



THE ORINDA NEWS

Orinda's #1 News Source!

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Comedy Night Features Star from *Good Times*

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

The Orinda Chamber of Commerce's Sixth Annual Comedy Night will be "Dyn-o-mite" if Jimmie "JJ" Walker has anything to say about it. And, he does!

The star of television's popular urban comedy, *Good Times*, headlines the Mar. 6 show at the Orinda Theatre. Walker's wisecracking character on *Good Times* was known for the catchphrase "Dyn-o-mite." Doors open at 7 p.m. with the show starting at 8 p.m.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jimmie "JJ" Walker will headline at the Chamber's Comedy Night on Mar. 6.

"I am so excited about this year's show," says Chamber President Sylvia Jorgensen. "We're very fortunate to have JJ as our headliner along with Jeff Applebaum and our Master of Ceremonies Anthony Hill."

Wine and beer plus popcorn and other theater refreshments will be available starting at 7 p.m. "While everyone is waiting for the show to begin, they can enjoy the slide show on the big screen, which will include photos from last year's comedy show and 'Sylvia's Corny Jokes,'" says Jorgensen. "I started the pre-show jokes last year and had lots of requests to do it again."

[SEE COMEDY page 8]

IN THIS ISSUE

News	
Housing Element	5
MOFD	5
Police	5
School Funding	7
Veteran Awards	19
Waste Authority	7
Around Town	
Local Groups	6, 10, 13, 14, 15
Performing/Visual Arts	2
Schools/Students	10, 16, 17, 20
Senior Services	2
Accidental Philanthropist	19
Business Buzz	24
Calendar	21
Car Time	9
Classified	20
Editorial	4
Everyday Changes	22
Orinda Association	3, 11-13
Roving Reporter	15
Something to Howl About	14
The Reel Less Traveled	16

Police Chief Nagel Honors Outstanding Officers



JILL GELSTER

Front row (L-R) Officer of the Year **Jay Melen**, Mayor **Steve Glazer**, Police Chief **Mark Nagel**, Sergeant **Mike Berry** and Reserve Officer of the Year **Bryan Walley**. Shown here with other members of the Orinda Police Department and Orinda City Council.

By FRAN ENDICOTT MILLER
Staff Writer

Police Officer Jay Melen has been selected by Orinda Police Department (OPD) Chief Mark Nagel and first line supervising Sergeants as OPD's Officer of the Year. Reserve Officer Bryan Walley was selected as Reserve Officer of the Year. Chief Nagel made the presentation to both officers at a February Orinda City Council meeting attended by the honorees' family, friends and fellow police officers.

Officer Melen was recognized for his outstanding level of dedication to OPD and Orinda citizens. "Officer Melen is

highly proficient in his duties as a police officer," said Nagel. "He has demonstrated on a regular basis his ability to investigate criminal cases thoroughly and conduct follow-up when necessary." Nagel cited Melen's successful August 2014 investigation and subsequent arrest of auto burglars at the California Shakespeare Theater. "Officer Melen's thorough investigation and self-initiative resulted in returning stolen property to the rightful owners and the arrest of five Alameda County residents who were targeting this area," said Nagel, adding that Melen has made numerous arrests for DUIs, drugs, warrants and other crimes. "However, his arrests stats are not what define Officer

Melen's excellent work," said Nagel. "It's his work ethic, his dedication to being part [SEE OFFICERS page 8]

Mayor Enters Race for State Senate



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Governor **Jerry Brown** (L) walks with Orinda Mayor **Steve Glazer**.

By FRAN ENDICOTT MILLER
Staff Writer

The Orinda community provided overwhelming support for Mayor Steve Glazer's State Assembly bid last year, and he hopes for the same endorsement on Mar. 17 as a Democratic candidate in the race to replace Mark DeSaulnier's seat in the State Senate. "My socially progressive and fiscally conservative views are very compatible with my hometown citizens," says Glazer. "I hope they will participate in the Mar. 17 election."

Glazer - a self-described independent-minded, fiscally conservative bipartisan problem solver - will run for the East Bay's 7th State Senate District seat against Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla, D-Concord, former Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan, D-Alamo, and Democrat Terry Kremin. The lone Republican in the race, Michaela [SEE RACE page 8]

Redesigned Orinda Library Space for Teens



DAVID DIERKS

The **Teen Advisory Council** held their last meeting in the newly completed teen area of the Orinda Library. (L-R) **Emma Rust, Danny Campbell, Jason Rudiant, Yassamin Emadi, Jordan Hardwick, Leila Minowada, Lara Sanli** and **Jackie Decareau**. Seated on the floor is **Melanie McCallum** - Teen Services Librarian.

By BETH GIRSHMAN
Contributing Writer

In 2014, newly hired library staff member **Melanie McCallum**, teen services librarian, and **Adriana Nino**, library assistant, noticed that adults had taken over the library space originally designated as the

Young Adult (YA) area. With help from a subcommittee of Friends of the Orinda Library, they investigated other area library [SEE TEENS page 18]

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Gallery: 12th Annual High School Visual Arts Competition

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

The Orinda Arts Council (OAC) is proud to showcase and acknowledge 2D, 3D, photography, and digital design work by high school students who live in or attend school in Orinda, Lafayette, Moraga, or the Acalanes Union High School District, including Las Lomas High School. The Visual Arts Competition (VAC) features \$3,000 in cash awards, merit citations and a month long public exhibit of entries through Mar. 27. The public is invited to attend the award ceremony on Mar. 5 from 4 to 6 p.m. where light refreshments will be served. Four categories of work are exhibited: 2D – paintings, drawings, printmaking, mixed media and collage; 3D – sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, construction; photography – black and white, color, film, digital and digital designs – work produced solely on a computer platform which may contain photo images. This is the first year digital design has its own category.

Judges will award cash prizes in each category as follows: First Place \$300; Second Place \$200; Third Place \$100; Honorable Mention \$25; Best in Show \$300

and the Audience Choice Award (gift certificate).

Judging is done by professional artists whose criteria are creativity and originality; content; and degree of expertise in the chosen medium. Approximately 200 entries are expected from high school students in public, private and home high schools. Lamorinda art teachers who assisted high school students in preparing their entries have earned our heartfelt gratitude. Come to the reception and meet the teachers, students, their families and friends.

The OAC's focus for 60 years has been on stimulating, supporting and advocating for the arts in the schools and community. See orindaartscouncil.org for more information.

Visit the gallery 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 p.m. to 5 p.m. Call 925-254-2814 for more information.

Visual Arts Competition

March 1 - 27
Orinda Library Gallery
Reception - March 5 at 4 p.m.

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The Secret Word for March is . . .

Continuing with its popular charms, Echo Grove features the Orinda Chamber of Commerce's upcoming Comedy Night for both February and March. The charm commemorates the Mar. 6 Comedy Night to be held at the Orinda Theatre. To receive a free charm, simply stop by Echo Grove, #112 in Theatre Square and say the secret word – "Dyn-o-mite."



Lamorinda Village – A Virtual Village with Local Roots

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Lamorinda is about to welcome everyone involved in the April 6 launch of Lamorinda Village, which has been in the works since 2012. Lamorinda Village (LV) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization made up of residents 55 years of age or older from Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. Its mission is to provide a one-stop resource for people to access services and programs which will empower them to remain independent in their homes and communities as they grow older. Think of LV as a "concierge service" for seniors with one-stop shopping by telephone or on the LV website. LV offers its members potential solutions to many needs, including: transportation, computer help, meal preparation, prescreened handyman and professional repair services, health and older adult services, non-medical home care, medical equipment, physical therapy, exercise activities, social activities, continuing education, personal, legal and financial services, house and pet sitters and travel opportunities.

A member of the national Village to Village Network (VtV Network), LV has lots of resources on which to draw. According to the VtV Network website, there are 150 villages operating across the country in Australia and the Netherlands, with over 120 more villages in development. See www.vtvnetwork.org for more information.

According to Ruth McCahan, LV president, "When I heard about Beacon Hill Village [the first one of its kind] I thought, here's a way we can do this, help older people stay independent in their homes and connected to their communities." McCahan began exploring the concept in 2012 with eight other Lamorinda seniors by speaking to the Avenidas Village in Palo Alto. "They were the first California village and were



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

At a recent Orinda Rotary Club event, **Jim Carlson** made a presentation about Lamorinda Village (LV). Pictured (L to R) are **Ruth McCahan**, LV president, **Jim Carlson** of the Orinda Rotary and **Andy Amstutz**, LV outreach chair and board member.

very helpful," says McCahan. Soon the eight-member task force grew to 14. They surveyed over 500 residents of Lamorinda over the age of 65, which gave them a good picture of what seniors wanted.

Initially, the Lafayette Community Foundation acted as fiscal sponsor for the group so that they could accept tax-free contributions. The law firm of Bowles and Verna in Walnut Creek provided pro-bono legal work including incorporation and obtaining nonprofit status. The Joseph and Vera Long Foundation awarded them a \$43,250 grant. The Lamorinda Rotary Clubs have also been invaluable in assisting LV with referrals and more. Their target membership number to launch is 100; to operate in the black their target is 200 members. With a task force of 57, which includes people both in and out of the organization, they anticipate meeting their goals. Right now they are looking for their first office space.

[SEE VILLAGE page 19]

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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
Orinda Association Board Message

Bill Waterman



OA Membership

For those of you not yet OA members, the OA board cordially invites you to join your neighbors in supporting our efforts to enrich our community. Since 1946, the OA has been dedicated to maintaining and improving the quality of life in Orinda, promoting awareness and dialogue among Orinda residents on issues of importance to the community, and mobilizing volunteer efforts to enhance the beauty, character and security of Orinda. Here's what your membership directly supports:

Orinda's Fourth of July Parade and celebration (for 32 years);

Volunteer Center – including our office support staff and website;

The Orinda News – published monthly and mailed to all Orindans;

Seniors Around Town (SAT) volunteer ride program for seniors; and

Public forums every year.

Please go to the OA's website (www.orindaassociation.org) and click on "Join Us" to become a member of the OA. You'll be glad to know your membership has helped fund all of these programs.

OA Volunteer Fair

On Saturday April 18, from 9 a.m. to noon, the OA will help support the "Orinda Action Day" by sponsoring the first annual "Volunteer Fair" in the Library Plaza. Come by that morning to talk with many Orinda service groups, who will have tables with information and volunteers present to answer your questions. You can get a good sense of what these groups are doing – and what you might do to help out in a way that fits your interests and schedule. Find out why many of your neighbors get so much enjoyment out of serving the community – just drop on by for a visit. See you then!

Orinda Association's Awards Dinner



SALLY HOGARTY

Dick Burkhalter became the 2014 Volunteer of the Year at a gala dinner held on February 9 at the Orinda Country Club. Burkhalter is shown here with his wife Betty.



SALLY HOGARTY

The Orinda Intermediate School's "Other's First" program received the 2014 William Penn Mott, Jr. award. Mayor Steve Glazer (L) presented the three OIS students with the largest number of volunteer hours with a proclamation from the City of Orinda. (L-R) Stephanie Friese, Ava Killbourn and Veronka Huish.

Comedy Night Volunteers Needed

Have a blast working with your fellow volunteers at the 2015 Comedy Night, Mar. 6. Choose time slots between 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. Volunteers are needed to serve at the bar, take tickets, help set up or take down or work at the will-call desk.

Volunteers should wear a black shirt and bring a flashlight. You will get to see at least part of the show and be acknowledged in the program and on the big screen.

For more information, contact Candy Kattenburg at info@orindachamber.org or call 925-254-3909 as soon as possible.



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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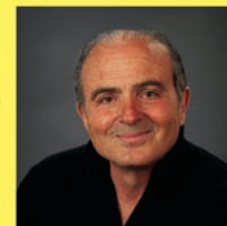
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Become a member today! A senior membership is only \$40, family membership is \$50. Mail your check to the Orinda Association at P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563 or go online to www.orindaassociation.org and join online.

The OA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and your membership donation is tax deductible to the extent of the law.

THANKS for your support!

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Corrections . . .

In last month's issue of *The Orinda News*, the Roving Reporter feature on page 11 inadvertently misspelled two names in one of the photo captions. The correct names are **Tom Taeb** (L) and **Carl Meggers**. We apologize for any confusion.



CHARLES JARRETT

Letters to the Editor

Crushing the Consent of the Governed

This City Council is demonstrating the most incompetent decision-making process since Orinda was incorporated as a city. The council has been extremely effective in using their authority to impose their political priorities, irrespective of citizens' objections.

When Eve Phillips ran for City Council on a platform opposed to the direction being taken by City Council incumbents, Ms. Phillips won the most votes. Nevertheless, at the January 20 City Council meeting, she found the other sitting councilmembers entrenched in their determination to impose their preferred march to regional rule vs. local control.

Ms. Phillips moved to have a citywide confidence vote on the substantive terms of the proposed 5th Cycle Housing Element. This motion had two objectives: prove the council's oft-stated concern for Orindans' interests and afford the council the opportunity to truly capture citizen sentiment on the next cycle of the housing element commitments. Ms. Phillips's motion was rejected by other councilmembers, who defended their past receptivity to public input, incorrectly characterized her motion as a vote to keep or abolish a housing element, and refused to second her motion.

The justification for Ms. Phillips's motion is based on what many citizens find objectionable about two recent housing developments, Monteverde Senior Housing and Pulte Homes. If major land-use changes are to be implemented in contravention of Orinda's General Plan, citizens should have more than an opportunity to express their opposition. They should have the option to vote on issues such as re-zoning and increasing the 35' height limit.

What justifications did the councilmembers offer in opposition to the motion to vote? Timing apparently is viewed an obstacle since the May deadline looms if the council wants to gain certification of its housing element for an eight vs. four-year span. In short, better to have a bad eight-year plan than a good citizen approved four-year plan. Minor costs for a ballot vote seem to stymie the idea along with the effort to go through regulatory requirements that somehow don't seem to bother councilmembers for other issues. The unstated objection is fear; fear that Orindans might not be so ready to rally around a housing element that thwarts the General Plan and places Orinda "on sale" to any developer eager to exploit the honey-pot.

Clearly, Orindans can no longer assume our city will be governed for the "good of the city" by the "consent of the governed."

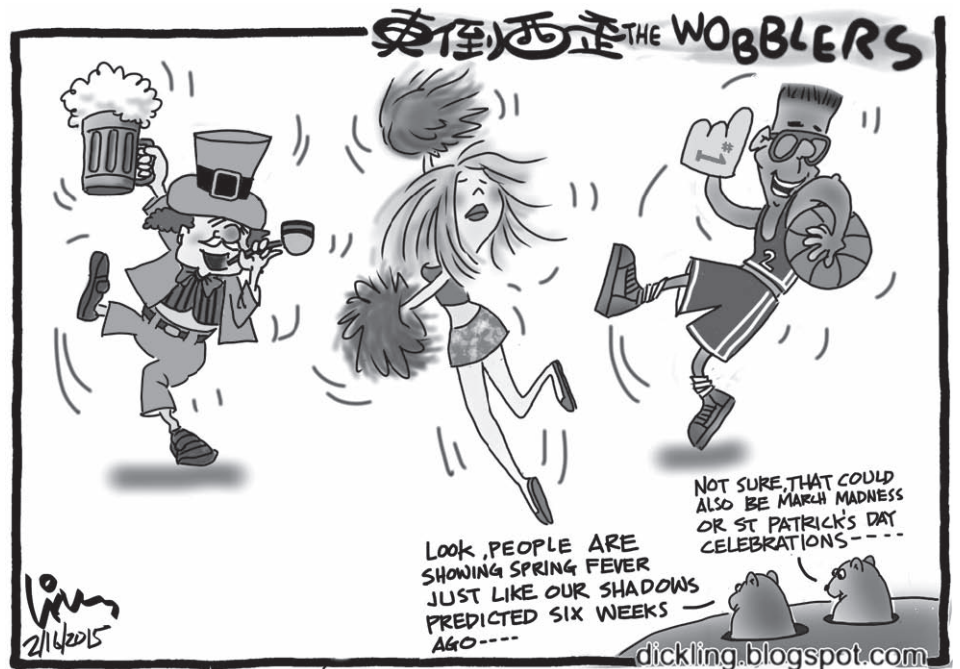
— Sandra Wooten

Citizens Want Right to Vote

At the Jan 20, 2015 City Council meeting, three of the four attending Council members voted down a motion by Council member Eve Phillips to allow Orinda citizens a vote on its Housing Element commitments. The vast majority of citizens in attendance spoke in favor of the right to vote. While the vote technically was in regard to the Housing Element of the General Plan, the broader issue is about Orinda residents having a real say about what kind of a city Orinda will be in the future. Urging a citizen vote on key issues like building heights and changes to the General Plan protects citizens from bad, irreversible land-use decisions that will change the characteristic features of the city forever.

The present Housing Element process is a patently disingenuous exercise and has come under harsh criticism from many Orindans. It's a canned process, and it works something like this. It starts out with a consulting firm's boilerplate 100-plus page document. The magnitude and questionable correlations between stated goals and the policies advanced in such documents demand serious public review and approval. Nonetheless what follows is a pretend public-input process, void of public exchange with the citizens who attempt to participate. Expressed questions fail to find council feedback and proposed edits never see incorporation into Housing Element final documents. As the 4th cycle Housing Element clearly demonstrated, the substantive net of public input is nil. An honest process would start with an interactive exchange with a citizen group, full consideration of suggested proposals, drafting, and public disclosure of all subsequent city negotiations with the Housing and Community Development Department (HCD).

The flawed process is evidenced in HCD's Dec. 19, 2013 approval letter of Orinda's 4th Housing Element. In it, HCD assistant deputy director states to Orinda's City Manager, "The Department finds the adopted housing element in compliance with State ... law. The Department's review found the adopted element to be substantially the same as the revised draft reviewed on June 12, 2013 ..." In other words, during the six-month period wherein hundreds of Orinda citizens contrib-



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	Page		Page
Automotive		Orinda Taxi	15
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Medicine Shoppe	5	Village Pizza	15
Dr. Kristin Walker	11	Zamboni's Pizza	3
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Orinda Chamber of Commerce	12	Echo Grove	2
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Theatre View Veterinary Clinic	14	Senior Living	
Professional Services		Aria	23
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uted literally thousands of hours of analysis of General Plan policies, legal requirements, environmental impacts, and subsequent recommendations, the council's incorporation of that input was essentially nothing.

Sadly, we don't have a functioning, democratic process, and this is why Orinda residents requested, need and should be afforded the right to vote.

— Chris Kniel

A Fearful City Council

A fearful and elitist Orinda City Council – with the exception of new Councilmember Eve Phillips – has blocked an opportunity to let Orindans vote on a matter of great civic importance.

On January 20, 2015, three members of the City Council refused to second a motion by

[SEE LETTERS page 9]

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Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, fax them to 254-8312, or email to news@orindaassociation.org. **Letters to Editor** for the April issue are due **March 8, 2015**.

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

FUNDRAISERS

Old Yellow House Goes “Green”

By CHARLIE JARRETT
Staff Writer

James Phillip Wright, owner of the 1890's Yellow House on Moraga Road, met with Scott Saftler (Contra Costa County Historical Society), Terry Murphy, Professor Reginald H. Barrett and Lucy Hupp Williams (Orinda Historical Society) in January to collaborate on how to showcase the completely refurbished house and give local residents the opportunity to learn about the historical property.

The result is a lecture and slide show at the Orinda Theatre on Mar. 19 at 7 p.m. that will explore the miraculous resurrection of the Yellow House, the oldest structure in the United States to be converted into a state-of-the-art “Net Zero” residence, and a new model of energy efficiency for historically significant homes.

The house was built by an investor of the California-Nevada Railroad, Captain Alexander Jenkins, a retired sea captain. Wright stripped the building down to its basic framework, peeling away the old finishes to the interior framing. His team

carefully marked each piece of the exterior and interior molding. Once the state-of-the-art insulation materials, natural energy transference air returns and heat recovery ventilation systems were installed, the original frame and molding was reapplied. Wright also replaced the fading pink exterior paint with the same pigment of yellow used in the 1890 original.

While Wright intends to make the Yellow House his home, it will also be an educational tool. He hopes to open the house to schoolchildren and parents to show how a home can harness the natural geo-solar energy of the earth. For instance, Wright has transformed the basement and its 27-foot-deep, man-made subterranean well into a thermal heat sink and storage unit to enhance the natural cooling system for the house and future guest house. An added bonus for those touring the house is the cache of pre- and post-World War II newspapers Wright found under the interior flooring that are now showcased in the hallway. Many of these pages document a time when the world was trying to understand the cataclysmic events in Germany and

◆ WYRO from page 5

community,” added Wyro. “If you live here, you have to do this. It’s part of being part of Orinda. I feel truly blessed to have been involved and will continue to be involved in some form or another because it’s part of living in this community. I gain the most satisfaction from the knowledge that as a result of forming this district lives have been saved. It only took one to make the whole thing worthwhile and we’ve done much more than that.” Wyro will continue to work with the district as a volunteer on

one final project. “We need to see station 46 through. We have some work yet to do for that. I plan on continuing on that effort,” said Wyro.

Wyro’s seat on the board is now filled by Brad Barber, whose current term ends in November, 2018. Barber has served on Orinda’s Gateway Task-force and co-chaired the Measure J bond issue campaign to repair Orinda’s roads. “I am very comfortable with Brad and I think he is going to be a very good director,” said Wyro.

For more information, visit www.mofd.org.



CHARLIE JARRETT

Tours of James Wright’s restored Yellow House on Moraga Road will benefit the historical societies of Orinda and Contra Costa County.

Europe before and after the war.

Admission to lecture and slide show is \$12. Tickets can be purchased from historical society volunteers at the theatre before the event. Audience members can also sign up for a shuttle to the Yellow House and

guided tour on Saturday, Mar. 21 (and Mar. 22 depending on demand). All profits will go to the historical societies of Orinda and Contra Costa County. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/NetZeroHomes or call 925-945-1111.

Epicurean Experience Raises Money for Moraga Adobe

By CHARLIE JARRETT
Staff Writer

The Epicurean Exchange and Friends of Joaquin Moraga Adobe (FJMA) will present an afternoon of cooking and celebrating Early California Rancho cuisine to raise money for the ongoing restoration of this nugget of Orinda/Moraga history. The event will be on Sunday, Mar. 22, from 2 to 6 p.m. at Epicurean Exchange in Orinda and is limited to 12-16 people.

Join Orinda resident, Chef Charles Vollmar of the Epicurean Exchange, as he guides guests through a hands-on cooking experience preparing authentic dishes from the Early California Rancho period. Vollmar will use authentic ingredients and classic cooking techniques as participants work together to prepare – and then enjoy – a festive meal typical of 1840’s California. The menu will include red chili, pork and cactus stew; tamale pie; chile-relleno with cheese; wild mustard greens with red pepper and garlic; handmade corn tortillas; and

orange-polenta-almond cake with a fig-port compote. The multi-course buffet will be prepared and paired with period varietal wines and classic beverages.

All proceeds from the event benefit the Moraga Adobe restoration. “FJMA is a non-profit started in 2009,” said board member Tanya DeGroot. “Our plan is to transform this state Historic Landmark and National Register property into a History and Learning Center dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the early settling of the East Bay region with a focus on the Rancho period – between the Mission period and the Gold Rush. Our group is currently raising funds towards the purchase and restoration of the Adobe.”

For reservations, visit www.moragaadobe.org and click on “Buy Tickets.” Tickets are \$95 per person. Epicurean Exchange is located at 2 Vallecito Lane, Orinda. For information contact Charles Vollmer at 925-368-4181, visit www.EpicureanExchange.com, or email Charlie@EpicureanExchange.com.

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WASTE AUTHORITY / SCHOOL DISTRICT

Orindans Get New Color-Coded Waste Carts

By DAVID DIERKS
Assistant Editor

Starting in April, Orinda residents will be receiving new landfill, recycling and green waste carts from Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA). “We’ll be sending out mailers to residents to notify them a week before we pick up their carts,” said CCCSWA Executive Director Ken Etherington. The new cart colors



DAVID DIERKS

New waste containers start appearing in April with black the new color for the garbage can.

will now match the standardized colors of black for landfill, blue for recycling and green for organic waste.

The new carts will be delivered the day before the regular waste pick-up is scheduled. “For example, if you have a Wednesday collection, we’ll be there Tuesday with the new carts and Wednesday we’ll pick up your old ones after they’ve been emptied by the trucks,” said Etherington. “The only exception to that scenario is if you have a Monday collection day in which case we’ll deliver your new carts on Friday so you will have them through the weekend.”

Another big change to the carts is the addition of molded-in graphics on the top and hot-stamped labels on the sides. “You constantly have instructions on what container takes what,” said Etherington. “When we talked to customers about what they wanted and how they could recycle more, the number one response was ‘we always get confused with which bin is what and what can go where.’ These carts have graph-

[SEE Containers page 18]

State Funding Formula Results in \$2.3 Million Deficit for AUHSD

By BILL O'BRIAN
Staff Writer

Like life itself, most budgets have good news and bad news. The good news about California’s education budget is that funding has increased 39 percent over the last four years. The bad news is that state revenue for the Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD) has increased only 18 percent in the same time period. The Local Control Funding Formula law (LCFF), which reorganized how schools are funded, was proposed by Governor Brown and is the reason for the varying funding levels.

The state projects that General Fund tax revenues for 2014-2015 will be more than \$2 billion above the projections in last June’s state budget. The state also projects that the General Fund’s three major tax streams will increase by more than \$5.6 billion in 2015-2016 – more than \$1 billion above last June’s estimates. These higher revenue projections result in a multibillion-dollar influx of new funds for schools and community colleges under the Proposition 98 minimum funding guarantee. The state’s Legislative Analyst Office Executive Sum-

mary states, “The Governor’s priorities are generally prudent ones. In the near term, the Governor’s reluctance to propose significant new program commitments outside of Proposition 98 could help avoid a return to the boom and bust budgeting of the past.”

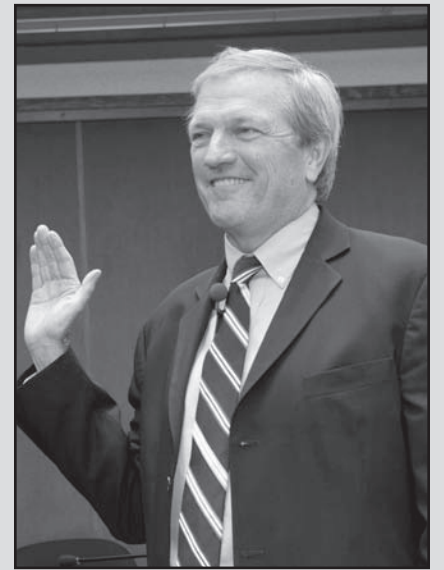
Recent strong economic data and a surge in state income tax collections in December account for the increase in state revenue. The Analyst’s office suggests that the increase in state revenues, bolstered by the soaring stock market last year, may not continue for long. The Governor argues the budget is still vulnerable to market downturns, and thus, building budget reserves and paying down state debts remain important goals.

So how does all this good news for the state affect the AUHSD? The short answer is the AUHSD will not benefit from the projected increase in state revenues due to the LCFF law. Even though funding from the state for the Acalanes district is projected to increase by about \$1.075 million, it will not cover district expenses. The income for the next AUHSD school year of 2015-2016 is projected to be just under \$63 million and the expenses just over \$65 million, leav-

[SEE AUHSD page 18]

Congressman DeSaulnier Receives Oath of Office

Former Congressman George Miller administered a special ceremonial oath of office to newly elected Congressman Mark DeSaulnier at the Concord City Council chambers on Feb. 17. Although Congressman DeSaulnier officially received the oath in Washington D.C., the City of Concord wanted to hold its own special ceremony honoring Concord’s first U.S. Congressman. “To be here surrounded by constituents and colleagues, and for my mentor George Miller to administer the oath, is something I will remember for the rest of my life,” said Congressman DeSaulnier. Miller noted he felt honored to be asked to administer the oath for the congressman, who will serve in the same district where Miller served for 40 years.



CHARLIE JARRETT

District Approves Raises in Teacher Salaries, Health Care Caps

By BILL O'BRIAN
Staff Writer

The Orinda Union School District (OUSD) and the Orinda Education Association (OEA) agreed on several changes to their collective bargaining agreement of 2007-10 at a meeting on Dec. 1 of last year. The major changes affect salaries, teacher health care cost caps, class preparation time and staff meetings. The OUSD also created a trust fund to pay for future retiree health expenses.

Teachers and the district agreed to increase salaries to all steps of the 2012-13 Certificated Salary Schedule by three percent, retroactive to Oct. 7, 2013. The compensation package covers the fiscal

year 2013-2014. Also, both parties agreed that all OEA members will receive a one-time off-salary stipend of \$3,475 per full-time employee. This payment will be prorated for part-time employees. Regarding health care, teachers can choose from various options. Costs vary, but one difference is whether an individual or a family is covered. The two parties agreed to an increased health care benefit cap for current fiscal year 2014-15. Beginning Dec. 1, 2014, the health benefit cap will be \$1,400 per month for full-time teachers, and will be prorated for part-time personnel.

Starting with the 2015-16 school year and continuing through the end of the 2016-17 school year, elementary school teachers

[SEE OUSD page 8]

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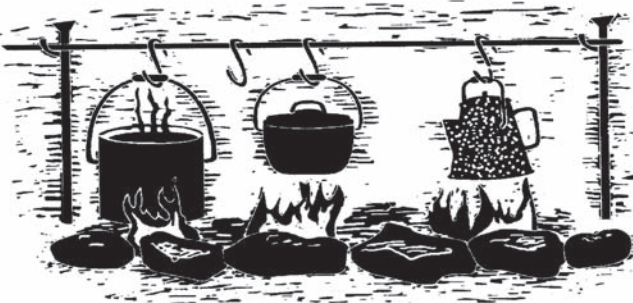
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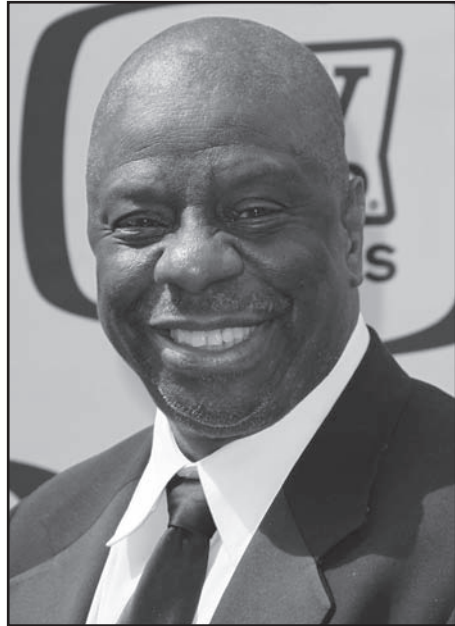
◆ COMEDY from page 1

JJ Walker certainly has lots of life experiences to draw on for his comedy routines. Growing up on the mean streets of New York's South Bronx, the high school dropout attended night school while working full-time. A class in oral interpretation not only improved his writing but helped Walker develop his comedy skills – skills he didn't know he possessed. By 1969, he was performing standup with the likes of Bette Midler, Steve Landesberg and David Brenner. Walker went on to become the youngest MC in the history of the world-famous Apollo Theater in Harlem.

However, it was Midler, Landesberg and Brenner who gave Walker his big break when they refused to appear on the *Jack Paar Show* without him. That wildly successful appearance led to many more and before long Walker was named "Comedian of the Decade" by *Time Magazine*. Numerous television appearances and his popular role on *Good Times* secured his success. Walker has since appeared in many movies and been a guest star on numerous television shows. However, stand-up comedy remains his first love. Now in his fifth decade of doing comedy, he currently tours the country 35 to 45 weeks a year performing live.

Also appearing at this year's Comedy Night is Jeff Applebaum, who was recently seen on the *Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson*. His 20-plus year career includes work with such comic legends as Robert Klein, Richard Lewis, Robin Williams and Dana Carvey. The versatile comedian also has the distinction of playing Joey Bishop in the long-running musical tribute *The Rat Pack is Back* and can be seen in the feature film *The Pursuit of Happyness* starring Will Smith.

Master of Ceremonies and comedian



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
JJ Walker currently performs live throughout the U.S. 35 to 45 weeks a year.

Anthony Hill rounds out the evening. A Bay Area favorite, Hill tours nationally and has appeared on television with Conan O'Brian and Jay Leno.

"I'm so looking forward to this year's show," says Jorgensen. "Our purpose is to bring something really fun to our local community, show off the beautiful Orinda Theatre and engage our chamber members, many of whom will be volunteering at the event."

A variety of ticket prices is available: VIP tickets in rows one and two - \$100, rows three and four - \$60 (both include free champagne); general admission - \$35; and Sky Box seats in the last five rows - \$20. Tickets can be purchased at the door or in advance at www.orindachamber.org, at the chamber office, 26 Orinda Way, or at First Republic Bank, 224 Brookwood.

For additional information, call the chamber at 925-254-3909.

◆ RACE from page 1

Hertle of Pleasanton, pulled out in early February citing lack of time to establish funding and name recognition. She has thrown her support to Glazer. (Due to the timing of her pullout, Hertle's name will still appear on the ballot.) If no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the primary vote, the special general election will take place May 19.

Glazer weathered a particularly brutal campaign last summer in his failed bid for the East Bay Assembly District 16 seat, but the hotly contested race did little to dampen his interest in governance. He says he had been thinking about the senate race for some time but needed to have a clearer idea of the field of candidates to better assess his chances. "When you are running as a centrist, you become the most feared opponent by candidates from the left and right," says Glazer, who, during the campaign will continue to remain a full participant in Orinda City Council oversight and business. "In the Assembly race, this meant that I was attacked from all sides. In this Senate race, the field of candidates is different."

Glazer says he will continue to focus on his pragmatic problem-solving skills and try to lower the volume on partisanship. "Whether you are a Democratic,

Republican or Independent, I believe our voters want someone who will work in a bipartisan manner to make our communities safer, our schools better and our roads more easily traveled while maintaining a balanced budget."

Glazer is a married father of two daughters who both attended Orinda's public schools. He supports education policies that put students first and allow local school boards to ensure quality teaching in classrooms regardless of seniority. As trustee of the 23-campus California State University system, he fought for affordable and accountable higher education. He supports pension reform that creates a sustainable financial model and ends pension spiking, and he seeks to prioritize road improvements. "My record demonstrates the courage to take a stand against entrenched special interests," says Glazer. "I was the first elected official to oppose the BART strike and support a permanent ban on transit strikes just like those in New York and San Francisco."

Glazer's other areas of interest include education, job creation, the environment and caring for those in need without new taxes. He calls himself a fiscal conservative and points out that as a local elected official and Mayor, he balanced 10 straight budgets.

For more information visit www.GlazerforSenate.com.

◆ OUSD from page 7

who teach grades one through three will have an additional 80 minutes per month for class preparation time. A side letter to the contract stipulates that "this time is to be used for preparation and planning exclusively, may not decrease the amount of instructional time, and shall not be at any additional cost to the district." The time will be slated based on the regular school schedule and will be pro-rated for part-time teachers.

A second side letter to the contract addresses staff meetings. For the 2014-15 school year only, there will be four mandatory staff meetings a year, the dates to be chosen by the principal. The letter states, "Teachers shall have the opportunity to participate in the creation of the agenda. There will be a time limit of 50 minutes for each mandatory meeting." This schedule applies only to the 2014-15 school year and is not intended to set a precedent for mandatory meetings.

Superintendent Dr. Joe Jaconette and OEA President Charles Shannon signed the contract adjustments and letters of agreement in mid-December, 2014.

The board action to create a trust fund to pay for future retiree health costs is a

requirement of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS), which administers the district's cost for its employees. OUSD authorized a \$1 million payment to open the account. It is the only amount committed so far; more funding requires further board discussion and action. It commences the funding for future retiree health costs based on financial projections.

◆ OFFICERS from page 1

of a team in the Orinda Police Department, and his genuine dedication to the community of Orinda."

Reserve Officer Walley has been with the OPD for nearly three years. In addition to his public speaking engagements regarding safety, he conducts home audits, helping citizens to be prepared in preventing residential burglaries. He also works diligently with families, individuals and organizations that support at-risk individuals. Nagel heralded Walley's in-depth Search and Rescue knowledge and his willingness to respond to all missing person bulletins.

"Most importantly, Bryan is a team player and is always asking how he can help," said Nagel. "He has a great sense of humor and is a pleasure to work with."



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CAR TIME

◆ LETTERS from page 4

Phillips, in effect killing her plan. Phillips moved to allow Orindans to vote on what is called the Housing Element, a plan to add hundreds of new homes to Orinda, a city that basically has no room for additional housing units.

Voting not to support Phillips were Councilmembers Steve Glazer, Victoria Smith and Dean Orr. Councilmember Amy Worth was absent. However, a few weeks earlier, Worth would not even support Phillips' request to have the City Council discuss the Housing Element.

By adding hundreds of new homes to Orinda, the city's fine school system will become overcrowded. Orinda's bucolic and semi-rural environment will be wrecked. The value of an Orindan's home will plummet.

The City Council should be not be afraid to let Orindans, in a citywide referendum, vote on the Housing Element. After all, in a democracy people have the right to vote.

A bold president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, led the United States to victory over Nazi Germany and Japan. In his first inaugural address as president, Roosevelt declared, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

The Orinda City Council – Phillips is an exception -- must be pushed to overcome its fear of letting residents vote on important civic matters – matters that will greatly affect Orindans' cherished, scenic environment and the value of Orinda homes.

– Richard S. Colman

Why Change Downtown?

The pro-developer crowd around here has been trying to convince Orinda residents for several years that our downtown is either too old (with some buildings over 40 years old – which always gets a laugh from my East Coast friends) or is "crumbling" (although they've never identified an actual building in disrepair). Their proposed solution is always to bulldoze much of downtown and build

condominiums there instead.

But based on a letter in February's *The Orinda News*, it appears they are trying a new approach: saying that downtown Orinda has "too many parking places!" Unsurprisingly, the proposal once more is to build condos over those parking lots, perhaps including an underground garage.

I suggest asking any busy Orinda parent, hastily running errands in between dropping off and picking up kids, if they feel Orinda presently has "too many parking spaces." I suspect they will get an earful.

The original Orinda General Plan, written by citizen volunteers around the time of our city's incorporation, wisely recognized that most of our 18,000-plus residents live on narrow, windy hillside streets, which require a motor vehicle to get to-and-fro. Because of that, our tiny, central downtown was to contain necessary shops and services intended for use by locals, which could be easily accessible. And that's what we have, a small valley with grocery, pharmacy, post office, doctors offices and local eateries, which all have some sort of parking nearby.

Building condos where people now park would benefit only the bank accounts of developers and be detrimental to most other Orindans. Imagine just needing quickly to get groceries, dry cleaning or a prescription and to get to any of these having no choice but to park blocks away in a paid Broadway Plaza-style garage.

Lest anyone say "don't worry, it's just a 'letter to the editor,'" the Orinda City Council this week reported a request for a "downtown parking study." Coincidence? I think not.

– Frank Simons

Drawback of a "Revitalized" Village

The supporters of a revitalized downtown overlook the many side effects and collateral damage that would be involved in demolishing and rebuilding Orinda Village and also overlook the drawbacks of a "revitalized" [SEE LETTERS 2 page 20]

CAR TIME

Independent Shops Get Thumbs-Up in Consumer Report

By JOHN VANEK



Consumer Reports' 2014 survey of vehicle repair service satisfaction found consumers tend to be more satisfied with an independent repair shop than a franchised new-car dealership. The survey, conducted by the Consumer Reports National Research Center, was based on subscriber satisfaction with repairs on more than 121,000 vehicles - 80,000 of which were repaired at franchised dealers and more than 41,000 at independent shops. The survey found that, in general, independents out-scored dealerships in overall satisfaction, price, quality, courteousness of the staff and work completed when promised. With few exceptions, the entire list of independent shops got high marks in these categories. The same could not be said for franchised new-car dealers.

There were some disappointments involving prestige marques, but the biggest gripe was the cost of parts and labor. Mercedes-Benz drivers, in particular, were much more satisfied with the price they paid for repairs at independent shops. Also dinged for high prices were Jaguar dealerships – as well as Mini dealerships, which often share a service drive (and high prices) with an affiliated BMW dealer. If you own

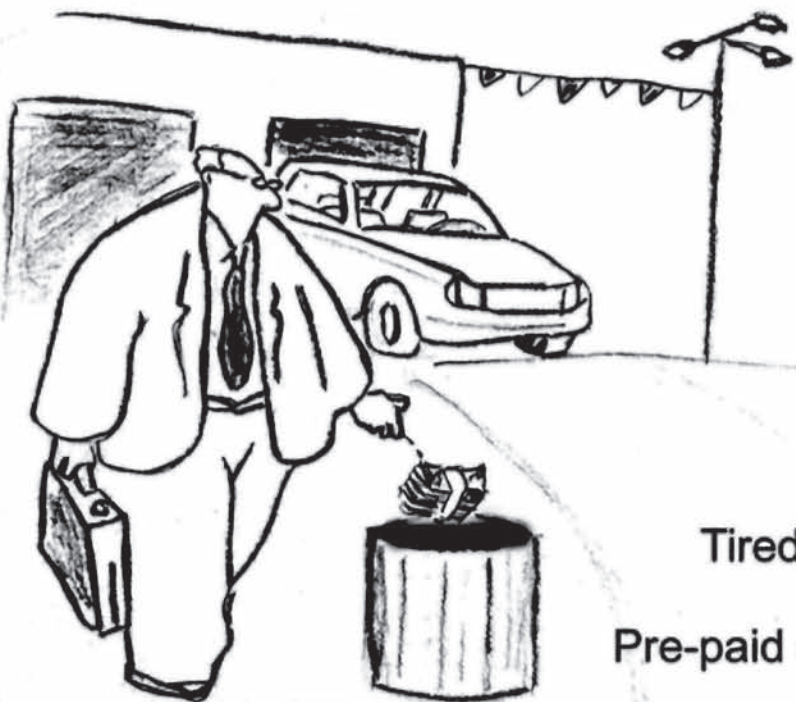
a BMW, Porsche or Volkswagen, bargain hunting for a mechanic might not pay off. The lowest overall satisfaction score came from RAM owners who went to franchise dealerships, but that score was still a 76, which indicates that those consumers are still at least "fairly well-satisfied" with the service they received.

Considering that price is one of the biggest concerns among consumers, motorists are taking a hard look at the cost of auto repairs. There is concern about repair facilities that pay service advisers on a commission basis – a common trend among dealerships today. There is also concern about the honesty of repair. Unfortunately, greed can come into play and consumers can end up paying for repairs that are not required. The best thing is to get a second opinion when a dealer that you don't know well suggests repairs for problems that you weren't aware of.

The bottom line: Auto repair is expensive. Mercedes is one of the most expensive cars to service. Most owners are "sticker shocked" when they find out how much the repair costs – but it's the price of admission when owning a German car. Price, however, is not always the most important thing when it comes to auto repair. More important is finding a shop you can trust that has knowledge of your vehicle, handles your needs swiftly, fixes things right and stands behind the repair. This applies to both independent and dealership service centers. Be a good consumer of auto repair by tracking when your car is due for maintenance. I am always available for automotive consultation.

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Doctor Talks on Aging and Memory at First Friday Forum

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

First Friday Forum will present Dr. Joel Kramer, Director of the Memory and Aging Center Neuropsychology program at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) in the Sanctuary of the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette, on Mar. 6 at 1:30 p.m. Dr. Kramer will speak on Aging and Memory in the 21st Century.

“Advances in health care have enabled an ever-increasing number of people to live into their 70s and 80s and beyond. This good news is tempered by the fact that age-related cognitive decline is also on the rise,” Dr. Kramer says. “This talk will focus on some of the reasons why advancing age increases the risk of cognitive impairment and dementia, and offers the hope that the better we understand the causes, the better equipped we will be to maintain optimal cognitive functioning.”

Dr. Kramer has been extensively involved in studying the cognitive

changes associated with brain disorders for the past three decades. He has co-authored widely used neuropsychological measures of memory and executive functioning. Much of his work has been devoted to identifying the different ways in which aging and neurodegenerative diseases affect memory and other abilities and in utilizing these differences to improve differential diagnoses in the clinic. Presently, Dr. Kramer’s active areas of research involve studying the underlying biological mechanisms of cognitive aging, the effects of cerebrovascular disease and frontotemporal dementia.

Dr. Kramer earned his doctorate in psychology at Baylor University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in neuropsychology at the Martinez Veterans Administration Hospital. The UCSF Memory and Aging Center is an international leader in the field of memory disorders and dementia.

The lecture will be preceded with refreshments in Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m. This is a free event open to the public. For questions, phone 925-283-8722.

Orinda Teen Spends Gap Year in Oslo, Norway, Palestine and More

By MAGGIE SHARPE
Staff Writer

Orinda resident Isabelle Johannessen, 18, who graduated from the Oakland School for the Arts in 2014, is taking a “gap” year to study at the YMCA/YWCA-sponsored Ronningen Folkehogskole in Oslo, Norway, where she is majoring in “Tur/Retur Verden,” meaning Round Trip World. Her major has allowed her to attend many political, religious and educational events in Oslo – including the Nobel Peace Prize presentation to young Pakistani activist Malala Yousafza – and to visit Palestine, Jordan and Israel. In late February, she and her classmates will visit South Africa.

“I will be going to Cape Town and Johannesburg for five weeks,” said Johannessen, who also attended Glorietta Elementary and Orinda Intermediate schools. “We will be doing community service in local schools and prisons and staying with families in townships, learning about apartheid and visiting various YMCA/YWCA organizations.”

Johannessen, who studied in Norway for a semester during 10th grade, says she decided to take a gap year before college to “meet new people, experience new cultures, travel and perfect my language skills” – all her classes are conducted in Norwegian. After her gap year, Johannessen, daughter of Dr. Helge and Lisa Johannessen of Orinda and half-sister of Marit – who lives in Norway – will attend Chapman University in Southern California to study business and marketing.

Johannessen vividly recalls her two-week trip to the Middle East last year with her school group, which consisted of 15 students and two teachers – mostly from



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Orinda resident **Isabelle Johannessen**, 18, picks olives in Palestine as part of a campaign to raise money to help Palestinians keep their agricultural land.

Norway but also a young man from Burma and four other American students.

“In November we left for Jordan where we spent two nights and got to swim in the Dead Sea which was so much fun. You can’t put your legs underwater because of all the salt,” she said. “Then we drove to Palestine, through many Israeli check points. We as Norwegian tourists went right through, however, the Palestinians are forced to stand in line for up to five hours and in inhumane conditions. Many times they reach the end of the check point and are not even allowed to enter. We visited

[SEE STUDENT page 20]

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Perhaps school-age children have used our volunteer center to complete a school, scout or other volunteer program. Your whole family may have participated in a volunteer project together such as decorating for the Fourth of July, helping clean Orinda creeks or parks, or contributing to a local food bank or shelter.

How many times have residents learned what's really happening in Orinda by reading the monthly *Orinda News*, or learned more about a local politician's views and goals by attending public forums?

Many residents stop by our office or call us to find out where to go for just about anything. Many Orinda families rely on our free transportation service for seniors called *Seniors Around Town*. The OA's programs and events cover the interests and needs of all generations.

Consider renewing your membership today or, if you're not a member yet, join us. Go online to www.orindaassociation.org. Your support has never been more important.

Stop by the Orinda Volunteer Center at 26 Orinda Way, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon or 1 to 4 p.m. to learn about programs and other volunteer opportunities.

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Dick Burkhalter (L), the Orinda Association's 2014 Volunteer of the Year, talks with **Bea Heggie** at the festive awards dinner held at the Orinda Country Club.

- | | | |
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[SEE OA page 12]

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◆ OA from page 11

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 [SEE MEMBERSHIP page 13]

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CASA / OA MEMBERSHIP

Volunteers Advocate for Abused, Neglected Kids

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

People often want their lives to make a difference and what better way than by giving a troubled child support and hope. That's exactly what approximately 125 volunteer advocates in Contra Costa County are currently doing through CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates).

CASA began in 1977 in Seattle, WA, when Juvenile Court Judge John Soukup felt he needed more information about the children appearing before him. CASA now operates across the United States. The Contra Costa County office is located in Walnut Creek.

CASA volunteers advocate for abused and neglected children who enter into the juvenile dependency system because their parents cannot or will not take care of them. While these children can spend years moving from one foster home to another and be reassigned various social workers, the CASA volunteers remain the one constant in their lives.

"Our volunteer advocates are very important people in the lives of these children," says volunteer coordinator Kerry Mixie. "They attend all the court hearings, have access to the school, medical records and

social worker reports, and, most importantly, spend time with their assigned child." According to Mixie, that time can include helping with homework, attending events or encouraging the child to participate in drama, art or sports. "Extra-curricular activities are often where a child finds his or her self-esteem," she says.

"Our advocates provide a healthy adult role model," adds case coordinator Bob Salgado. "They facilitate and advocate for services and are a friend and mentor for the child assigned to them. They don't get paid but are there because they want to be, something that makes a difference to the child."

CASA asks for a minimum two-year commitment from advocates, who receive a comprehensive training program and continued support from CASA. All volunteers undergo a screening process that includes fingerprint and DMV checks.

"We have volunteer trainers who are experts in their fields – therapy, mental health, education, the law and more," says Salgado. "We also have amazing team leaders who meet with the advocates as well. We're so fortunate to have volunteers supporting volunteers."

Moxie notes that many volunteer advocates go beyond the two-year commitment. "We encourage them to take a break in



CHARLIE JARRETT

Members of CASA attended the Festival of Trees, sponsored by the Orinda Woman's Club. CASA is a major beneficiary of the event. (L-R) seated: **Janice Bradner, Charles Mead, Margi Mead, Kerry Mixie, Gina Turturici**; standing: **Vicki Hughes, Susan Meadow, Gordana Zura and Gregg Chavarria**.

between assignments. It is an ending of sorts, and they need to process that before working with another child. Right now, we have several of our kids who are being adopted. That's the best possible outcome."

Advocates often keep in touch with their children after they leave the foster care system. "It's very fulfilling for our volunteers to see these young people succeed in life,"

[SEE CASA page 18]

◆ MEMBERSHIP from page 12

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Ellis Sjoberg
Maryann Skitarelic
Theresa & Theodore Slaman
Joseph & Sally Small
Winifred Smith
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Jeffrey & Michele Spitulnik
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AWARDS / PETS



CHARLIE JARRETT

(L-R) Orinda Woman's Club members **Elene Lee** (Festival of Trees chair) and **Vera Mayturn**, Holden High School Co-Director **Kate Knox**, Holden High School Board of Directors member **Gail Mead**, Holden High School Development Associate **Melanie Wentz**, and Orinda Woman's Club members **Kathy Kerr-Schochet** and **Adeline McClatchie**.

Orinda Woman's Club Awards

On February 10, the Orinda Woman's Club presented its major beneficiaries of Festival of Trees with monetary awards. The two recipients included Holden High School in Orinda and CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates).

Holden High School, a private, non-profit school, offers a unique, alternative approach to education. They received \$13,500. CASA, which provides volunteer advocates for abused and neglected children in the juvenile dependency system in Contra Costa County (see story page 13), received \$15,500.

– Sally Hogarty, Editor



CHARLIE JARRETT

Holden High staff member **Haley Hewitt** provided entertainment at the event.



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Both the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and the National Poison Prevention Center promote Pet Poisoning Prevention during March, and it is worth taking a moment to consider ways to protect your pet from obvious and obscure poisoning threats. Obvious dangerous substances are those clearly labeled as poisonous to animals, which include many household cleaning products, automotive items and human medicines. If there are products you keep away from your kids, keep them away from your companion animals as well.

If you think a toddler can be creative about opening a cupboard, just watch a cunning cat or crafty dog get their paws or mouth around a cupboard handle! Since some poisonous products smell pretty good and your dog or cat probably cannot read (or, at least, will not admit to it), it is best to put such items far out of their reach.

It isn't just household substances that can be dangerous, poisons abound in your yard and neighborhood. Take the oleander plant, for example. A few swallows can be deadly. Wild mushrooms are another trick of nature – many are beautiful to look at but deadly to consume. They are especially tempting to dogs and so easy to snap up that your dog might eat one without your knowing it until symptoms appear. Symptoms can be vomiting, shaking, panting and foaming

at the mouth. If your cat or dog shows any of them run, don't walk, to the emergency veterinary hospital. If you happen to catch your animal in the process of eating a wild mushroom, contact your veterinarian to determine if there is an emetic you can administer or if you need to bring the animal to the veterinarian's office for treatment. The Internet contains many listings of plants and substances that are poisonous to animals and humans. Print out a list and keep it handy for quick reference.

Other dangers in nature include spiders and scorpions. There are scorpions in the Bay Area as well as varieties of poisonous spiders. Check your animal's bedding frequently and carefully to ensure that neither you nor your pet get bitten.

Exercise caution when purchasing food and treats for your pet. Recent media reports tell of treats imported from China that have caused severe illness in pets. It is wise to not only check the country of origin of pet treats but also the list of ingredients.

If all this sounds like cautions you would take with your child or other family member, you are right! Your companion animal is an important part of the family. You can protect your animal and other family members from potentially poisonous dangers by using common sense and solid knowledge along with veterinary and medical oversight.



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ROVING REPORTER / ST. PATRICK'S DAY

Roving Reporter What does March Madness mean to you?

Charlie Jarrett



Samanta Menezes.

Samanta Menezes is a Brazilian student from Sao Paulo, currently living with an Orinda host family and attending Berkeley City College where she majors in business administration. She's been in Orinda for just over a year. "I think for me, the month of March will potentially be a big month for changes," said Menezes, who will find out in March if her visa will be extended for another 6 months to allow her to finish her current study program or whether she will have to return to Brazil. If not allowed to stay, she will have to remain in Brazil for a minimum six months before applying to have her visa renewed. Currently she is taking basic classes, as more advanced classes are for native English speakers. However, her command of English is excellent as she has studied the language for many years.



Brendon Verissimo.

Brendon Verissimo: "To me [March Madness] is all about basketball. My alma mater was not a basketball powerhouse so I tend to root for Pac 12 West Coast college teams. However, since the West Coast teams have not done that well recently, I guess I am probably going to be interested

in whatever the perennial favorites such as Kansas, Duke and University of North Carolina will be doing. Unfortunately, I will probably end up spending more time sitting in front of the TV watching whatever the team of the moment will be doing, just because I enjoy basketball."

Verissimo works at Ziploop, a start-up company in Orinda that has created a digital wallet space application compatible with the iPad and iPhone. It allows people to file, save and locate receipts and rewards for every product they purchase. "When you go shopping and they give you a paper receipt or reward, you can take a photo of it with our application and it will go to our OCR (Optical Character Recognition) server program that will read it, organize it and store a digital copy in the safe, appropriate

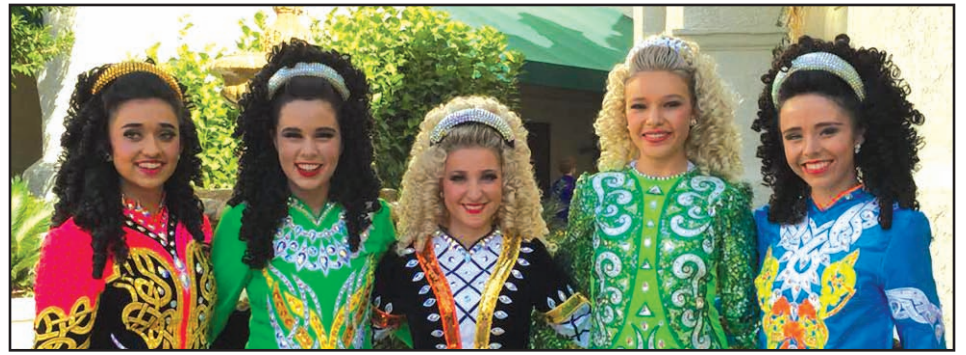


Dino Bertoli.

location," said Verissimo. "All you have to do is pull it up on your in your Ziploop application and show it to the merchant. Also, you will never miss out on rewards again as Ziploop is designed to remind you that your reward is about to expire. In addition, it organizes and tracks all of your spending for whatever purpose that you need, be it taxes or just knowing how much you are spending and where you are spending it," exclaims Verissimo. Ziploop is located at 25 Orinda Way or visit www.Ziploop.com.

Dino Bertoli: Another basketball fan, Bertoli says March Madness is an important part of basketball – when it really gets exciting. "This is the time when everybody really starts to watch the games," says Bertoli, who lives in nearby Briones Park and attends school in Orinda. "I'm a fan of the Celtics, but they haven't been doing so well. They used to be good, but after they lost Rondo and Ray Allen, they haven't been as good lately. I hope that they will start to make a comeback soon."

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day Locally



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dancers from the Michael Dillon School of Irish Step Dancing will perform at the SMC Guide event on Mar. 15.

The Saint Mary's College Guild plans a festive St. Patrick's Day event featuring a traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner, silent auction, Irish dancing by the Michael Dillon School of Irish Step Dancing in Walnut Creek and music by Irish singer Sin Silver.

The fun takes place on Mar. 15 from 5:30 - 10 p.m. at the Soda Activity Center on the St. Mary's campus, 1963 St. Mary's

Rd., in Moraga. Master of ceremonies is Dick Callahan. Auction items include: two nights at the Lafayette Park Hotel; golf at the Moraga Country Club; a Bocce Ball party at the Round Hill Country Club; and tickets to Beach Blanket Babylon.

Proceeds benefit the St. Mary's College scholarship fund. Call 925-388-0437 for reservations.

– Sally Hogarty, Editor

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FILM

Miramonte Graduates Set Movie in Orinda

By HILLARY HOPPOCK
Contributing Writer

The Orinda Theatre was filled with hometown friends, classmates and well-wishers on Jan. 31 to watch and cheer for *Pete's All-Stars*, directed by Miramonte High 1997 graduate Mike French and produced by classmate Mitch Walker. The cinematic collaboration between the classmates can be traced back to grade school days in Orinda when Mitch, his twin brother Noah, and Mike began writing and filming the stories they created in their homes and at Del Rey Elementary.



MONICA BARRETT
Director **Mike French** (L) and producer **Mitch Walker** stand outside the Orinda Theatre where their film *Pete's All Stars* was screened in January.

Pete's All Stars is dedicated to the memory of Noah, fondly called "Ace." Mike and Mitch filmed recognizable local sites such as the Miramonte High track, CiCi Café and Moraga Commons as well

as local people including Mike's step dad and a former Del Rey music teacher. Mike wrote the script and plays the title role of team coach and pitcher for *Pete's All Stars*, a small town adult baseball league. Against the backdrop of living out his youthful passion for baseball, Pete's achingly realistic "coming of age" story emerges. More than 10 years after leaving high school, he still lives with his dad and, not having a driver's license, rides his old bike to local high school sports events that he covers for a local newspaper. He barely earns enough to cover the cheap beer he drinks in a local bar after every practice and ball game – which his team tends to win.

The gritty, motley crew of working class players on his All Stars team includes a cop, a utility worker, a free spirit covered in tattoos, a dog catcher and an "arrested development" classmate still living in town. The crisp dialogues are laugh-out-loud funny as Pete banters and quips with these quirky, fiercely loyal team members. As they play their sport, drink their beer and "go icing" with their girlfriends down the grass hills on frozen ice blocks, the group becomes memorable and endearing, as identifiable as any group of friends at any age.

Inevitably Pete's dream starts to unravel when the All Stars second baseman chooses to marry his girlfriend and quit the team.

[SEE FILM page 18]

THE REEL LESS TRAVELED

MOVIE MADNESS OPENS WITH
JOHN HUGHES' CLASSIC

Tom Westlake

It's been slim pickings for the last 60 days or so but now that March is here, riches await us at our two landmark movie houses with something to suit everyone's taste.

We're not 12 days into the new month and already we're dealing with delinquents – not just any delinquents but an elite class consisting of the very best of the up-and-coming talent of the time. I speak, of course, about *The Breakfast Club*. Anyone who follows this column or who regularly attends The Film Classics Series will know that John Hughes is a regular staple here. He is often regarded as a director who, more than any other director, "spoke" to the disaffected youth, and it's no wonder. With films such as *Sixteen Candles* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, (both of which have been shown here in years past) not to mention the *Home Alone* films, he seemed to tap into the mind-set of the teenage crowd, while at the same time producing a catalogue of films that enjoyed great commercial success. It could be argued that this film served as a template for many that came after it but there is no doubt how entertaining this film is. It will screen at the Orinda Theatre on Thursday, Mar. 12 at 7 p.m. – and the cost is absolutely nothing.

Though details are still forthcoming, I can confirm that the "B" movie festival has officially returned! This last month saw a screening of *The Manster* and, based on what I know so far, another cinematic gem will be shown at the Rheem on Friday, Mar. 13 (how fitting!). Make sure to check lamorindatheatres.com for this and other late additions.

Tennis, anyone? As simple and clichéd as this question may be, it's given a far deeper (and hilarious) significance with this month's offering from the Moraga Movers. Great movie teams – Laurel and Hardy, Abbott and Costello, even Bogie and Bacall are all notable pairings but none of them can compare for wit and bite with Hepburn and Tracy. Though the films they made together are few, one cannot deny just how delightful they were together. Filled with repartee that can cut like a knife while also reducing the audience to helpless laughter, *Pat and Mike* also showcases Hepburn's athletic ability, not only on the golf course, her character's true sport of choice, but also on the court as well (well, kinda). Verbal lobs and volleys abound as well as comic mishaps and even a little intrigue. Be sure to make time for this one. It will show at the Rheem on Wednesday, Mar. 18, at 1 p.m.

We're going to take a little side trip here and delve into territory usually reserved

for the International Film Showcase. The Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation, which represents our sister city Tabor in the Czech Republic, will be featuring *Vratne Lahve (Empties)* on Sunday, Mar. 22, at 4 p.m. Centering on a retired school teacher who chafes at the very idea of retirement, he bounces from one occupation to the next until he settles in with a part-time job in charge of recycling empty bottles. This gently comic, poignant, award-winning story contains themes of our desire to remain alive and vital as well as the continuing struggle we have in our relations to those closest to us. This film also distinguishes itself as the most popular film in Czech history. In a rare opportunity, the Orinda community will have the chance to see why. It will show at the Orinda Library on Sunday, Mar. 22, at 4 p.m. Admission is \$5.

Lastly, while we're talking about award-winning foreign films, we will gladly return to the more familiar and beloved International Film Showcase. This month, Efi and JoAlice have outdone themselves with the 2015 Oscar-nominated *Timbuktu*. As well as the story it tells – that of a peaceful family threatened by religious extremists – *Timbuktu* also boasts some striking cinematography. As of this writing, the Oscar broadcast is still about a month away so predictions would be a moot point. The film may not win the gold (it's nominated in the Best Foreign Language Film category) but that may not matter. The real winners are those who take advantage of the opportunities afforded by Efi and JoAlice to watch movies we otherwise wouldn't see. *Timbuktu* will have a one-week run at the Orinda Theatre starting on Friday, Mar. 20, at 7 p.m. Visit internationalshowcase.org for more information.

Now, all that's left is to wait for April's offerings, which, with so many great movies to see in March, will arrive before you know it. Until then, remember to stay in the dark for that's where the reel magic lies.

Film Showings

The Breakfast Club - Mar. 12 at 7 p.m., Orinda Theatre

Pat and Mike - Mar. 18 at 1 p.m., Rheem Theatre

Vratne Lahve - Mar. 22 at 4 p.m., Orinda Library

Timbuktu - Begins Mar. 20 at 7 p.m., Orinda Theatre

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SCHOOLS / STUDENTS

Test Your Spelling Skills at Zany Miramonte Musical

By KATHRYN G. McCARTY
Staff Writer

Are you smarter than the middle schoolers at *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*? If so, you might have an opportunity to test your skill, so dust off your dictionaries and brush up.

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee will be performed at Miramonte High School, Mar. 12 at 4 p.m., Mar. 13 and 14 at 7 p.m., and Mar. 15 at 2 and 7 p.m.

The 2005 Tony Award-winning musical incorporates audience interaction. Set at a fictional middle school and featuring a host of eccentric characters, the show is directed by drama teacher Heather Cousins, in collaboration with the school's choir and instrumental music programs.

Spelling Bee features the talents of seniors Maritza Grillo, Tosca Maltzman, Sam Shain, Elija Stavena and Dylan McCombs, juniors Eleanor Roeder, Max Hunt, Henry Hodder, Andy Tobin, Kyle McKeen and Jesse Epstein and sophomore Lauren Bond.

Cousins said the show, with music and lyrics by William Finn from a book by Rachel Sheinkin, was chosen, "for its ensemble nature, fun music, and opportunity for engaging characterization. We have a perfect, all-star cast filling these quirky roles."

According to Cousins, the musical is, "funny and zany yet has poignant moments about the stress school children are under and the pressure they face to please and succeed."

Senior Maltzman, who has performed under Cousins' direction for 4 years, says the show is "a great way to finish off my high school musical career. There are many skills that I've learned from my theater experiences that will serve me in the future. These include flexibility, humility, problem solving and collaboration."

Grillo, who has also performed every year in Miramonte productions, said it is, "definitely bittersweet knowing this will be my final musical at Miramonte, but if there's anything the theater industry has taught me is an ability to let go and move



SALLY HOGARTY

Miramonte students rehearse *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. (L-R) Sam Shain, Jesse Epstein, Lauren Bond, Eleanor Roeder and Henry Hodder.

on."

He says he loves drama because it takes people from all walks of life and forces them into a very intimate and personal setting. "You learn to forget what it means to be awkward, embarrassed, or ashamed; and you treat every choice with full confidence," said Grillo. "The beautiful thing about theater is that it doesn't discriminate, all are welcome. There are not many other places in high school that offer that true melting pot environment."

Both Maltzman and Grillo credit their teacher for helping to establish that kind

of positive environment. "Heather Cousins is a truly remarkable teacher, director and person," said Grillo. "She dedicates herself fully to everything she does. I am honored to have had the chance to work with her these past four years and I honestly believe I would not be the person I am today without the guidance and support I have had within the Miramonte drama program."

Cousins warns that the material is considered "PG-13" for some of its language and themes. For tickets, visit www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte. Price range is \$5-\$15.

PBS Holocaust Documentary Features Miramonte Students

By KATHRYN G. McCARTY
Staff Writer

Miramonte High School will be featured in the upcoming PBS documentary *I am a Pianist*, the story of Lisa Jura and *The Children of Willesden Lane*. Produced in collaboration with the Los Angeles public television station, and Hold On To Your Music Foundation,



DAVID DIERKS

Mona Golabek performed songs from her show *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* at Miramonte High School in February.

the film chronicles Jura's daughter Mona Golabek's efforts to bring the story of her mother's escape from the Nazis to schools across America.

Late last year, Miramonte drama teacher

Heather Cousins and her students attended Berkeley Repertory Theatre's production of *The Pianist of Willesden Lane*, Golabek's one-woman show, which has been produced in New York, L.A., Chicago, Boston and other cities across the country. Based on the book *The Children of Willesden Lane*, written by Golabek and Lee Cohen, the play is adapted and directed by Hershey Felde. Cousins said that Golabek, a concert pianist, plays the part of her own mother, "while playing some of the most beautiful music ever written." Cousins described the performance as one of the most compelling pieces of theatre she had ever seen and sent Golabek a letter describing how inspiring she and her students found the show.

The teacher was surprised when Golabek gifted the school with a class set of *Children of Willesden Lane*, which Cousins then taught in her English class. According to Cousins, the book is the story of Jura's "incredible story as she escaped Nazi Austria as a child on the Kindertransport and pursued the life of a classical pianist in London." Jura was one of approximately 9,500 children saved by the Kindertransports.

Miramonte sophomore Leah Woodcox said the book is "important to study because, while portraying the horrible effects of the Holocaust on one girl, it is also a story about passion and the power of holding on to what you truly love."

[SEE PBS page 20]

Renowned Pianist at Acalanes

Tanya Gabrielian will perform a benefit concert on Mar. 20 at the Acalanes High School Theatre in Lafayette. She will be joined by professional vocalist and Acalanes High School graduate Jessica Winn.

Appetizers will be served at 7 p.m. followed by the concert and presentation from 8 - 9:30 p.m. Proceeds benefit Trust in Education, which helps Afghan families rebuild their lives through education, health and economic aid. Tickets are \$20 (students) and \$35 (adults). Call 925-299-2010, Ext. 4 or go to <http://tiebenefitconcert.brownpaper-tickets.com>.

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CONTINUATIONS

◆ HOUSING from page 5

Citing nearly two years of exhaustive Fourth and Fifth Housing Element hearings and public meetings, council members Dean Orr and Victoria Smith and Mayor Steve Glazer said that public comment had been captured and integrated into the draft. A January staff report listed the 10 open forum dates over a 6-month period when public comment was solicited. The report also listed other venues used by the city to inform the public, such as the city's quarterly newsletter, website, direct mailings and newspaper articles.

"We are at halftime here in this process," said Glazer. "We've gone through this process thoroughly and reflectively in seeking public comment, and it's hard to say that we are now going to throw up our hands and punt."

Phillips, the council's newest member and the top vote-getter in the November election, ran her campaign based on rebuilding trust between residents and the city council. "My motivation in January's discussion and initiative stemmed from the many, many conversations that I had both during my campaign and since with residents of Orinda, including parents at soccer games, families at the farmers' market, developers, and retirees, from walking the neighborhoods, hosting events, etc.," said Phillips. "I heard a significant amount of concern that the council's direction and decisions were not consistent with what residents wanted, particularly in the area

of development."

However, others in attendance at the January meeting disagreed with her assessment and supported the council's work on the Housing Element plan. Jud Hammon, a 20-year Orinda resident, stated that the citizens had elected the council and thus entrusted the councilmembers with the best interests of the city. He questioned the feasibility of presenting a new Housing Element plan should the current plan be rejected by voters, and defended the council's actions to date.

Valerie Sloven urged those in attendance to move on from the issue. In addressing the councilmembers, she stated, "You've bent over backwards to obtain public comment. I urge you to move on."

City staff estimated that a Fifth Housing Element special election ballot measure would have cost the city between \$31,000 and \$54,000, with an additional \$91,000 printing cost for the 130-page ballot. The time necessary to create and hold the ballot measure would likely result in a missed submission deadline, resulting in further costs to the city in fines and penalties. Failure to comply by the deadline could also result in forced compliance to update the housing element every four years rather than every eight – a requirement that would pull resources from other pressing city matters.

Councilmember Orr expressed his support for capturing the eight-year cycle. "I don't want another council to go through the struggles of a four-year cycle. The dead-

line and the eight-year cycle are milestones for me."

"So much cost and time has been devoted to this issue," said Councilmember Smith. "We elected officials to do our best to uphold the law, and I would not put something on the ballot which allowed Orinda to break state law. We need to get beyond the Housing Element and move on to other issues that citizens care about."

Glazer encouraged Phillips to be more specific in where she felt the council wasn't listening to its constituency. "In my experience over the past 24 months of hearings on the Fourth and now the Fifth Housing Element, almost all of the community concerns have been listened to," said Glazer. "The only exception is the location of the zoning change." Glazer stated that Phillips and others who advocated for an election were unable to specifically support or oppose any of the alternative zoning sites.

Though disappointed with her fellow councilmembers' objection to putting the issue to a vote, Phillips pledged to continue to make sure citizen concerns are heard and, as appropriate, that their suggestions are incorporated into city policy.

Said Glazer, "I am confident that at the end of this exhaustive community engagement process that we will have broad consensus on the housing checklist that will be forwarded to the state. I don't expect this document to force any dramatic change in the character of our town. It is very likely that our approval of the document will reduce density for housing, which is what all parties seem to desire."

◆ CONTAINERS from page 7

ics built into the container with pictures that make it very simple to use. We've also hot-stamped on the side landfill, organics and recycling so there are a lot of visuals to encourage people to put their waste in the right containers."

The old carts will be recycled. "There are two companies that have containers, Republic Services and Waste Management. They will go through the carts after they are picked up and reuse those that they feel are still in good shape," said Etherington. "The majority of them will get recycled. They'll take the steel axle off and put that into metal recycling and grind up the rest."

The carts are another step in increasing the amount of waste material that is diverted from landfill. "The state set goals back in the late '80s to divert 50 percent of the waste stream, which we've achieved. We're at 63 percent diversion as an agency," said Etherington. In addition to the carts, CCCSWA has a Food Waste Recycling Program. "This is separate from recycling," said Etherington. "You get a container just

for food and there are separate trucks that collect the food waste from restaurants in the area." A lot of schools are also participating in the program. "The waste is transported to EBMUD in Oakland where it is introduced into digesters to generate methane gas. They capture the methane, which is introduced to a generator to generate electricity that is sold to the grid, so it's true recycling. That program is growing. Every month there are new participants."

The Waste Buster Program is aimed at schools. "When schools hit a certain diversion target percentage at the end of the school year, we give them funds to buy recycling products for their school," said Etherington. "If we were to look back at 2001, the schools were at nine percent diversion and now they are at 40 percent diversion. The schools have done a great job of harnessing all the kids, the teachers, the counselors and the custodial staff. Getting them to all work together on this has been a real success."

For more information, visit www.wastediversion.org.

◆ CASA from page 13

Moxie says.

The majority of children that CASA works with are in middle school through high school. "But we receive all ages – some as young as five years old," says Salgado. "And with the passage of AB 122, a child can remain in foster care until they turn 21."

With a waiting list of children needing support, CASA is always looking for volunteers to train as advocates or to provide other support services. "Our volunteers really make a difference in the lives of these children. Not everyone has the time required to be an advocate, but there are other, less time-consuming ways they can help," Salgado explains.

The Orinda Woman's Club has been so taken with the important work of CASA that it has chosen the group as its major beneficiary of the annual Festival of Trees fundraiser several times.

CASA holds periodic informational sessions for potential volunteers. The next session is scheduled for Mar. 10 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Walnut Creek office, 2020 N. Broadway, Suite 204, in Walnut Creek. Call 925-256-7284 or go to www.cococasa.org for more information.

◆ FILM from page 16

His replacement is Pete's high school classmate who finished graduate school and came home to live until he finds a job. After becoming a dependable friend and team player, he takes a job elsewhere and tells Pete he enjoyed temporarily living "the low life" with him.

Each character is brutally honest, down to the bartender who agrees with Pete's old time girlfriend Sarah, that Pete is a loser living out his "Peter Pan" dream. The film ends with Pete taking a light but determined "next step," leaving his hometown and moving on to the future.

◆ AUHSD from page 7

ing a deficit of roughly \$2.3 million. This deficit will come out of the district's reserve funds. The district's planning for the next school year's budget is based on Governor Brown's January 2015 budget proposal.

Two methods to address this gap in funding are: 1) reduce expenses and 2) use reserve money. Currently, the district has a hiring and spending freeze and projects continuing those into the next school year, for a savings of about \$1 million. In addition, part of the projected cost savings includes closing the Adult Education Program at the old Del Valle campus. Currently, there is insufficient information from the state about its budget for adult education programs to make a final decision. Other cost-cutting measures include reduction in Common Core transition funds, supplies and services and use of temporary employees.

While AUHSD's funding gap is bad news for the district, the good news is that the district has enough money in its reserve fund to cover this and next year's deficit and still will meet the legal requirement of a minimum budget reserve.

◆ TEENS from page 1

teen spaces, conducted research on current thinking on library services for teens, attended workshops on design of library spaces and came up with a design, color scheme and new wall art to completely overhaul the "YA corner" with the intention of having an actual space that teens would want to utilize.

Teen volunteers were involved in the final design process. The new furniture came from a company committed to sustainable business practices with upholstery fabric made from recycled materials.

The Library's Teen Advisory Group will advise on program planning and book selection and also help promote library use for all ages in our community.

Generous private donations from the Hart family and Friends of the Orinda Library with additional financial support from Contra Costa County Library system funded the project.



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AWARDS / AAUW SPEAKER

French Consul Awards Medals to Local D-Day Vets

By CHARLIE JARRETT
Staff Writer

June 6, 2014, was the beginning of a year-long celebration in France of the 70th anniversary of the historical military offensive that began on the beaches of Normandy and turned the tide in favor of the Allies in World War II. To demonstrate their gratitude, the French decided to award

tion who were willing and able to attend a scout meeting be honored. Cooper said he personally knew some WWII veterans and also spread the word about the medal program through *The Orinda News* and other local organizations.

Senior Patrol Leader Sam Sernett of Troop 237 was Master of Ceremonies at the February event and Mt. Diablo Silverado Council President Lou Paulson spoke about



CHARLIE JARRETT

French Consul General Pauline Carmona awarded medals to 14 local veterans including (L-R) Bill Cooper, Leonard Snyder and Warren Jensen.

D-Day medals to those who fought. As part of that effort, French Consul General Pauline Carmona awarded medals to 14 local veterans from Lamorinda and Walnut Creek in a ceremony at Orinda Community Church last month, hosted by Boy Scout Troop 237.

According to Troop 237 Scoutmaster Emeritus Bill Cooper, locating the veterans was a complicated task that began in France when the Normandy Regional Government contacted the Boy Scouts of America, requesting that veterans of the first 100 days of Normandy's reconstruc-

the importance and honor of Scouting and serving in the U.S. military. Paulson's address was followed by a poignant speech by Carmona, who said in part, "The state of the friendship and of the alliance between France and the United States is strong. Friendship, first and foremost, means being true to one's friends. Since the birth of the United States as a free nation, the loyalty between the French and American people has never failed. And far from being weakened by the vicissitudes of history, it has never ceased growing stronger. Seventy years ago, young American soldiers came by the thousands to save us from Hell. Today, I am particularly honored to celebrate all these Americans."

Following a standing ovation, Carmona congratulated each veteran in French and English and presented them with medals and certificates. Orinda Vice-Mayor Victoria Smith also paid tribute to the honorees and cited her late step-father, William Wickham Mills Smith, who was a member of the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) and parachuted into southern France shortly after D-Day to keep the German Panzer divisions from reaching the battle front. She spoke of the honor, joy and gratitude she felt when she recently visited the D-Day



CHARLIE JARRETT

City Councilmember Victoria Smith with Sam Sernett of Troop 237 and French Consul General Pauline Carmona.

Accidental Philanthropist Global Poverty Topic for AAUW Speaker

Ksenija Olmer



People often ask me: Why don't you help people close to home? There is plenty of poverty in the U.S. or in the Oakland schools. I have a simple answer: I am not rich enough to make a significant difference in Oakland, but my dollar goes a long way in a Third World country. I can choose to adopt a family for the holidays or use the \$250 I would spend on Christmas toys to build a water well that will change the health and well-being of a Cambodian family for a lifetime. I can also bring used clothes, toys and school supplies to children who will be far from offended that they are not brand new and wrapped up in colorful paper.

It is a shame that rich Western countries have hungry children and homeless families, yet the crushing poverty in other parts of the world is even more heartbreaking and inhumane. Too many people in the U.S. live under the poverty line, but more than one billion people on the planet live on only a dollar a day.

The Lafayette-Moraga-Orinda branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) hosts law professor Thomas Nazario on Tuesday, Mar. 17,

at 9:30 a.m. at the Holy Trinity Serbian Church Cultural Center, 1700 School St., Moraga. Professor Nazario is founder and president of The Forgotten International organization, which develops programs to alleviate poverty and suffering in the U.S. and worldwide, particularly among women and children. He is also author of *Living on a Dollar a Day: The Lives and Faces of the World's Poor*.

Professor Nazario (with Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist Renée C. Byer) published *Living On a Dollar a Day* last April. Their team traveled to four continents, took thousands of photographs, conducted numerous interviews and researched agencies around the world that strive to help the destitute. The resulting stories and photographs offer a heartrending glimpse into the everyday realities of individuals and families facing extreme poverty. The book also offers insight into the root causes of poverty and shows what can be done to alleviate it.

Don't miss the chance to hear Professor Nazario, ask questions and purchase a signed copy of his new book. For more information, visit <http://oml-ca.aauw.net>.

landing sites and the Museum of Peace in Caen, France. Smith concluded with expressions of gratitude to the veterans and presented them with proclamations and certificates on behalf of the citizens of Orinda.

The program concluded with each veteran's personal memories of their fears, exhilaration and sorrows about that war-changing military operation on June 6, 1944. Each veteran thanked France, the Boy Scouts of America, their communities and the audience for the special honor and opportunity to reflect on that momentous day. Each veteran also emphasized that they were not the heroes – that their comrades who are buried in France were, and always will be, the true heroes.

◆ VILLAGE from page 2

The LV board members are from Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda and include Andy Amstutz, Diane Barbera, George "Skip" Bradish, Art Haigh, Don Jenkins, Ruth McCahan, Karen Mendonca, Kathryn Schofield and Jane Tiemann. Individual membership dues to join LV are \$840 per year; individual social membership dues are \$300 per year. Membership dues for a two-person household are \$1,200 per year; social membership dues for a two-person household are \$600 per year. See www.lamorindavillage.org for more information about membership criteria or call 925-253-2300.



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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

MARCH

- 5 **Orinda Books** hosts Sister-in-Crime Staci McLaughlin, discussing her latest mystery, *A Healthy Homicide* (A Blossom Valley Mystery), 276 Village Square, 5 p.m.
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 **Orinda Chamber of Commerce**, Sixth Annual Comedy Night, stars Jimmie "JJ" Walker of television's *Good Times*, along with other well-known comedians, Orinda Theatre. Doors open at 7 p.m. Show starts at 8 p.m. General admission, \$35; VIP tickets, \$60 to \$100; Sky Box, \$20. Tickets at door, www.OrindaChamber.org or at 26 Orinda Way. Call 925-254-3909.
First Friday Forum presents Dr. Joel Kramer, Director of the Memory and Aging Center Neuropsychology program at UCSF, Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette, 1:30 p.m. Dr. Kramer will speak on Aging and Memory in the 21st Century.
- 7 **Orinda Books** hosts Steven Burchik discussing his memoir of a year with the First Infantry Division in Vietnam, *Compass and a Camera*, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. Call 925-254-7606. Mar. 8 marks the 50th anniversary of U.S. troops landing in Vietnam.
- 12 **Epicurean Exchange** hosts author, journalist and historian Georgeanne Brennan presenting a delectable Provençal lunch, telling stories of her French-inspired life, and signing titles and products from La Vie Rustic. \$125 per person; seating is limited. Visit www.EpicureanExchange.com.
Orinda Theatre, Free Movie Night, showing *The Breakfast Club* 7 p.m. Visit http://www.lamorindatheatres.com/index_orinda.asp.
- 14 **Cal Shakes** gala "Play It Forward," Four Seasons San Francisco, 6 p.m. Call 510-899-4907.
- 17 **AAUW-Laf-Moraga-Orinda** branch hosts law professor Thomas Nazario speaking on programs to alleviate poverty, 9:30 a.m. Go to oml-ca.aauw.net. (See story page 19.)
- 19 **Lecture and Slide Show** on the refurbishment of the historic Yellow House on Moraga Road into a state-of-the-art "green" residence, Orinda Theatre, 7 p.m. Tickets \$12, available at the door. Guided tour of house on Mar. 20. (See story page 6.)
- 20 **Orinda Parks and Recreation Department** San Francisco Flower and Garden Show trip for seniors, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Residents \$33; non-residents \$38. Call 925-254-2445 or visit www.cityoforinda.org.
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. Visit www.lamorindatheatres.com/index_newrheem.asp.
International Film Showcase presents *Timbuktu* for a one-week engagement at Orinda Theatre. The film was nominated for an Oscar this year in Best Foreign Language Film category. Visit <http://internationalshowcase.org> for information and show times.
Tanya Gabrielian, world renowned pianist, performs a concert with soloist Jessica Winn benefiting Trust in Education, 8 p.m., Acalanes High School Theatre. Call 925-299-2010, ext. 4 or <http://tiebenefitconcert.brownpapertickets.com>.
- 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.
- 22 **The Epicurean Exchange and Friends of Joaquin Moraga Adobe (FJMA)** celebrate early California Rancho cuisine to raise money for the restoration of the adobe, 2 Vallecito Lane, Orinda, 2 to 4 p.m. Tickets \$95. For reservations visit www.moragaadobe.org and click on "Buy Tickets." (See story page 6.)
Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation presents the award-winning foreign film *Vraigne Lahve*, 4 p.m., Orinda Library. (See story page 16)
- 26 **Orinda Books** hosts Dr. Sherellen Gerhart, M.D. (a practicing hospice and palliative care physician) talking on a new program known as Death Café, a group-directed discussion of death, 276 Village Square, 7 p.m. RSVP to 925-254-7606.
Maria's Book Club will discuss *Family Life* by Akhil Sharma at Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, 11 a.m. RSVP to 925-254-7606. The new group meets monthly.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. For more information, call 925-254-2184 or visit www.ccclib.org/locations/Orinda.html.

- 2 **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony** for redesigned Teen Area, 4:30 to 5:45 p.m.
- 4 **Paws to Read**. 1st- through 5th-graders practice reading with a friendly dog, Gallery Room, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
Teen Advisory Group (grades 9 to 12). First Wednesday of month, Tutoring Room, 4 p.m. Teens meet with librarian to collaborate on teen programs, book collections and displays and earn community service hours.
Free Computer and eReader Help. Wednesdays, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Also Mar. 11, 18 and 25. Register at the Information Desk.
- 5 **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 Mar. 12, 19 and 26.
- 6 **Monthly Book Sale**. Hosted by Friends of the Orinda Library, Book Shop and sorting room, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 7 **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.
- 9 **Jane Eyre Seminar**. Led by novelist and scholar Deborah Jenke, Gallery Room, 7 to 8:30 p.m.
- 11 **USS Potomac Presentation**. A film on the history of the Potomac followed by discussion, Garden Room, 6:30 p.m.
- 20 **Mystery Book Club**. Members discuss the book of the month, Tutoring Room, 3 to 4 p.m. For 18 years and up.
- 26 **Contra Costa Tale Spinners**. Adult storytelling with guest speaker, Gallery Room, 7 to 9 p.m. Tell a tale or just come to listen.
- 30 **Pet Food Bagging**. Drop in to help package food for needy pets, Tutoring Room, noon to 4 p.m.

CLUBS & GROUP MEETINGS

Written Word Still Carries Some Weight



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Our copy editor, **Maggie Sharpe**, stopped by the offices of the *Belfast Telegraph* on Royal Avenue, Belfast, on her recent trip to Ireland and found that the pen is still mightier than the sword.

- 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 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., Sept. through May, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephen's Drive, www.montelindogarden.com. Speaker Howard Arendtson, owner of H. Julien Designs, Berkeley, will talk on "Floral Designs."
- Orinda Garden Club**. Fourth Thursday, 10 a.m. to noon, Sept. through May, Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante.
- Orinda Junior Women's Club** community service group. First Tuesday, Sept. 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 Wednesday, call 925-254-1353 for time and place.
- Orinda Job's Daughters**. First and third Monday, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 925-283-7176.
- Orinda/Tabor (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 sites.google.com/site/orindawomansclub.

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 meeting location will be posted on the agenda.
- Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees**. Second Monday, 6 p.m., 8 Altarinda Road, 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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Move of the Month

Oblique Crunches on the BOSU



Lay with your hip and side on the BOSU, top leg outstretched, bottom leg slightly bent and resting on the ground. Place your hands behind your head.



Simultaneously lift your upper leg and upper body, in a side crunch. Be sure to keep your upper body facing forward rather than twisting it. Do 5-15 of these and switch sides.

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

“Breathe Move Be Well” Celebrates

At their Orinda Pilates holistic center, co-owners Bridget McCarthy and Gaby Diskin are celebrating their first anniversary. Along with massage therapist Adriana Agnoletto, they want to thank their clients for their support which has allowed them to make their dream of creating an oasis of wellness into a reality. Plans for the second year at Breathe Move Be Well in-

clude expanding various Pilates specialties including CoreAlign, Scolio-Pilates® and Garuda; working with dancers; providing a scholarship; and supporting those with limited physical abilities. For more information, go to www.breathemovebewell.com, visit them at 1 Northwood Drive, #4, Orinda or call 510-290-3428.

– Elana O’Loskey, Staff Writer

Everyday Changes Transformation



Bonnie Waters

Here we are in March already and the stores are beginning to showcase spring-summer fashions – encouraging us to transform our wardrobe.

In the beauty industry when it comes to trends, we take loose inspiration from the runway fashions of New York Fashion Week. The challenge is to interpret the myriad of looks shown on the runway and to personalize and make them our own. Here are some of our favorites.

Colors and Patterns

Black and white is everywhere with various textures, patterns, and silhouettes. If the black and white combo is too stark for you, blue and white may be more your palette. There are no longer rules dictating when you can wear white. It is important however how you wear it. The key is to mix shades and textures and layer your various white pieces to create a cohesive look. Yellow is bringing a brightness to spring trends and can range from amber and canary to saffron and marigold. Knowing your skin’s undertone is critical here. Pack away your plaids and switch them for the tiny check gingham which can be worn prim and proper or have a sexy vibe when paired with some edgy pieces.

Shapes, Silhouettes and Lengths

Shorter hem lengths are sticking around this season, whether it be a mini-skirt, capri or culottes pants. Take the look to work by

pairing it with a jacket, a button down or tailored polo shirt and a classic, sensible shoe. Transform to evening with a one-shouldered top to show off your smooth skin and switch out your down-to-earth shoes for a sensual heel or platform wedge. Jeans are a given for any season. You can pack away your slim, low rise jeans because this season it’s about cropped, baggy cuts.

Most Important – Beautiful Skin

Beautiful skin is always in fashion. There is no better time to schedule an appointment with your skincare professional. If time is a consideration, check out Changes’ 45 minute Purity Face Polish from Cosmedix. This new service is just the solution to transform your winter-weary skin and at special spring pricing of only \$67 it is gentle on the pocket book.

Don’t Worry, Be Happy!

Remember fashion trends are not hard rules. Take these ideas shopping with you as inspiration. Don’t take fashion too seriously. Notice what fashion trends make you smile. What colors delight you? Most importantly, just have fun!

Our Changes team is busy designing looks to transform fall-winter looks into spring-summer hair, nail and makeup trends. Check back next month as our talented professionals provide ideas to help you complete your own personal transformation for spring-summer 2015!



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living lean.
by Sheena

Sheena’s Living Lean Tip of the Month:

Focus on milestones. Milestones keep you doing what you need to do to reach your goal.

Be Accountable to Someone: Make sure there is someone who can give you a quantifiable measure of your progress.

Be Open Minded to Change: You need progression, increasing intensity in your training and variation in types of workouts over time.

Get Out of Your Comfort Zone: If your workouts are comfortable for too long, your body gets used to them, and your exercise won’t provide you with any added change. Participate in new classes or activities.

Eat for Power: a high performance workout requires high performance fuel. You can be very efficient at changing your body if your performance level is maximized in your workouts.

Always Remember Where You Were When you Started! The Progress Never Has to Stop.

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

Read Client Testimonials at www.livingleanprogram.com




“I had gained some significant weight, and my wife suggested we try Living Lean together. After the first week, I was hooked and saw serious progress almost immediately. The only question I have now is how low do I want my body fat to go! It is a great program and I recommend it to anyone who is serious about getting in shape.”
– Eric Shaqfeh
Department Chair of Chemical Engineering
Stanford University

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Swim Team Registration – March 14th-30th

BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 24

cepted. If interested in saving even more money, pay your bill with cash.

While working six days a week does not leave much time for leisure, Ibrahim enjoys family barbecues, watching movies and dining in San Francisco on occasion. His favorite pastime is collecting watches and cars.

For more information about Orinda Tires and Wheels, call JJ Ibrahim at 925-253-7799.



Rebekah Truemper of STAND.

STAND! For Families Free of Violence

A nonprofit organization headquartered at 1410 Danzig Plaza in Concord, STAND! For Families Free of Violence fulfills its mission of breaking the multi-generational cycle of violence by promoting safe, strong relationships and rebuilding lives in Contra Costa County. Director of Development and Marketing Rebekah Truemper points out that STAND! is the only comprehensive domestic violence organization in the county.

“The range of our services encompasses three distinct areas including safety and immediate crisis, rebuilding lives and prevention,” says Truemper. “We operate a crisis telephone hotline 24 hours a day,

seven days a week and run an emergency shelter that accommodates 24 women and children who do not have other resources to support them as they leave a violent domestic relationship.” Studies demonstrate that, due to a variety of complex reasons, a victim will leave an abusive relationship seven times before leaving for good, according to Truemper. Choosing to end an abusive relationship and taking action to get help is a sensitive time. “Violence tends to escalate when one leaves the relationship so we provide a lot of safety planning,” says Truemper. “We meet the victim where they are emotionally and provide counseling to assist them in leaving in a safe manner.”

She says that domestic violence is not restricted to physical abuse. “It can take the form of financial, sexual or emotional abuse, which also includes coercive behavior. For example, when isolation takes place and a victim can’t reach out because of ridicule and blame, it is important for people to know they can get help,” she says. STAND!’s emergency response team works closely with hospitals, sheriffs and other first responders, providing caseworkers on site to serve victims of domestic violence.

Many clinical programs assist victims and their children rebuild their lives, including a parenting program for relative caregivers designed to help prevent children in domestic violence families from being placed in the foster care system. Counseling opportunities are available for any member of the family, in addition to an anger management program.

“Children who grow up in domestic violence tend to be twice as likely to use violence as an adult or become a victim,” says Truemper. “STAND! collaborates with the California Department of Public Health to implement Promoting Gender Respect (PGR), a program designed to develop the knowledge and leadership skills of middle school boys that will enable them to prevent bullying and gender violence.”

Living Lean Partners with Lafayette Tennis Club



DAVID DIERKS

Coach Hunter Gallaway, Coach Carmen Selaru-Stewart, Sheena Lakhotia of Living Lean, and clients Sue Eisenberg and Angela Aerves.

Living Lean believes in helping clients become fit for life through personal training, nutrition programs and group classes. In addition to their currently offered spin classes, circuit training, TRX, abs and yoga classes, they are now offering tennis classes.

In partnership with Lafayette Tennis Club, Living Lean will offer free beginner tennis clinics Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. and private lessons with World Class pros at a discount. Clients will have the option to play on tennis teams appropriate for their level as well.

Living Lean owner Sheena Lakhotia feels that tennis will offer her clients another type of workout to complement the workouts they already do. She believes that tennis offers a fun, different, challenging, circuit type workout that, in combination with the other classes, will effectively help her clients to get to the next fitness level. “I recently added tennis into my weekly workout routine and have noticed my fitness level has dramatically improved,” says Lakhotia.

For more information, call 925-360-7051 or go to www.livingleanprogram.com.

The crisis hotline serves teens as well as adults. To access STAND! services or if you are worried about a teen that you suspect is involved in dating violence, call the crisis hotline at 888-215-5555. To volunteer or

make a donation (in-kind donations are always welcome and a list of needs may be found on the web site), call the administrative office at 925-676-2845. Visit www.STANDFFOV.org for more information.

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Cooking Class

Wednesday, March 4 | 3:30 pm

Our culinary team will show you how to make butternut squash ravioli, which you can enjoy after the class.

St. Patrick’s Day Celebration

Tuesday, March 17 | 1:30 pm

Come dressed in green and join us for green beer and live music from Irish band Valerie Rose.

Space is limited – RSVP for these events at 925.448.3073.

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The Intuitive Writing Project Helps Girls Find Their Voice

At the heart of the Intuitive Writing Project is a curriculum that helps girls connect with their inner wisdom and express it. Elizabeth Perlman's brainchild incorporates the Amherst Writers and Artists' philosophy that every person is a writer and every writer deserves a safe environment in which to learn, experiment and develop craft. The Intuitive Writing Project is conveniently located in Theatre Square, across from Barbacoa. Inside the studio an entire wall features photos of accomplished women in every field along with a caption indicating her contribution to the world. Examining this wall of notable women is time well spent.

"The purpose of the Intuitive Writing

Project is to support girls finding their own voice, discovering their strengths and realizing their capacity for leadership," says Perlman, founder and executive director. "The more you grow as a person, the more focused and successful you will be if you know who you are."

The fee-based 12-week program is designed for high school girls, ages 14 to 19 years. A creative writing curriculum is offered for 11- to 13-year-old middle school girls. Classes are limited to six students and are conducted on Saturdays.



VALERIE HOTZ
Elizabeth Perlman of the Intuitive Writing Project.

Every two-and-a-half hour class is broken down into five components beginning with Perlman's teaching session, which leads to a group discussion. Two subjects are offered as prompts, with time allocated for writing to the prompts. Every student reads her writing aloud and the last portion of each class is devoted to feedback. Everyone offers positive feedback without any judgment about each piece in order to encourage freedom of expression.

"The very heart of this program is giving girls the time they need for self-reflection so they can know themselves," says Perlman. "With the increased presence of media in young people's lives today they are passively absorbing more information than ever before and consequently there is an even greater need for self-reflection."

While laptop computers are allowed, participants are encouraged to write the old-fashioned way using a pen and notebook. This is a safe place where girls can express themselves and be supported. The writing studio is beautifully decorated, complete with plush upholstered chairs and writing tables. "I believe honoring intuition and judgment is important because there is a lot of wisdom there. If I can help girls trust their intuition and judgment, then they will always have the guidance they need throughout life," says Perlman.

Prior to setting up shop at the Theatre Square location, the Intuitive Writing Project operated out of Jennifer Vigo's Re-Chic Boutique, located at 101 Orinda Way. Perlman is immensely grateful to Vigo for embracing the program. "Our board of directors provides amazing support and our chief financial officer, Maureen Brown, has played an instrumental role in making this happen."

Originally from Ohio, Perlman moved to the Bay Area seven years ago and enjoys a career in graphic design. Her favorite thing

to do is write, everything from children's books to screenplays and short stories. In her free time she prefers to spend time with friends and likes to hike.

For more information about the Intuitive Writing Project, visit <http://intuitivewritingproject.org>.



VALERIE HOTZ
Jawad "JJ" Ibrahim of Orinda Tires and Wheels.

Orinda Tires and Wheels

Whether you drive a Toyota or a Porsche, Orinda Tires and Wheels is the place for your tires, brakes and wheels needs. This small family business owned by Jawad Ibrahim (everyone calls him JJ) and his wife Sara is located at 67 Moraga Way, by the Union 76 station in the Crossroads. Established two-and-a-half years ago with the goal of providing excellent customer service at the best possible prices, JJ goes the extra mile for every customer.

"I run my business to serve my customers' scheduling needs and convenience. Developing a good relationship with each customer is the most important thing to me," says Ibrahim. "I have a customer who races a Porsche 911 GT 3 and another who drives a Ferrari, and I provide their tires."

Taking pride in providing a quick turnaround for customers, if a tire is not in stock Ibrahim will have it in as little as two hours or no later than the next morning. "I carry high-end and lower priced tires, including Michelin, Pirelli, Continental, Dunlop, BF Goodrich and Goodyear, as well as Korean and Chilean made tires. Used tires are a very good bargain that I provide," he says.

One of the few tire and wheel shops between Oakland and Walnut Creek and centrally located at the Crossroads, Orinda Tires offers customers free parking privileges at the rear of the Union 76 Station. "I meet online prices for tires and provide excellent service, including free brake inspection and free air for tires," he adds.

If stylish wheels are your thing, check out all models of Lorenzo, OZ or TSW that Ibrahim has available at excellent prices. Customers have been known to come from as far as Brentwood to take advantage of the bargains here.

The policy at Orinda Tires and Wheels is first-come, first-served. Drop-ins are always welcome and customers may call ahead to schedule their appointment for quick turnaround. The shop is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to as late as 8 p.m. Those who head out earlier in the morning for their commute to San Francisco may drop their car keys with the gas attendant and their car will be ready when they return at the end of the day.

Always on the customer's side, the 47 Yelp reviews enthusiastically endorse Orinda Tires and Wheels for running an efficient and clean shop offering excellent bargains. MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express and debit cards are ac-

[SEE BUZZ page 23]

TOPS

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