and volunteers from the Monument Crisis Center attended the Orinda Woman's Club's Festival of Trees in November. The center was the major recipient of proceeds from the event.

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

A single pearl gleamed on the program for this year's Festival of Trees (FOT), signaling the 30th year of fundraising for local organizations that benefit families and children. About 500 people attended the Nov. 17 event at San Ramon Marriott, which featured Dan Ashley of KGO Channel 7 News as Master of Ceremonies. Founded in 1953, the Orinda Woman's Club

(OWC) event raised \$46,000 for Monument Crisis Center (MCC) in Concord and the OWC Community Service Committee.

Sandra Casentini, FOT chair, opened the event and introduced Ashley who announced the silent auction winners. Next came the raffle winners - prizes included lavish trees decorated for the season, wreaths, gift baskets and getaway packages. After lunch, Helen Lyall's fashion show wowed everyone with elegant European-

[SEE FESTIVAL page 14]

Local Church Shelters Homeless Through Warm Winter Nights

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Warm Winter Nights, a project of the Social Justice Alliance of the Inter-faith Council of Contra Costa County, has set up house at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church (LOPC) Fellowship Hall. The homeless shelter program provides tents that occupy one half of the hall; the other half serves as the dining room. The entire building is used with the Fireside Room a place for residents to find tutoring services, play games or they can just relax in the Davies Room.

"We want this to be as near a home-"
[SEE LOPC page 14]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Volunteer **Randi Long** (L) at the Orinda Community Church's Winter Night's program helps a mother and young child with an art project.

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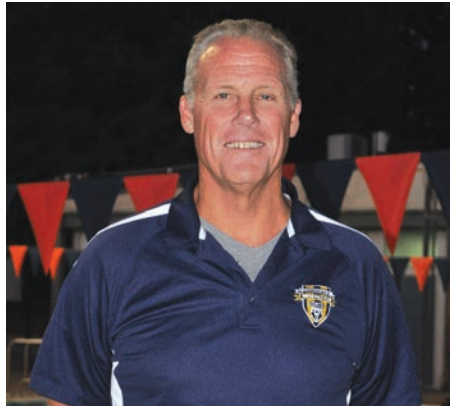


Danville Home Expo will be held on Sunday, February 12, 2017 at the Danville Community Center, 420 Front Street, Danville.

WATER POLO / SCHOOLS

Three-Time Olympic Water Polo Coach Now At Lamorinda

By STEVE LUCAS
Contributing Writer



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Guy Baker, three-time Olympic Water Polo Coach.

Legendary water polo coach Guy Baker has been named Executive Director of Lamorinda Water Polo, a move intended to instill Baker's extensive experience, knowledge and success at the Olympic and university levels, including key principles and systems into developing a robust youth water polo program.

Baker was the head coach of the USA Water Polo's (USAWP) Women's Senior National Team from 1998-2004 and returned in 2006 through the 2008 Olympic Games. Major accomplishments include leading Team USA to three Olympic medals at the 2000, 2004 and 2008 Olympic Games and two World Championship titles at the 2003 and 2007 World Championships. He is the only Women's National Team Coach to win three consecutive Olympic medals, and he rapidly elevated the team's performance taking over a team ranked 8th in the world in 1998 to the silver medal at the 2000 Olympic Games. During his tenure, Team USA won 10 FINA major championships medals; five gold medals,

four silver medals and one bronze medal, the most gold medals and overall medals during this time period. Following the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, he became Director of Olympic Development of USA Water Polo, launching the Olympic Development Program and overseeing the Men's and Women's National Teams.

In 2001, Baker led the efforts to fully establish a national program incorporating a USA Water Polo System of Play featuring a robust National Team Athlete and Coach [SEE COACH page 15]



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SCHOOL CALENDAR

Note that schools will be closed Jan. 2 for winter break and Jan. 16 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

- 9 **Orinda Union School District** Board Meeting, 8 Altarinda Road, 6 p.m. Visit www.orindaschools.org.
- 11 **Acalanes Union High School District**, Board Meeting, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette, 7:30 p.m. Visit www.acalanes.k12.ca.us.
- 12 **Miramonte High School**, Therapy Dogs at Lunch, 750 Moraga Way, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 925-280-3930 or visit www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte.
- 13 **Education Foundation of Orinda** Grandparents and Special Friends Day, Glorietta Elementary School, 15 Martha Road, and Del Rey Elementary School, 25 El Camino Moraga. Call Glorietta at 925-254-0521 or Del Rey at 925-258-3099.
- 17 **Holden High School**, Information Session for prospective families, 10 Irwin Way, 6 p.m. Call 925-254-0199 or visit www.holdenhigh.org.
- 26 **Miramonte High School**, Public Speaking Showcase, Theatre, 750 Moraga Way, 7 to 9 p.m. Call 925-280-3930 or visit www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte. Also Jan. 28.

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



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Year of the Czech Begins in January

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

The Year of the Czech officially begins with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Jan. 1 at 10 a.m. at the Linden Tree in Orinda Community Center Park.

The tree, located by the Tot Lot, was planted by the first delegation from Tabor, located in the Czech Republic, in 1985. Tabor and Orinda subsequently became Sister Cities (part of Sister Cities International) with groups from both countries traveling back and forth over the years.

"In these uncertain times, the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation works toward the one-on-one goal of international peace

by bringing one Tabor student every fall semester to Miramonte High School," says Sister City Foundation member Bobbie Landers. "The student enters a competition in Tabor by showing English proficiency with an autobiographical essay followed by an interview in English by a Tabor-based panel. Hosted by an Orinda family, the student's transportation costs are covered by the foundation. This year's student, Adam Kraus, an accomplished photographer, exhibited his work at Miramonte's library gallery."

The Sister City Foundation has planned an event-filled yearlong celebration that will showcase the cultural and historical aspects of Czech society. Children's Czech



WICK SMITH

With its colorful buildings, Tabor resembles a storybook town.

dances can be found in the Orinda Community Center's 2017 activity brochure, and the San Jose Sharks ice hockey team will feature a Czech Heritage Night on Feb. 15 when they play the Florida Panthers. Each team boasts a Czech player: Tomas Hertl

(Sharks) and Jaromir Jagr (Panthers).

The Orinda Historical Society will also display Czech artifacts in its storefront windows in the Library Breezeway. A Czech museum will be a feature at the Orinda

[SEE CZECH page 13]



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Wild Magnolia Restaurant Opens in Theatre Square

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Can't find Table 24 in Theatre Square? That's because it has been reinvented as Wild Magnolia by restaurateur Michael Karp and creative director and partner Dianna Condon with the culinary expertise of chef Ulises Santiago. Same casual atmosphere, great for families, full bar with specials and artisan cocktails, happy hour 3 to 5 p.m. daily, reservations accepted and outdoor seating (dog friendly). What's different? Everything else. As Condon says, "I wanted a place where I could eat healthy for myself in an environment like home."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jars of fresh fruits used to make the many artisan cocktails at **Wild Magnolia**.

First, the menu says it all. To say they feature seasonal, sustainable small plates with light, healthy options for lunch and dinner is an understatement. Try their signature kale and quinoa salad dressed with

grapefruit vinaigrette or the tiny greens salad made with micro greens, sliced pears, goat cheese and pistachios with sherry

[SEE MAGNOLIA page 14]



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AUTHOR / PETS

Author Gives Kudos to Yoga in New Kids' Book

By KATHERINE G. McCARTY
Staff Writer

Author Dana Dowell identifies with her protagonist in *Yoga Girl*. "I am Rylie Rose," she says. The writer describes her children's book, illustrated by Kevin Coffey, as a story of a young girl who gains understanding of how her mind and body can work together to achieve liveliness and inner strength through yoga.

Dowell was raised by a single mother in Orinda and attended Miramonte High School "where not many kids were from a broken home."

Her mother, Jeanne Dowell, supported the family by teaching yoga, and is hailed as a pioneer in Orinda's yoga movement.

Dowell attributes her mother's youthfulness to her daily yoga practice and describes her mother as "most influential in writing this book." Jeanne continues to teach yoga and, at 87, "can ski down any mountain in the country."

Dowell hopes *Yoga Girl* helps "introduce kids to yoga in a way they might relate to," and says her own three sons inspired her to write the book. As she watched them deal with the pressure to succeed in school and participate in many different Lamorinda sports, Dowell decided to turn to her own lessons as a young adult to help young people deal with similar issues.

Dowell began practicing yoga while at Westmont College in Santa Barbara. As a cross-country athlete, she noticed doing

yoga improved her performance level in both sports and school. "I was faster and was able to focus more."

Dowell said that as a young woman, she had felt "a lot of pressure to be perfect" and battled with an eating disorder for five years, before she discovered "the more yoga I did, the less I worried about my weight. My weight balanced out naturally with the yoga more so than with all the running I was doing."

After becoming a drama major at the University of Southern California, Dowell signed with the famous Wilhelmina Modeling Agency, performing in both commercials and TV. "I noticed yoga helped me feel less nervous at auditions, and it also helped me to gain confidence."

Dowell is taking the lessons learned through her practice and using them to educate young people on the value of yoga. She is currently developing an interactive Saturday morning cartoon, has a line of yoga girl clothing and teaches yoga. "My goal is to some day be a keynote speaker



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dana Dowell, who's mother Jeanne Dowell is a long-time yoga instructor, recently wrote a children's book entitled *Yoga Girl*.

and share my struggles of growing up and how yoga helped me be less focused on the outside and more focused on who I am on the inside.

"Yoga is not just a physical activity, it's about finding that courage and light we all have in ourselves," says Dowell.

Orinda Books will host a reading of *Yoga Girl* on Jan. 7 at 11 a.m. The book is available for purchase at Orinda Books, on Dowell's website at www.mpwbooks.com, or through online booksellers.

Something to Howl About... Animal Tales

Resolutions for Pets and People



Jennifer Conroy

Happy New Year! Made your resolutions for 2017? Since I believe in recycling, I simply recycle mine year after year after year. But what if your cat or dog or bird or fish could make resolutions? Well, maybe they do and we just don't know it.

Fish Resolutions: "I've got to improve my backstroke this year." "I'll try not staring at people staring at me." "I won't bury the shrimp brine in the pebbles any more."

Bird Resolutions: "I'll quit squawking every time the cat walks into the room." "I'll stop lying on my back with my feet in the air because it scares the human." "I'll try to keep at least half the bird seed inside the cage for a change."

Dog Resolutions: "I'll keep my nose out of the trash." "I'll wipe my wet paws on the carpet before jumping on the couch." "I won't lick my butt in front of company."

Cat Resolutions: "I'm not making any resolutions because I'm perfect."

And, as for us humans, what sort of resolutions might we make on behalf of our companion animals?

How about ...

Fish People: "I'll stop tapping on the fish tank to get Goldie's attention." "I'll put a grate on top of the tank so Tabby will stop sticking her paw in there."

Bird People: "I'll give Bluebell more time out of her cage and will trim her wings a wee bit so she can get some safe flying

practice in." "I'll replace the cuttlebone every few weeks."

Dog People: "New leash, new reflecting collar, new ID tag, new food dish, new water dish, new Kong, new grooming brush, new flea comb." "Bigger boxes of healthy treats." "New walking shoes for me so I can enjoy our walks even more."

Cat People: "I will happily clean up spit-up fur balls without a complaint." "I will never push Tabby off my face in the middle of the night." "I will sit stone cold still while she kneads her paws on my arm."

Okay, so we all know what we'd like our companion animals to do and what we'd like to do for them. And, because we are but mere humans, sometimes we fail them.

The essential resolutions we should never fail when it comes to our animals are: Create safe habitats for them, be it a fish tank or your entire house; provide quality food and clean fresh water; enable time and space for exercise and for just plain relaxing; give them attention and keeping them groomed; get our cats and dogs microchipped so they never have to worry about calling home; make sure vaccinations are up-to-date and regular veterinary checkups are a matter of routine; tell them every day that we love them and are grateful they are in our lives.

Happy 2017 to you and your animal companions!



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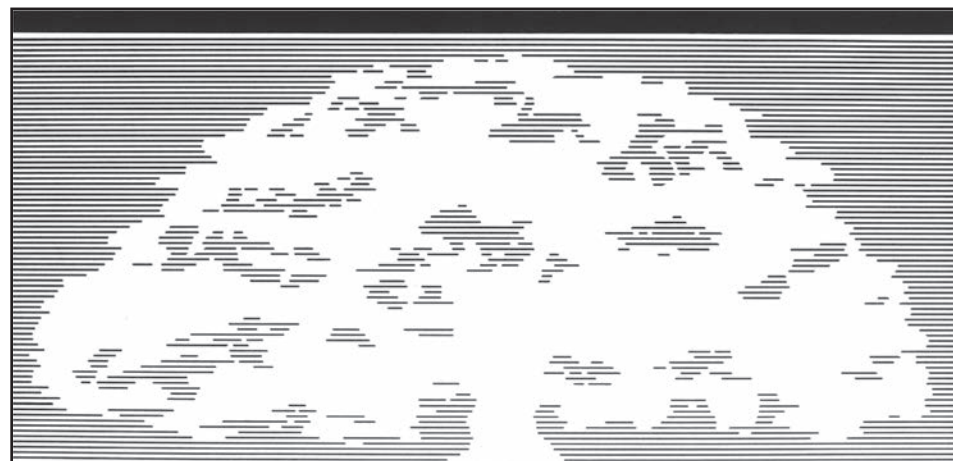
www.oldfirehouseschool.com

Lafayette Open House
Jan.23rd, Feb.27th
6:30 p.m.
984 Moraga Road
(925) 284-4321



Walnut Creek Open House
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6:30 p.m.
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(925) 934-1507

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REAL ESTATE

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Purchasing Power



MAUREEN WILBUR

As of Nov. 10, 2016, according to Freddie Mac's latest Primary Mortgage Market Survey, interest rates for a 30-year fixed rate mortgage are currently at 3.57 percent. Rates have remained at or below 3.5 percent each of the last 16 weeks, marking a historic low. However, interest rates have risen to over 4 percent since mid-November.

The interest rate you secure when buying a home not only greatly impacts your monthly housing costs, but also impacts your purchasing power. If you are a home seller, interest rates also impact you.

Purchasing power, simply put, is the amount of home you can afford to buy for the budget you have available to spend. As rates increase, the price of the house you can afford will decrease if you plan to stay within a certain monthly housing budget.

The chart to the right shows what impact rising interest rates would have if you

planned to purchase a home within the national median price range and planned to keep your principal and interest payments at or about \$1,100 a month.

With each quarter of a percent increase in interest rate, the value of the home you can afford decreases by 2.5 percent, (in this example, \$6,250). Experts predict that mortgage rates will be closer to 4 percent by this time next year.

In most cases, interest rates on 30-year fixed mortgages are currently at 4 percent and a bit more. As interest rates rise, the cost to obtain a mortgage increases, thus lowering demand and affecting home prices.

Lamorinda homes have maintained

Buyer's Purchasing Power

RATE	4.75	\$ 1,304	\$ 1,272	\$ 1,239	\$ 1,206	\$ 1,174
	4.50	\$ 1,267	\$ 1,235	\$ 1,203	\$ 1,172	\$ 1,140
	4.25	\$ 1,230	\$ 1,199	\$ 1,168	\$ 1,138	\$ 1,107
	4.00	\$ 1,194	\$ 1,164	\$ 1,134	\$ 1,104	\$ 1,074
	3.75	\$ 1,158	\$ 1,129	\$ 1,099	\$ 1,071	\$ 1,042
	3.50	\$ 1,123	\$ 1,095	\$ 1,066	\$ 1,038	\$ 1,010
	3.25	\$ 1,088	\$ 1,061	\$ 1,034	\$ 1,006	\$ 979
		\$ 250,000	\$ 243,750	\$ 237,500	\$ 231,250	\$ 225,000
		-2.5%	-5%	-7.5%	-10%	



Principal and Interest Payments rounded to the nearest dollar amount.

their value overall through downs in the economy throughout the decades. Since 2013, Lamorinda homes have seen values consistently increase. Our real estate mar-

ket has been driven by low inventory, low interest rates and high demand. A rise in interest rates may impact our market; we just don't know what the impact will be, if any.

◆ ELECTIONS from page 7

are here in Orinda, with me. My family is grateful for the presence of yours."

Verity explained that she did not want her message to be political or angry.

"But I felt shaken to my core by the election," said Verity, who feels basic principles of honesty and integrity are at risk. "I am part Jewish and my family is made up of multiple races - and I have two gay siblings."

The Nextdoor posting quickly sparked more than 100 responses and, on Nov. 18, about 125 people showed up at a Candlelight Vigil at Orinda Community Park in support of "kindness and community" and "our community pride in diversity." At the vigil, Verity said people wanted to know what they could do moving forward.

"People were reaching out to us, asking if we were going to do anything, or start

some kind of group," she said.

Verity decided to band together with three other concerned moms in Orinda, Monika Pitchford, Nicole Reader and Ksenija Olmer, and Orinda Progressive Action Alliance (OPAA) was born - it published its first online newsletter on Dec. 1.

Pitchford also reached out to Orinda Mayor Victoria Smith, asking her to issue a statement in support of her diverse constituents and the city's zero tolerance for hate crimes.

On Nov. 15, the mayor responded with a statement that read, in part: "It is my belief that through our individual actions we as a community ... can and do demonstrate inclusion regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, political stance, and faith. I personally encourage everyone to be mindful of our friends, neighbors, and family and insure that we model what is so wonderful about living in the Bay Area, which is the rich diversity of our region's population."

Verity said the community response to her personal distress over the election is reassuring. "It feels good to know that the community has my back," said Verity. "Our main goal is to protect our principles. Even the number one basic principle of just telling the truth is under attack. I can't turn a blind eye to that."

Verity said there are a lot of ideas being tossed around by the group about how they want to proceed but nothing is set in stone. The bottom line is that they want to support anyone in the community who is reaching out to help others - whether it's knitting for refugees, writing letters to elected officials, or a community-wide food "cupboard," similar to the little free library boxes around town, that could help feed the hungry.

"We plan to host diversity dinners, where

neighbors can get to know their neighbors, including neighbors who are different from them," said Verity.

She feels that while a lot of people get political alerts through the Internet and social media, there are a lot of people, especially older people, "who may not be so hooked into social media." Verity said joining OPAA can help keep people informed and also provide ways to take action.

Older people aren't the only ones who want to take action. On the night of the November vigil, Verity said Nicole Reader organized a children's march and rally in Orinda.

"I have a second-grader and sixth-grader, and I am amazed at how politically active they have become - and it's not coming from home," said Verity. "This election has really been talked about in schools more than any previous election I can recall."

Reader is working with Orinda City Manager Janet Keeter to organize another march for children on Jan. 21, the day after Trump's inauguration, which will coincide with women's marches in Washington D.C. and over the Golden Gate Bridge. "We decided to organize a march just for children, because big marches can feel threatening for people with small children," said Verity.

OPAA's action plans are still fluid, and they welcome the community's input and participation. OPAA's first meeting will be on Thursday, Jan. 12, from 10 a.m. to noon. The location will depend on how many people are interested in attending. People can RSVP at monikapitchford@gmail.com or <http://evite.me/xb1yStrCXe> and will be kept informed of the meeting place.

You can also go to the group's website <http://orindaprogressives.wixsite.com/opaa>.

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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1 **Orinda/Tábor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation** “The Year Of The Czechs” begins with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, speeches and music, Orinda Community Park, 10 a.m. Gather at the Linden Tree planted by the first delegation from. See article, page 10. **Moraga Art Gallery** presents Beauty Near and Far, featuring oil landscapes by gallery member Kerima Swain and bold ceramics by guest Lesley Jensen, through Jan. 7 at 522 Center St., Moraga. Visit <https://moragaartgallery.com> or call 925-376-5407.
- 3 **Orinda Library Art Gallery** presents Vegetable Art, Sculptures and Paintings through Jan. 31, with an artist reception and live music on Jan. 7 from 3 to 5 p.m. See article p. 2.
- 5 **Orinda Books**, Story Hour with Cathy Goshorn for children 2 to 4 years, with reading, songs and games, every Thursday, 276 Village Square, 10 to 11 a.m. **Senior Bridge** meets Thursdays from 12:15 to 2:30 p.m., at Orinda Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, sponsored by the City of Orinda. Call 925-254-2445 to confirm that the group is meeting that week.
- 6 **First Friday Forum** features Dr. David Peritz talking on “Social Justice and Politics in the Age of Trump,” Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall prior to the presentation. Call 925-283-8722. See article this page.
- 7 **Orinda Books** hosts Dana Dowell who will offer a yoga event for girls ages 5 to 10, based on her new book, *Yoga Girl*, 276 Village Square, 11 a.m. Call 925-254-7606.
- 12 **Free Movie Night** at Orinda Theatre features *Young Frankenstein*, the Oscar-nominated comedy starring Gene Wilder, 7 p.m. Free movies are screened every second Thursday at the theatre. Visit <http://lamorindatheatres.com>.
- 14 **Oscar Evening with Piper Laurie**, featuring two of Laurie’s Oscar-nominated movies and a Q&A after each movie, Orinda Theatre. *Carrie* will be shown at 5 p.m. and *The Hustler* at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for each movie. Visit <http://lamorindatheatres.com>.
- 17 **World Affairs Book Group** will discuss *In Europe’s Shadow: Two Cold Wars and a Thirty-Year Journey Through Romania and Beyond* by Robert D. Kaplan, Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. Discussion leader will be Rob Strong. The group meets bimonthly and welcomes new members. Call 925-254-7606.
- 19 **Orinda Theatre**, *Elect to Laugh: 2016* with Will Durst. The laughs continue on Inauguration Day with the comedian’s 90-minute, stand-up show about the presidential election cycle, 8 p.m. Tickets \$20. Visit <http://lamorindatheatres.com>. **Orinda Books** hosts an author luncheon with Elizabeth Rynecki who will discuss her book and her upcoming documentary *Chasing Portraits*, 276 Village Square, noon. Tickets \$10. RSVP to 925-254-7606.
- 21 **Rheem Theatre**, *Greatest Songs from Hollywood* features pianist Patti Liedecker playing beloved movie songs on a baby grand piano, once owned by Hollywood legend, Dom DeLuise. Enjoy *Moon River*, *My Heart Will Go On* and music from *The Pink Panther*, among others, 7 p.m. Tickets \$15. Visit <http://lamorindatheatres.com>.
- 26 **Maria’s Book Group** will discuss *What Becomes Us* by Micah Perks, Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, 11 a.m. The group meets monthly and welcomes new members. Attendees are asked to call ahead to 925-254-7606.
- 27 **The International Film Showcase** presents the Belgian black comedy *A Brand New Testament*, Jan. 27 - Feb. 2. Visit www.lamorindatheatres.com in early January for dates and times.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. Note the library will be closed Jan. 1 and 2 for New Years and Jan. 16 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. For more information, call 925-254-2184 or visit <http://ccclib.org>.

- 6 **Teen Coloring Club**. Join Orinda Library Teen Advisory Group (TAG) to de-stress, relax and have fun. The library provides age-appropriate coloring books and colored pencils; teens provide inspiration and creativity. Free and open to all teens, 4 to 5 p.m. Also Jan. 13, 20 and 27.
- 10 **Toddler Lapsit**. Stories and songs for 1-to 3-year-olds and their caregivers, Gallery Room, 10 and 10:30 a.m. No registration required, but attendance limited to once a week. Also Jan. 11, 17, 18, 24, 25 and 31.
- 12 **English as a Second Language Conversation Circle**. Volunteer teachers lead informal group discussions, 1 to 2:30 p.m. Preregistration not required. Also Jan. 19 and 26.
- 17 **Peek-a-Boo Time**. Rhymes and rhythms for infants up to 16 months (pre-walkers) and their caregivers only, 11:30 a.m. to noon. Also Jan. 24.
- 20 **Mystery Book Club**. Meets every third Friday to discuss the latest mystery of the month (check at the library to find out this month’s title), Study Room A, 3 to 4:30 p.m. Adult program.
- 21 **Lunar New Year Celebration**. Includes a lion dance by the Concord Kung Fu Academy, Garden Room, 3 p.m.
- 24 **eReader Workshop**. Seniors and adults can learn to set up their device and find, download and read eBooks from the library’s large collection. Workshop requires attendees to have a working knowledge of their device. Register online or at the library beginning Jan. 3.
- 26 **Contra Costa Tale Spinners**. Storytelling for adults with a featured storyteller, Gallery Room, 7 to 9 p.m.

CLUB MEETINGS

- Diablo Star Chapter #214**, Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m. Orinda Masonic Center, Karen Seaborn, 925-689-0995.
- Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe**. Third Monday, 7:30 p.m., Gallery Room, Orinda Library, www.moragaadobe.org.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks**. Fourth Wednesday, 8:30 a.m., May Room, Orinda Library, 925-253-1997.
- Guided Meditation**. Wednesdays, 9 a.m., St. Mark’s United Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way, Orinda, focuses on health, harmony and wholeness, 925-254-5965
- Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition**. Third Wednesday, 10 to 11:30 a.m., Orinda City Hall Sarge Littlehale Room, 925-687-8844, ext. 227.
- Lamorinda Meditation**. Every Monday and Thursday, 10:30 a.m., Career Wisdom Institute, 1036 Country Club Drive, Moraga, Suite 100. Meditate in silence for 30 minutes, \$5 donation.

Friday Forum Looks at Justice and Politics in Age of Trump

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

“Social Justice and Politics in the Age of Trump” is the topic of Dr. David Peritz’s lecture at the First Friday Forum (FFF) on Jan. 6 at 1:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette.

“We are witness to one of the more stunning upsets in American political history,” said Peritz. “What does Donald Trump’s victory (and Hillary Clinton’s defeat) reveal about the state of American politics and society?”

Peritz will examine some of the most important dynamics that produced the result, and also look at the last 18 months from an historical, philosophical and sociological perspective.

“Ultimately, I will ask whether the 2016 presidential campaign should be viewed as an anomaly or the consequences of deeper shifts having to do with the integration of America into an increasingly global and financialized economy, the rapid transformation of the media environment and ... changes in the culture and demographics of American society,” said Peritz.

Peritz received a B.A. from Occidental College and holds a Ph.D. from Oxford University. He teaches in the Politics Department at Sarah Lawrence College in New York. He is also a visiting professor



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. David Peritz will be the speaker at January’s First Friday Forum.

at Dartmouth College and has taught at UC Berkeley, Harvard and Cornell. He is now on sabbatical, living in Berkeley.

FFF co-chair Darlene James invites the community to come for refreshments in Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m., followed by Peritz’ presentation.

For information, call 925-283-8722.

◆ CZECH from page 10

St. Wenceslas Czech Festival on Sept. 29, 30 and Oct. 1, 2017. The festival includes Czech food, music and dancing. A concert

in the Library Auditorium on Oct. 1 will feature Czech composers.

For more information on these upcoming events, go to www.orindaczechfestival.com or www.facebook.com/orindatabor.

Contact Gaby Mozee at gemozee@gmail.com.

Lamorinda Nature Walk and Bird Watching for seniors. Wednesdays, 9 to 11 a.m., free. Call 925-254-2445 for weekly meeting place.

Lamorinda Sirs for retired men. Second Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga, Pete Giers, 925-254-4667.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary. Every Friday, 7 a.m., Lafayette Park Hotel, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, www.lamorindasunrise.com or 925-283-8288.

Lamorinda Toastmasters. Every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Temple Isaiah, 945 Risa Road, Lafayette, <http://lamorinda.toastmastersclubs.org>.

Montelindo Garden Club. Third Friday, 9 a.m., September through May, St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephen’s Drive, www.montelindogarden.com. January’s topic is “Repurposing for an Artistic Garden,” with Stout and James Pettigrew, owners of Organic Mechanics of San Francisco, who design one-of-a-kind garden landscapes with sustainability and recycling in mind.

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 Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, 925-254-2222.

Orinda Association. Second Monday, 7 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. Call 925-254-1353 for times and location of meetings.

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>.

CITY/FIRE/SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

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 meeting location will be posted on the agenda.

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

BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 16

would lead us to have our own business, so in 2006 we ventured out to open our own Ameriprise franchise,” says Michelle.

A Saint Mary’s College graduate, Scott is a chartered retirement planning counselor. With this certification, he is equipped to help clients plan pre- and post-retirement needs. Scott’s area of focus includes investments, wealth preservation strategies, domestic partner planning, estate-planning strategies, retirement income strategies, tax planning and education planning.

As a certified financial planner, Michelle focuses on executive compensation and benefit strategies, social security retirement benefits, tax and estate planning, as well as retirement income strategies. She is a graduate of the U.C. Berkeley. “Our association with Ameriprise Financial provides the support of a strong and stable company. Our practice combines 30 years of financial advisory and wealth management experience, providing clients with exceptional service,” says Michelle. “We have worked with many of our clients for over 10 years and as our practice has grown, we have become 100-percent referral-based. We have found our clients are our best advocates.”

Pollak and Pollak Wealth Management maintains a staff of five to serve clients’ needs. In addition to Scott and Michelle, Nancy Tran serves as the firm’s financial paraplanner, Jennifer Wenker is a financial planning assistant, Haley Armstrong, client service coordinator and Tara Knight



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Orinda Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Pollak and Pollak’s new Orinda office. (L-R) front row: **Haley Armstrong, Jennifer Wenker, Scott Pollak, Michelle Pollak, Nancy Tran** and **Mary-Jane Nicolas-Carrion**. Back row: Maintenance Supervisor **Steve Ehrhardt**, Parks and Rec Director **Todd Trimble**, then Mayor **Victoria Smith**, Orinda Chamber of Commerce president **Roy Hodgkinson**, OA Board Member **Tom Romaneck**, (partially hidden) City Councilmember **Inga Miller** and Chamber Executive Director **Sophie Braccini**.

serves as administrative assistant. “I enjoy working with young, bright women. When I was growing up, I was mentored by two intelligent, strong women, and I feel this is an important way for me to give back to my community,” says Michelle. In addition, the firm has internship opportunities from time to time.

Orinda residents since 2005, Scott and Michelle enjoy having eliminated the commute into San Francisco, which translates into some free time during the week to practice meditation and yoga. It also means their English bulldog, Chauncy, can hang out in the office on occasion. “Our favorite hobby is stand-up paddling in the Hawaiian

Islands, and we enjoy traveling immensely.”

For more information about Pollak and Pollak Wealth Management or to schedule a complimentary initial meeting, call 925-905-9890.



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◆ COACH from page 9

Development Pipeline that still continues to this day to be the foundation of the USAWP Women’s National Team. Baker intends to apply these concepts to Lamorinda Water Polo Club in addition to being the leaders of new and innovative approaches to developing youth water polo.

“The Bay Area has always been a source of tremendous athletic and coaching talent,” said Baker. “After many years of coaching Olympians and college student-athletes, I am very excited turn my attention to developing youth water polo in this area and to apply at this level athlete development principles and systems that have so successfully served my career at UCLA and USA Water Polo. I am excited to focus on bringing the Lamorinda Water Polo Club to a whole new level,” Baker added.

The Lamorinda Water Polo Club is a year-around USA Water Polo club program, with over 200+ players from all over Alameda and Contra Costa counties. The program is open to males and females, at

all levels of play, who want to learn about the sport of water polo and develop and enhance their skills. www.lamorindawaterpolo.org.

Breast Cancer Update

February 1, 2017
6:30-8:30pm

Cancer Support Community
3276 McNutt Avenue, Walnut Creek

The San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium is the largest annual breast cancer conference in the world.

Dr. Tiffany Svahn, breast cancer specialist and Orinda resident, will give an overview of new research presented at this symposium.

Highlights of the conference will include exciting new data from the latest clinical trials and FDA approved treatments.

Refreshments will be served. Space is limited; register by calling 925-677-5041 x272.

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Edelweiss Tailoring and Cleaners

Kilja Kim established this friendly operation at 72 Moraga Way 27 years ago and has been efficiently serving the Orinda community ever since. Walking into her shop is like walking into a mini-museum, with an array of antique sewing machines and depictions of her favorite Impressionist paintings adorning the walls.

Edelweiss Tailoring and Cleaners pro-



VALERIE HOTZ

Edelweiss owner **Kilja Kim**.

vides dry cleaning and laundry services as well as alterations. Repairs can be made whenever feasible to do so. Both Kim and

her assistant handle all alterations and repairs. "I have a party tomorrow and Kilja is gracious to repair my dress while I wait. This is fabulous," says Oakland resident Sharon Berry.

The usual turnaround time for alterations is one week, but if there is a special need, as there was in Berry's case, Kim will work with customers. Dry cleaning and laundered shirts take five days, and if needed sooner can be done in three days.

With strains of classical music playing in the background, a momentary respite from the frenetic pace awaits when retrieving your dry-cleaning order. This time of year a collection of poinsettias and orchids adorn the front windows, nestled among antique irons and sewing machines from bygone eras that Kim has collected during her travels. "I got the Stebilo machine in Ireland. Everywhere I travel I get one iron to add to the collection," says Kim.

Kim grew up helping her mother with her sewing and recalls as early as age five pulling fabric through the machine as her mother sewed. Passionate about history, she went on to major in European history at the University of Korea and was headed to Paris to study fashion design when she stopped off to visit her sister in Geneva. She ended up staying nine months. "My brother insisted I should not go to Paris alone as a young woman and instead I came to the United States," explains Kim. Her husband, Soon, is a retired engineer. The couple has two adult children, Peggy and Steve, and

four grandchildren.

"I love my customers, they are such wonderful customers. I am grateful for their patronage over the many years. We chat about books and news, about everything," says Kim. Managing a small family business does not leave much free time to pursue hobbies and, when time allows, Kim enjoys gardening. With their daughter and son-in-law living abroad, Kilja and Soon enjoy traveling to Ireland periodically to spend time with their grandchildren and take in the art museums as well.

Edelweiss Tailoring and Cleaners is open Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon. They are closed on Sunday. For more information, call 925-253-0337.



VALERIE HOTZ

Frank Shen of Niwa Restaurant in Orinda Village.

NIWA Restaurant

This cozy sushi and Mandarin Chinese cuisine restaurant is owned by Orindan Frank Shen, who also serves as sushi chef. Located opposite Safeway at One Camino Sobrante, Shen has been making delicious sushi dishes at this location for 22 years and has established a loyal following.

Children and adults alike enjoy the colorful salt-water coral reef aquarium, prominently displaying live coral (the resident eel prefers to remain in hiding). With nine tables and a sushi bar that seats 11, this restaurant is an old Orinda favorite. Regulars have their own personalized

wooden square masu Saki cups that remain on a shelf behind the sushi bar. "The flavor of the Saki is exquisitely enhanced by the aroma of the wooden masu cup. It must be carefully washed, using no soap, and we maintain them here for our customers," says Shen.

A full sushi menu includes 21 selections of nigiri sushi, 30 offerings of roll sushi and 15 choices of sashimi, with all kinds of fish being offered here. Shen prepares all sushi and two chefs in the kitchen prepare the Mandarin Chinese dishes as well as tempura, teriyaki chicken, miso soup, and edamame, among others. "Our Chinese soups – wonton soup, egg flower, and hot and sour soup – are special because we use fresh chicken stock, which adds more flavor, making the soup more tasty," says Shen.

You do not want to miss the customer specials noted behind the sushi bar. These dishes have been created by customers and usually bear their names such as Jason's Special Hand Roll, Sharon's Special, Guy's Roll and M.D.'s Roll among them. "Customers especially like yellowtail. It is a white fish, very tender and sweet people say. Salmon and tuna are very popular dishes as well," says Shen.

Lunch is served Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. NIWA is open for dinner Monday to Thursday, 4:30 to 9:30 p.m., Friday, 4:30 to 10 p.m., and Saturday, 11:45 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Shen and his wife Ann are longtime Orinda residents. The couple has two daughters. While running a restaurant is typically a 24/7 operation, in his free time Shen enjoys skiing in the winter and playing tennis throughout the year.

For more information about NIWA Restaurant or to place a take-out order, telephone 925-254-1606.

Pollak and Pollak Wealth Management

The husband-and-wife team of Michelle and Scott Pollak relocated their wealth advisory practice from San Francisco to Orinda six months ago and could not be more delighted with their decision. Their new office is situated in the Vintage House building at 25 Orinda Way, Suite 205, across the street from the Orinda Community Center.

Both Michelle and Scott began their careers at Ameriprise Financial as employees. "We always knew our entrepreneurial spirit

[SEE BUZZ page 15]

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