

THE ORINDA NEWS

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Residents Vocal on Downtown Parking Woes

By FRAN ENDICOTT MILLER
Staff Writer

Orinda residents and business owners packed the Orinda Library Auditorium in late January for the first community outreach meeting regarding the upcoming Downtown and Affected Neighborhoods Parking Study. Amit Kothari, the study's lead consultant from TJKM, led the meeting and answered audience questions on how the city intends to improve short-term and long-term parking downtown and in adjacent neighborhoods, and how to address access needs for residents, employees, customers and commuters across a range of transportation modes. The study and TJKM were commissioned last summer by the City Council after community members' repeated appeals for parking solutions.

Kothari led with a presentation on the scope of the study and then provided the opportunity for the public to share ideas and concerns. He described the study's goals and objectives and his firm's approach to the study. He then laid out Orinda's various parking supply-and-demand needs and described parking solutions and policies.

A plan to take the audience through the

Aladdin and the Lamp at Orinda Library in March

SUE ELLEN NELSON

East Bay Children's Theatre presents a new musical *Aladdin and the Lamp* by Ron Lytle, who also directs. Based on the Arabian Nights, this new musical retells the story of Aladdin who is trapped by a comical villain, falls in love and discovers a magical lamp. Performances are March 20 at 1 and 3 p.m. at the Orinda Library Auditorium. Go to www.ebctonline.org for more information. Shown above are **Noel Thomas** as Gene E., **Jessica LaFever** as Princess Balroubadora and **Daniel Ye** as Aladdin.

six defined problem areas one by one was quickly scrapped as citizens waited for their turn to voice their opinions about particular areas, with BART overflow parking being targeted by many as the heart of Orinda's

[SEE PARKING page 5]

Showtime's *Fun Size* Star Headlines Local Night of Comedy

By KATHRYN G. McCARTY
Staff Writer

Comic Brad Williams may be Fun Size in stature, but his comic genius is definitely King Size. Williams' acclaimed comedy special *Brad Williams: Fun Size*



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

One of the hottest comedians in the country, **Brad Williams** headlines the Orinda Comedy Night on March 4 at the Orinda Theatre.

is one of Showtime's highest rated comedy specials of 2015. Williams recently completed filming his sophomore comedy special that airs on Showtime in spring 2016. This month, Williams headlines the Orinda Chamber of Commerce's "A Night of Comedy" at the Orinda Theatre. Ben Feldman opens for Williams and Anthony Hill emcees the Mar. 4 show at 7:30 p.m.

"Laughing is good for you," said Sophie Braccini, the Chamber's Executive Director. "It is said that laughter as therapy relieves physical or emotional stresses. If people get a little bit of that on top of just pleasure, why not?"

Braccini praises the success of the annual event, conceived seven years ago by local architect and chamber member Rick Kattenburg. "The show helps fund our other events and programs," said Kattenburg. "The chamber is the biggest advocate and supporter of the Orinda business community. We also provide information, communication and activities that benefit and enhance the community."

Braccini believes audiences will enjoy William's work. "Brad adds a level of irony and sarcasm that the Orinda audience is going to love," she said.

[SEE COMEDY page 16]

City Council Votes on \$25 Million Bond Measure for June Ballot

By FRAN ENDICOTT MILLER
Staff Writer

The Orinda City Council voted at their mid-February meeting to move forward with a June 2016 ballot measure asking citizens to back a \$25 million general obligation bond to help fix a portion of Orinda's ailing roads.

Councilmembers were in agreement that the bond election needs to take place; however, the proposed dollar amount was in question. Being considered were two amounts – \$25 million intended to fix some of the roads, and \$47 million intended to fix all of Orinda's roads.

Citing the recent findings of survey firm FM3, and a prior city history of failure on two other occasions to pass such measures, Mayor Victoria Smith stated that her decision to back the \$25 million figure was based on FM3's expertise and their opinion that the lesser bond amount has greater likelihood to succeed. "We need to take the information we received and do the best we can with that," she said. "This is the next step of the city's original plan; we always intended to move forward incrementally."

In a January 2016 poll of 346 Orinda residents, FM3 found that voters are generally

pleased with city services but are skeptical about the city's tax dollar spending. They are most dissatisfied with road maintenance, and though they are concerned about the costs associated with repair, nearly half of those surveyed prefer a measure that would take care of all roads - requiring a 2/3 vote majority.

[SEE ROADS page 5]

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The Meaghers Make Getting Involved a Family Affair

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Each month, a family member of the Orinda Association (OA) will be profiled. We hope you enjoy getting to know your fellow Orindans, who are actively improving the quality of life in our community by their membership. This month, meet April and Steve Meagher and their daughters, Bailey and Bridget.

How did you learn about the Orinda Association?

April: I wanted to get involved in the community after moving here and saw an ad in *The Orinda News* looking for volunteers for the 4th of July. I met a lot of really awesome people and really enjoyed the work.

What programs were you most interested in?

April: The 4th of July is definitely one of my favorites. But, as I got more involved in the OA and learned about some of what they did, I found other events that were really neat. I have attended the Volunteer of the Year dinner many times now, and it is really inspiring to see what people are doing in our community.

Steve: The 4th of July Parade! It is the one event that the entire community shares. From the WWII Veterans to the TOPS preschoolers, everyone is involved and shares the love of the community. I think *The Orinda News* is also a great resource to keep people up-to-date about what is going on in town.

Why was it important for your family to support the OA?

April: My husband and I believe in volunteering and when our girls, Bridget and Bailey, were young, we thought about how to instill that in them. We realized that the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Meagher family. (L-F) Bailey (8-years-old), April, Steve and Bridget (11-years-old) holding Ginger, are very involved in the Orinda community. You might recognize Bridget as the Statue of Liberty in the annual 4th of July parade.

best way to teach them to be of service was to allow them to watch us volunteer. When we can, we make it a family event.

Steve: The OA provides a lot of behind-the-scenes programs such as Seniors around Town, *The Orinda News* and, at one point, was selling Red Cross Emergency backpacks to help our citizens be prepared for any crisis. Programs like these that get little recognition but are vitally important to our well being as a city. Supporting the OA is a simple way to give back to these programs and the community as a whole.

What have you gained supporting the OA and why should other families get involved?

April: I think the biggest thing I have gained is a real understanding of how our community works. People will often say that they don't know about what is going on around town. I don't have that issue. Over the years, I have been introduced to people and events that really make a difference in our community. I feel like I have a real understanding of how Orinda works and what is needed to keep our community great. I also feel like I know many people in our

community. Many people will volunteer in the schools, which is great. But I felt like it was important to know about more than just what was happening in our schools. Don't get me wrong, I do my fair share of volunteering at school. I just wanted a broader range. I have met people I wouldn't have met otherwise in the community. The OA led me to the Orinda Juniors and to the Orinda in Action group. Each of these groups has enriched my life.

Steve: A sense of community and admiration for the people that volunteer their time to make Orinda a better place to live.

What makes the OA relevant to you?

April: I really appreciate the OA's mission of informing people about what is going on around town. I also know that my whole family is enriched by volunteering. We are all out there helping decorate for 4th of July, planning a float or at the BART parking lot the night before getting everything ready. My daughters have learned how to be part of a community, and it shows in their behaviors. Bailey feels strongly about caring for animals and Bridget is always concerned about others.



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As an Orinda resident, you are invited to join The Orinda Association. For over 70 years, we have been dedicated to enhancing our community and enriching the quality of life here. Please join us – the membership fees are nominal, but the returns are immeasurable!

Some of the ways we keep you Informed, Involved & In Touch:

- Publishing *The Orinda News*
- Operating the Volunteer Center
- Hosting Community Forums
- Organizing the All-Community 4th of July Celebration
- Providing transportation through "Seniors Around Town"
- ... and more!



PO Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563

Visit www.OrindaAssociation.org to see all the ways we support our community. Only through your generosity and support can we maintain Orinda as one of the best communities in the nation! For more details, contact us at 925-254-0800.

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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
 “Madness” Isn’t the Only March
 Event

Cindy Powell



I am truly grateful for our Orinda volunteers and the opportunities for fun that span all ages and interests. March Madness is not the only game in town! Below are highlights of some of Orinda’s events this month.

March 4 is **A Night of Comedy**. Every year we have a great time enjoying the comedians that the Chamber of Commerce invites to entertain us.

The first Friday in March is **Employee Appreciation Day**.

March 11 is the **Tri City Dance**, so send your seventh- and eighth-graders to dance the night away, and support the Lafayette Youth Commission.

March 12 is **Girl Scout Day**. Your favorite cookies are available this month. Be sure to buy a box or two.

Sunday, March 13, 2 a.m., we lose an hour to **Daylight Saving Time** (remember spring forward, fall back!). But I’m actually looking forward to March 14. Yippee! Pi Day for the mathematicians in town. I plan to celebrate by eating pie in their honor – my reward for knowing “Pi” to three decimal places!

Three days later, coming down from my sugar high, we’ll celebrate **St. Patrick’s**

Day. Apparently everyone is part Irish – who knew?

March 18 we celebrate **Orinda Citizen of the Year**, recognizing an outstanding Orinda volunteer. A BIG thank-you to Rotary Club of Orinda!

March 19 is **Junior Prom** for Miramonte and the **STEM** conference for middle school girls – beauty and brains.

March 19 is also **Spring Equinox** at 9:30 p.m. Technically, day and night are the same length. Spring is daffodils sprouting around town – thank you Orinda Garden Club! Nita Roethe would like suggestions for a plot the club can enhance next month.

And as you hit the spring-cleaning mode, consider upsizing your green or recycle bin from a 64 gallon to a 96 gallon for FREE.

March 26 the **Orinda Farmers Market** opens, but if you have a toddler to second-grader, you’ll be at the **Rotary Spring Egg Hunt**. True March Madness!

March 30 is the **All Orinda Band Festival** at Miramonte featuring great up-and-coming musicians.

Two days later is April ... don’t FOOL around. Be prepared! (Don’t say I didn’t warn you.)

Be well and enjoy our beautiful town.

Fresh New Look, Same Core Values

By the Membership Committee

Some things just get better with age and that is certainly the case with the Orinda Association (OA). This year, the OA is celebrating it’s 70th anniversary. As the oldest continuing, community-wide non-profit in Orinda, we’re putting on a fresh face while continuing our relevant mission of enhancing the quality of life in Orinda. You may have noticed our new 70th anniversary logo on the front page or received our colorful postcard in the mail.

While our outside might change a bit, our programs and events will retain the same quality you have come to rely upon. You chose Orinda as your home for many reasons: the quiet, rolling hills, the lush landscape, the proximity to cities, the excellent schools, the variety and exposure to the arts, the emphasis on outdoor living and much more. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life here in our beautiful town by building on community involvement and providing information on events, issues and

concerns in our community.

To help celebrate our 70th anniversary we’re planning some special events. We showcased a special 70-year short film that shows some of Orinda’s and the OA’s wonderful history at our Volunteer of the Year dinner on Feb. 21, and we’re busy planning special events around our annual July 4th parade. Other events are being planned, and we’ll be sure and let you know about them. See www.orindaassociation.org for details.

This year is dedicated to informing residents about our programs that benefit all of us in Orinda. We invite you to join us as supporting members of the OA and encourage you to become more informed, involved and in touch with your community because, after all, you are the community!

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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Letters to the Editor

We Can Fix Orinda's Roads

Nine years after the Infrastructure Committee told us what it would take to fix our roads, the City Council put a stake in the sand and agreed we should fix all of our roads. The Infrastructure Commission (CIOC) put a price tag of \$80 million for repairs plus \$3 million per year to maintain them afterwards. The Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) developed a selection of taxes to raise the funds.

At that point, however, the process started going south. Instead of beginning a dialogue with the community on the options, the City Council conducted a phone survey of 350 people which (1) Polled people not yet educated on the issues and financing options available to them; (2) Asked only about financing repairs and not the funds required to maintain the roads after we spend \$80 million to repair them; (3) Only asked about two of the five funding alternatives the FAC identified.

A grass roots citizens group, the Roads Action Group, would like to start the dialogue so that a final road funding solution is not forced upon a community desperate for better roads but a plan is developed by and embraced by the community. To this end, we have created a website describing Orinda's roads and the costs needed to repair and then maintain them; and then describes the funding options with their pros and cons. We have also included our proposal for a tax package which we believe is fair and will fund both repairs and maintenance for 25 years.

The website name is www.OrindaRoadFacts.info. Included in it is a short survey (www.surveymonkey.com/t/Orinda-Road-Survey-2016) which gives you the ability to ask questions and give feedback. We hope you will participate, and we hope there are open public forums and workshops in the near future.

— Steve Cohn

We Need a Comprehensive Plan for Roads

H.L. Mencken wrote: "It is the dull man who is always sure, and the sure man who is always dull." But sometimes one must broach dull subjects, taking some risk at appearing dull despite best efforts to sound merely sensible.

The subject is the City of Orinda's approach to road renovation, and the sense is a possible rethinking of its methodology. Undertaking a multi-million dollar reclamation project many times Orinda's annual budget is serious business. The City Council, the Director of Public Works and Engineering, and the citizens volunteer group (CIOC) presently managing this project may be well intended, and no insult is intended here. But I recommend a pause and re-consideration of how rebuilding Orinda's roads should proceed before

another request for more funding is put to Orinda voters.

An incremental approach to the raising and allocation of funds may be a necessary course. However, there must first be a comprehensive Plan that defines the full range of the type and extent of repairs that are required for every road to meet a pavement condition goal over the duration of the project. Absent such a plan, an essential grasp of the project's full expense and credible governance over the timely distribution of funds cannot succeed. Such a plan should have been in place before any shovel hit dirt.

Further, professional execution of such a plan must be in the hands of a full-time, qualified engineering project manager who is not burdened with competing city-wide demands for his/her attention as is Orinda's Director of Public Works and Engineering. The consequences of inadequate staff capacity, disorderly governance and fund misappropriation can significantly delay, even damage, outcomes and thereby diminish our community's confidence in this critical road reclamation project. Where the Director of Public Works and Engineering and the CIOC's talents would be best employed are in the documentation and reporting on the project's ongoing progress in order to secure the public's trust and future funding.

— Bob Nelson

No More Money For Road Repair Now

Orinda's voters must not provide any more money for road repair until and unless the money already supplied for bad roads is spent wisely.

In June 2014, the city's voters approved a \$20 million bond for road repair. Orinda's residents need to see how well the city has done with the existing funds before voting for any supplemental appropriations.

The *Contra Costa Times* (February 5, print edition) reported that, "At least three members [a majority] of the Orinda City Council voiced their support Tuesday [Feb. 2] for placing a bond measure on the June ballot to fund another portion of the city's ambitious 10-year roads and drainage repair plan."

In a January, 2016 telephone survey of 346 Orinda voters, the FM3 company of Oakland found insufficient support to pass a bond or parcel (property) tax for road repair.

The survey, which was commissioned by the City Council, found that 61 percent of Orinda's voters supported a bond measure while 55 percent favored a parcel tax of approximately \$411 a year for perhaps 20 years.

Passage of a bond measure or parcel tax requires at least two-thirds vote (66.7 percent).



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Orinda's roads are some of the worst in the East Bay. However, voters must not be stampeded into voting for more money now.

If the City Council does put a road-repair measure on the June ballot, Orindans must vote down such an ill-conceived plan. Orinda must demonstrate competence with the \$20 million now available.

— Richard S. Colman

Blacktop Blues

I am not the only citizen dismayed by

the selection criteria for road rehabilitation in Orinda. Called into question is the accuracy of the Pavement Index Condition (PCI) numbers of the Street Saver program, which mainly drives what roads are supposedly appropriate for immediate repair. The "worst roads" to be repaired for the initial phases of the project are those with a condition index of less than 25. But comparison of actual road conditions and the PCI street index numbers is a head-scratching experi-

[SEE LETTERS page 16]

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NEW SUPERINTENDENT / CONTINUATIONS

Carolyn Seaton Appointed OUSD Superintendent

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Now in her 32nd year as an educator, Carolyn Seaton will take over as the superintendent for the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) on May 2. She currently serves as executive director of human resources for the Manhattan Beach Unified School District. Seaton succeeds Dr. Joe Jaconette, who served as the district's superintendent for more than eight years.

"The board conducted a thorough search based on extensive input from our community," said OUSD Board President Julie Rossiter. "Carolyn Seaton rose to the top of an impressive field. She truly embodies the leadership characteristics most valued by our community."

Seaton received a B.A. in history from Southern Methodist University and an M.A. in education from the University of North Texas. She is expected to receive her Ed.D. in K-12 educational leadership from the University of Southern California this May. Her doctoral dissertation is titled "Transformational Technology Practices in K-12 Schools."



DAVID DIERKS
Carolyn Seaton has been hired as the superintendent for the Orinda Union School District. She begins her duties on May 2.

"I look forward to partnering with district, school, community and business organizations to expand the educational opportunities available for our students," said Seaton. "I am passionate about teaching and learning and committed to providing Orinda's children with the educational experiences that will best prepare them for college, career and life."

Kathy Marshall, OUSD's Director Of Curriculum and Instruction, is serving as interim superintendent until Seaton begins her tenure in May.

◆ PARKING from page 1

parking woes.

Jennifer Harper, a Brookwood resident and neighborhood action committee member who serves on the parking stakeholder committee (in which 15 varied entities are represented), commented that street parking – apparently mostly BART riders - has increased each year in her BART-adjacent neighborhood, resulting in pedestrian safety problems. Rick Kattenburg, a former president of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce and outspoken critic of the city's delay in addressing parking concerns, claimed that parking solutions have long been presented to the City Council, and questioned why only now are they moving forward. "There has long been a collection of information, with no follow-up," stated Kattenburg. "We can do better on so many accounts."

"Our voices are being heard by the city and the study," said Harper. "But I am not sure what the outcomes will be."

According to the City of Orinda's weekly e-newsletter, the *Orinda Outlook*, upon completion of the parking study, the following topics will have been examined:

- The existing parking supply, demand and current utilization;
- Current parking policies and alternatives to maximize utilization of existing spaces;
- Parking enforcement strategies;
- Intrusion of BART commuters into local business and residential neighborhoods;

- Enhanced customer satisfaction;
- Public/private partnership opportunities;
- Permit parking program for various users; and
- ADA compliance of on-street parking spaces.

Several people at the meeting encouraged the use of bikes and scooters to help alleviate parking problems and suggested the use of BART shuttles and car pools. Kothari said the study would look into these recommendations.

"I was pleased with the turnout at the community meeting," said City Manager Janet Keeter. "The comments voiced by the attendees reflected concerns about BART overflow parking, interest in having residential parking permits, the need for increased parking enforcement and evaluation of time limits in existing spaces. We are very committed to finding parking solutions. Not everyone will be happy, but we seek to find long-term solutions that work for everyone."

Comments from the public information session will be reviewed and considered when the final downtown parking improvement study is prepared. Future community meetings are planned but not yet scheduled. Concerns and opinions can be addressed to Tonya Gilmore, assistant to the city manager, via email at tgilmore@cityoforinda.org. Information and updates will also be provided via the *Orinda Outlook* and the city's website at: www.cityoforinda.org.

◆ ROADS from page 1

Councilmember Darlene Gee stated her desire to present the full \$47 million to voters. "We need to attack the whole problem," said Gee. "I feel we can do this more efficiently and for less money if it is all done at the same time. The reality is that everyone votes their own pocketbook," she said, indicating that those whose roads are fixed under the lesser amount might not then vote later for another measure to cover additional roads. But not wanting to keep the measure from moving forward, Gee then voted with the majority of the council for the lesser amount.


Councilmember Dean Orr, who in previous meetings had backed the larger dollar amount, stressed his desire to capitalize on citizens' current enthusiasm for fixing the roads. "We need to move forward with the \$25 million amount and do the best we can with a limited bank account." He concluded that there are no assurances that the \$47 million would cover all of the roads, citing inflation and probable cost increases

over time.

Councilmember Amy Worth concurred with the cautious, incremental approach, citing concern over attempts to reach a 2/3 vote on the June ballot. "Getting there is like climbing up an ice wall, she stated. Councilmember Eve Phillips abstained from voting in favor of continued discussions on the topic, and stated that, "We don't have our ducks in a row to ensure that the bond measure will be successful."

Several citizens spoke at the council meeting, including Steve Cohn, steering committee member of The Orinda Road Action Group – a volunteer organization that has proposed a five-step action plan to fix Orinda's roads (www.OrindaRoadFacts.info.) Cohn stressed his group's concerns about the funding costs for future road maintenance, and the ultimate cost to future generations of Orindans.


"Our consultant (FM3) believes that survey numbers indicate that voters want to bite this off in chunks, so that's what we are going to do," said Mayor Smith.



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EBMUD To Overhaul Orinda Water Treatment Plant

By DAVID DIERKS
Assistant Editor

The East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) will start a massive maintenance project on the Orinda Water Treatment Plant in April or May. The project will take 30 months and is necessary to replace the aging infrastructure, provide required maintenance, increase the plant's reliability and improve drought operations. "We'll be sending out a notification in March to our customers," said Michelle Blackwell, EBMUD's community affairs representative. "We'll get the schedule in March from Overaa Construction, the winning bidder. The project could start as early as April but might start in May."

The Orinda Treatment Plant was built in 1935. "It's a fairly old plant," said Blackwell. "It's an inline plant, meaning that water comes in and is treated immediately before being sent out. It's a very critical piece of the distribution network." Because of its critical nature, EBMUD wants to limit the amount of down time of the plant to the bare minimum. Sections of the plant will be shut down in multiple phases over several months. The project includes replacement of existing pipes, filters and disinfection system, installation of a back-up power plant and a seismic upgrade of the interior of the wash water tank on Stanton Court (the tank's exterior

was seismically upgraded a few years ago). "We are expending a lot of effort upfront so that when taken out of service, it goes back in quickly," said Blackwell. The actual plant outage won't happen until next winter and should last no more than 16 weeks.

Once started, construction will run Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. "However, allowable work hours for some activities will be 24 hours per day, Monday through Saturday, to meet critical water delivery needs. Activities outside typical work hours will be limited to control noise," said Blackwell. Eighty percent of the work will be underground. The exteriors of the historical plant structures will not be altered.

For more information, visit www.ebmud.com.

Orinda Action Day

Time to pull together your teams or family members for the 8th Annual Orinda Action Day. The community service day where residents clean and weed throughout Orinda takes place April 23 beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Library Plaza. This year's theme is "Keep Orinda Beautiful" and it includes a poster contest for K-12 students. For more information, go to <http://adameverton.wix.com/orindacommunityfoundation>.

News Briefs

Surveillance Cameras - At the Feb. 16 City Council meeting the council agreed to fund Police Chief Mark Nagel's request for another police vehicle to be outfitted with an automatic license plate reader, installation of two fixed automated license plate readers at the entrance of the Wilder development and purchase eight additional Reconyx fixed cameras.

New Planning Director - Drummond Buckley, who worked as a Senior Planner in Orinda from 1996-1999, has been named Orinda's new Planning Director. Since 2010, Buckley has been the Civilian Master Planner embedded with the U.S. Air Force in Afganistan.

More on both stories in the next issue.
- Sally Hogarty, Editor



POLICE BLOTTER

January 1 to January 31, 2016

Calls for Service

- 911 Abandoned:** 12 incidents.
- Abandoned Vehicle:** 1 incident.
- Accident Injury:** 1 incident.
- Accident Property:** 7 incidents.
- Alarm Audible:** 99 incidents.
- Auto Burglary:** 1 incident.
- Barking Dog:** 4 incidents.
- Civil Problem:** 7 incidents.
- CVC Moving Violation:** 73 incidents.
- CCV Non Moving Violation:** 67 incidents.
- Death Non-Criminal:** 1 incident.
- DUI Misdemeanor:** 2 incidents.
- Embezzlement:** 1 incident.
- Found Property:** 8 incidents.
- Fire/Ems Response Info:** 1 incident.
- Fraud Credit Card:** 1 incident.
- Grand Theft:** 2 incidents.
- Grand Theft From Building:** 1 incident.
- Grand Theft From Vehicle:** 2 incidents.
- Hit And Run Misdemeanor:** 7 incidents.
- H&S Violation:** 1 incident.
- Harassment:** 1 incident.
- Identity Theft:** 17 incidents.
- Loitering:** 2 incidents.
- Loud Music:** 3 incidents.
- Medical Hospital:** 1 incident.
- Missing Adult:** 1 incident.
- Motorist Assist:** 4 incidents.
- Ordinance Violation:** 3 incidents.
- Other Misdemeanor:** 1 incident.
- Outside Assist:** 20 incidents.
- Panhandling Violation:** 1 incident.
- Parking Violation:** 32 incidents.
- Parking Complaint:** 22 incidents.
- Patrol Request:** 33 incidents.
- Petty Theft:** 5 incidents.
- Prowler:** 1 incident.

- Public Assembly Check:** 3 incidents.
- Public Nuisance:** 9 incidents.
- Reckless Driving:** 12 incidents.
- Residential Burglary:** 2 incidents.
- School Assembly Check:** 12 incidents.
- Security Check:** 36 incidents.
- Service To Citizen:** 83 incidents.
- Shoplifting:** 1 incident.
- Suspicious Circumstances:** 46 incidents.
- Suspicious Person Stop:** 10 incidents.
- Suspicious Subject:** 2 incidents.
- Suspicious Vehicle:** 11 incidents.
- Suspicious Vehicle Stop:** 17 incidents.
- Tow:** 11 incidents.
- Traffic Collision Property Damage:** 1 incident.
- Traffic Control:** 1 incident.
- Traffic Hazard:** 6 incidents.
- Traffic Stop:** 31 incidents.
- Trespass:** 1 incident.
- Unfounded Gunshots:** 5 incidents.
- Unwanted Guest:** 1 incident.
- Vacation House Check:** 36 incidents.
- Vandalism:** 5 incidents.
- Vehicle Theft:** 5 incidents.
- Verbal Dispute:** 2 incidents.
- Welfare Check:** 7 incidents.

Arrests

- DUI Arrest:** 2 arrests.
- Grand Theft:** 2 arrests.
- Other Misdemeanor:** 1 arrest.
- Shoplift:** 1 arrest.
- Vehicle Theft:** 1 arrest.
- Warrant Arrest:** 2 arrests.

For more incident details, visit www.crimereports.com



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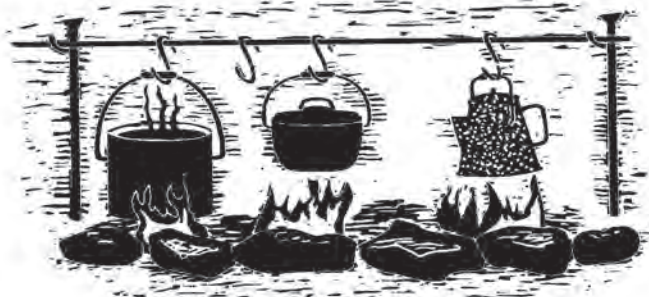
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Partner With Your Auto Repair Shop



By JOHN VANEK

The relationship with your auto repair provider is a partnership. Both parties need to do their part to achieve a common goal, which is keeping your vehicle reliable. Like any partnership there are commitments, expectations and loyalties.

What should the consumer expect from their repair shop? Are they AAA approved or Diamond Certified? Are they trained to work on your type of car, truck or SUV? Are they readily available to help you?

Some dealerships ask you to leave a message when you call, which delays the whole process. You need a shop that understands your transportation needs. Will they offer you a shuttle or rental car? Will they give you speedy service combined with quality service? Price is important but not the most important thing. Trust and value are most important. Will your shop fit you in and get you back on the road as quickly as possible? That is more important than saving \$20 on a brake job.

What is the consumer's part in the relationship? While your repair shop should be doing everything possible to get you back on the road, the owner has responsibility in the partnership also. This includes keeping the appointment that you made to bring in your car and calling if you are going to be late. When you drop off your vehicle give enough time to go over your service needs.

The Bureau of Automotive Repair regulates the auto repair industry. Their rules mandate that a written estimate be signed. That is your contract for the partnership. It includes a description of the service and the estimate price. It is a good idea to read

it so you and your repair partner are on the same page.

Once you drop off your vehicle it is important to be available to talk to your service provider. Waiting for the customer's approval on a vehicle repair can be frustrating. There are many things involved in repairing a vehicle. The car has to be diagnosed, parts ordered and installed and quality control checks need to be done. When there's no customer callback, it puts everything on hold. Also, don't bring the vehicle in with no gas, as that also wastes time and money having to fill it up before it can be road-tested.

Your car care provider helps you understand the maintenance needs of your vehicle. However, it is best to understand the maintenance needs of your car and also be consistent with the shop you use.

The bottom line is everyone has a choice when it comes to service providers. Do your homework and choose one that will be a good partner. Find a shop that does all the things I mentioned and in turn show loyalty for their efforts. A good partnership will give you much better results.

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

Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness
March 12 at 3 p.m.
Lafayette Library

Features authors Erin Marie Daly and D'Anne Burwell. Call 925-385-2280.

France Honors 92-Year-Old WWII Vet

By SALLY HOGARTY
 Editor

Sometimes good deeds and heroic actions take a long time to be officially recognized. That was certainly the case for 50-year Orinda resident Patrick Byrne. Now 92 years old, the former Navy radar technician received the French Legion of Honor Medal, France's highest accolade, for risking his life to liberate France from Nazi Germany during the "D" Day invasion of Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944. Byrne was seriously injured during the attack.

"Today, we are celebrating a hero whose courage, faith and dedication contributed – more than 70 years ago – to defend and preserve the independence of France and to save our common values: freedom, tolerance, democracy," said French Consul General Pauline Carmona at the Jan. 20 ceremony at the French embassy in San Francisco. "Courage and bravery are precisely the qualities that Napoleon wanted to reward while creating the Legion of Honor in 1802. Thanks to you [Byrne] and thanks to America, people of my generation were allowed to grow up in a free country," she added.

"I'm extremely happy, excited and honored to receive this award," said Byrne,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Long-time Orinda resident **Patrick Byrne** received the French Legion of Honor Medal at a Jan. 20 ceremony commemorating his bravery during the "D" Day invasion of Omaha Beach.

who was joined at the ceremony by his son Craig, daughters Deborah and Laurie, grandchildren Audrey, Kyle and Shawn and his brother Chris. "One of the most exciting aspects was actually being nominated for the award by the president of the French Republic, Francois Hollande."

Born in Dublin, Ireland in 1924, Byrne immigrated with his family to the United States when he was only six years old. His father had fought for England during World

[SEE BYRNE page 10]

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Local Author's New Book Turns Spotlight on Violence Against Women

By KATHRYN G. McCARTY
Staff Writer

In 1988 Orinda resident Joni Binder journeyed to a remote village in the southern region of Kenya carrying only a camera, empty journals, T-shirts, old flip flops and a bottle of red hair dye.

The unnamed village did not have the comfort of electricity or running water, and could only be identified by the Mile 46 marker and the dry red dirt of the Maasailand. For six months, the 21-year-old college photography student lived in a traditional dung hut with a Maasai family, chronicling the family and its community.

That journey provides the setting for her soon-to-be-released book, *Mile 46: Face to Face in Maasailand*, which will be launched at a private event at Futures Without Violence (FWV), in the Main Post of San Francisco's Presidio on March 8, International Women's Day.

Binder is passionate about FWV, serving on its leadership council. According to



FREDERIC ARANDA
Orinda resident **Joni Binder** whose book *Mile 46: Face to Face in Maasailand* will be available April 5.

Binder, the organization worked with Joe Biden and Bill and Hillary Clinton to get the Violence Against Women Act passed in 1992. Binder proudly adds that the group "has trained every Supreme Court justice, most federal court, state and county court judges, as well as professional sports teams' owners, coaches, trainers and players about domestic violence." FWV works with student organizations across America "to

help reduce – with the goal of ultimately eliminating – violence from school campuses and sports leagues."

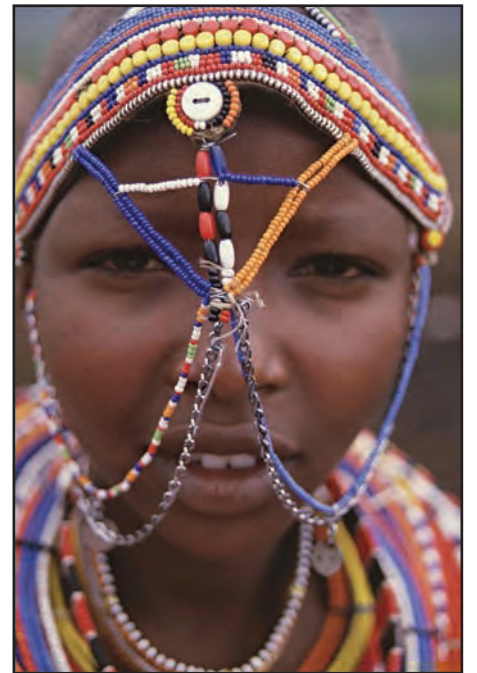
While in Kenya, Binder witnessed "terrifying violence, particularly against women and girls." Her private journals were a way to process what she had seen. When she returned to the U.S., her photographs were exhibited in galleries, "but both the journals and the photographs sat relatively untouched for a quarter of a century."

A few years ago, she shared the journal and pictures with her daughter. When sharing the items, Binder "realized I could contextualize them through my now more worldly perspective, as a mother and a more fully formed woman."

"Having my original journals and photos, plus my contemporary writing, makes for a unique and three-dimensional experience," Binder said, adding that *Mile 46* provides an intimate snapshot into the everyday life of the Maasai while making a wider plea for social justice, cultural awareness and personal diplomacy.

Binder said her decision to venture to Kenya resulted in "an experience that will always be a part of my own psychic fabric. There is a part of Africa in me forever."

Studying the traditions of the Kenyan



JONI BINDER
A young Maasai woman Binder encountered in the 1980s.

village provided Binder with many life lessons. "I have an appreciation for small things," she said. "I have a deeply ingrained sense of diplomacy, of how to be somewhere and recognize that I don't only

[SEE BINDER page 18]

13th Annual Visual Arts Competition at Orinda Library Gallery

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

This month the Lamorinda Arts Council showcases 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 students entered their artwork in the council's Visual Arts Competition (VAC), which features \$3,000 in cash awards, merit citations and a month-long exhibit at the Orinda Library Gallery. The public is invited to the award ceremony at the gallery on Mar. 4 from 4 to 6 p.m. when 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).

The council awards cash prizes in each

category as follows: first place \$300; second place \$200; third place \$100; honorable mention \$25, and Best in Show \$300. Professional artists judge the art based on 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. The council extends sincere thanks to Lamorinda art teachers who assisted students in preparing their entries.

Another reception for the student artists will be held on April 24 from 1 to 3 p.m. at St. Mary's College Museum of Art on the museum patio. Students who win in first, second and third place in any category, as well as Best of Show winner, along with their families, will be honored guests and receive complimentary admission to the museum.

For over 65 years, the council has been advocating for the arts in local schools and the community. An event of this scope calls for generous amounts of volunteer

[SEE GALLERY page 10]



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ROVING REPORTER

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What Will You Do On St. Paddy's Day?



Charlie Jarrett

Orinda will likely be running wild with Irish faithful on March 17, St. Patrick's Day. We asked employees and customers at Geppetto's Café: "Are you Irish, of Irish descent or an imitation Irishman on St. Patrick's Day and what will you do to celebrate?"

Geppetto's new owner, Peter Leou: "I love my customers and am planning to add something Irish and very special to my menu, certainly a treat that all our friends and customers will enjoy!"

"My mother's side of the family is Irish and German. I've lived in Orinda since 1967 - 49 years! I come to Geppetto's every day for breakfast," says Ray Earle.



Tom Morehouse

CHARLIE JARRETT

"My mom is part Irish and she was brought up eating corned beef and cabbage on St. Patrick's Day," relates Laura Michelle Mary. "The only thing we do to celebrate is drink green beer and eat corned beef and cabbage."

Mike Buchanan says, "I've been to Ireland four times and it's a wonderful place. The people are funny and a little bit crazy! My family came over a long time ago from Ireland, but none of them live there now." Amy Kay Raymond adds, "I'm English, Irish, Scottish, French, Welsh, Pennsylvania Dutch and maybe even a little Italian. I can probably celebrate every holiday there is! I've never been to Ireland, but I would love to go!"

[SEE REPORTER page 11]



CHARLIE JARRETT

Ray Earle with employee Hayley Alexander.

"My grandfather is 50 percent Irish. I've never really celebrated St. Patrick's Day before, but this year I am going to get some green beer and we are all going to dress up for St. Paddy's day here at Geppetto's," says Hayley Alexander. "I've always told my friends, 'you can't pinch me when I'm not wearing green, 'cause I'm Irish, and you're just not allowed!' After all, being part Irish, I must have some green in my blood!"

"The other part of my family is Irish," states Tom Morehouse. "We celebrate by drinking lots of green beer, late into the night! All right, I admit it, I'm not really Irish at all, I'm English and Scottish. I've lived in Orinda since 1987. The Irish are great people, you know!"



CHARLIE JARRETT

Mike Buchanan and Amy Kay Raymond.



CHARLIE JARRETT

Geppetto's owner Peter Leou (2nd from left) with employees Hayley Alexander, Callie Driskell and Laura Michelle Mary.

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ORINDA COUPLE

Orinda Couple Befriends Non-Profit in Uganda

By HILLARY HOPPOCK
Contributing Writer

In 2005, longtime Orinda residents Karen and Gil Gleason created Friends of Ruwenzori (FOR), a non-profit for AIDS prevention in the Western Region of Uganda. They were inspired by the work of a community-based organization - launched by Anglican priest Ezra Musobozi and his wife Marjorie in 1999 - to teach HIV prevention in the rural foothills of the Ruwenzori Mountains. After conducting too many funerals, the native Ugandan couple launched a new counseling program, Kitojo Integrated Development Association (KIDA).

Fast-forward 10 years and the Gleasons' FOR is going strong. It funds a hospital serving 100,000 people, as well as vocational schools in carpentry, tailoring and masonry, an orphan and vulnerable chil-

dren's program, the KIDA drama group working to lessen the AIDS stigma, a micro-finance sustainable cooperative and a rural health insurance plan. In January, 2016 the regional Department of Health ranked the KIDA hospital first in the top 10 performing facilities for 2014-2015. To ensure all funds donated go directly to KIDA, the Gleasons cover all administrative costs of FOR.

On their first trip to Uganda in 2001, the Gleasons were impressed "by how much Ezra and Marjorie were doing with very little money," teaching hundreds of illiterate poor people how to prevent HIV infection using the mediums of music, dance and live drama in the local language. The Muzobozis planned an AIDS clinic and engaged hundreds of people to make bricks for it.

On a return trip to Uganda in 2003, Karen saw that same pile of 40,000 hand-made



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Karen Gleason walks with a group of children in Uganda.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Gil Gleason plays the violin for a crowd of over 300 at a country church in Uganda in 2001. Most had never heard a violin before.

bricks, along with a \$5,000 donation from St. John's Episcopal Church in Oakland for cement, turned into a tiny AIDS clinic. Two hundred people came for testing at the opening of the clinic, which operated without electricity. Karen used her background as a clinical lab scientist to record results in the lab. She also vowed to return home and find KIDA more funding.

While still working at the microbiological clinical laboratory at San Francisco General Hospital, Karen started taking non-profit organization classes at the SF Foundation. Realizing "things grow into bigger things," she decided to retire after 39 years in a career she loved because FOR was becoming more than she could handle with her full-time job. Gil continued to teach violin and viola, playing with the Oakland Symphony and conducting the Oakland Community Orchestra.

One of their many memorable times in Uganda occurred in 2001 during a country church service where Gil played the violin. The church warden asked the congregation of 300: "How many of you have heard a violin before?" After two or three hands were raised he continued, "In the olden times, violins were played for princes and kings. Gil, today you made us all princes and kings."

Subsequent trips to Uganda involved many family members and friends. In 2007, an East Bay contractor joined a trip with Karen and learned brick laying from a 15-year-old Uganda boy who was attending the KIDA vocational school. In 2010, the Gleasons' son Mike and daughter-in-law Jen used their broadcasting experience to create a video of KIDA in action. Moses, the Ugandan orphan Karen and Gil sponsored who dreamed of being a doctor, caught up with his education in Kampala, attended medical school in Ukraine, married, named his first daughter Karen and is now a practicing surgeon in Uganda.

Last November's FOR Green and Yellow Festival at Piedmont Veterans Hall netted \$33,000, representing a big slice of the organization's \$170,000 budget to fund KIDA programs. However, the long-term goal has always been for KIDA programs to become self-sustaining. "Ezra and Marjorie are committed to empowering people to take control of their lives, improving their own health by helping others," said the couple.

For more information on KIDA, visit: www.FriendsofRuwenzori.org. Or view the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlqGmgUCE-M>.

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◆ GALLERY from page 8

work. VAC co-chairs Cindy Raleigh and Teresa Onoda thank council President Lawrence Kohl, past council Co-Chair Natalie Wheeler and many other volunteers for their hard work. Thanks are also due Michelle Lacy, Director of Orinda Parks and Recreation, who coordinates gallery events with Maggie Boscoe and Natalie Wheeler, gallery co-chairs. Co-sponsors of the event include Lafayette Partners in Education, Moraga Education Foundation, the Education Foundation of Orinda and Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley. See www.lamorindaarts.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 to 5 p.m. The library is closed Mar. 27. Call 925-254-2814 for more information or visit www.ccclib.org.

◆ BYRNE from page 7

War I so joining the U.S. Navy at 17 to fight for his adopted country in World War II seemed like the right thing to do. As a radar technician aboard the USS Augusta, Byrne became part of the Normandy invasion. During his Naval service, Byrne received the Good Conduct Medal and four Bronze Stars. He spent six months at Philadelphia Naval Hospital recuperating from his injuries during the landing on Omaha Beach.

While Byrne will not talk about his combat experiences, he proudly notes that generals Dwight Eisenhower, MacArthur and Patton all spent time aboard the USS Augusta. He fondly remembers a meeting between Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The Orinda City Council honored Byrne for his military service and for receiving France's highest military honor at its Feb. 16 council meeting.

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FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE

Orinda Home Lauded as “Most Beautiful in World” for 2016

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

“The Most Beautiful Home in the World” is the latest accolade earned by an Orinda Frank Lloyd Wright-designed house. The International Association of Architects and Designers, the world’s largest association of architects and designers based in San Francisco, bestowed the honor for 2016. Owner Gerald Schmajon received a plaque and is justly pleased with the award.

Maynard and Katherine Buehler commissioned the house in 1948 and lived there until their deaths. During their residence, they graciously opened it for many fundraising events. Schmajon purchased the home two years ago. Continuing the tradition, he has offered it for benefits for non-profit organizations. All who are fortunate enough to visit the house enter through a pair of double-glass doors etched with Wright designs. The octagonal living room, the most dramatic room in the home, has a shed roof, which allows for great ceiling heights and has a gold leaf inset that reflects light into the space. One might be surprised to find Katherine’s large collection of stuffed animals in this amazing room.

The floor-to-ceiling windows offer a view of the exterior landscaping. The three acres of land have gardens created by Henry Matsutani who also designed Golden Gate Park’s Japanese gardens. There is a ceremonial Japanese tea pavilion, greenhouse guesthouse, and a large, rock-lined pond with an eight-foot waterfall. A second, even more dramatic fieldstone-lined waterfall feeds into the property’s winding creek with a 16-foot drop.

Wright, 81 at the time of the commission,

was actively involved in the planning but only visited the house twice. It is the only single-family Wright home in the Bay Area.

The design is Usonian, a word Wright used rather than “American” to describe the character of the look. Usually quite small, the Buehler house is not typical of the Usonian design due to its 4,350 square feet of space, but the design is organized in the typical L-shape, with a flat roof of copper, carports, under-the-floor (Cherokee Red-colored concrete) radiant heating and a concrete block exterior.

The living section of the house connects to the sleeping wing via a 40-foot gallery hall lighted by the Buehler Home Insignia. There are three bedrooms each highlighted by wood paneling and striking red tile floors. An office and wine tasting room are built into the home.

The team of architects that visited the home prior to its selection as “The Most Beautiful Home in the World” came from all parts of the world. Schmajon relates that the Chinese architect suggested, “You could start a whole new religion in this house.”

The Wright-Buehler House was added to the National Registry of Historic Places in 2006.

◆ **REPORTER** from page 9

“We’re Scotch, Irish and German, mainly on my mother’s side of the family. I love corned beef and cabbage, and I make it throughout the year, but I traditionally make it on St. Patrick’s Day,” explains Callie Driskell. “I’m not super into beer, but I like green beer on St. Paddy’s Day! We have fun here at work and dress up for the occasion, with green shirts and hats!”



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

This **Frank Lloyd Wright** designed house in Orinda won “Most Beautiful Home in the World” by the International Association of Architects and Designers.

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MARCH SCHOOL CALENDAR

Please forward school calendar listings to m.sharpe66@gmail.com.

- 2 **Acalanes Union High School District** board meeting, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette, 7:30 p.m. Also March 16. Visit www.acalanes.k12.ca.us.
- 10-20 **Campolindo High School** presents West Side Story, Campolindo Performing Arts Center, 300 Moraga Way, Moraga. Tickets \$20 to \$25. Visit <http://www.campochoir.com/> for show times and tickets.
- 14 **Orinda Union School District** board meeting, 8 Altarinda Road, 6 p.m. Visit www.orindaschools.org
- 19 **STEM Conference and Workshop**, hosted by American Association of University Women, St. Mary's College Soda Center, 1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. \$20. Open to all middle school girls interested in science, technology, engineering and math. To register, visit www.expandingyourhorizons.org/conferences/AAUW-SAINTMARYS or call 925-284-5909.
- 17 **Miramonte High School** presents *Legally Blonde The Musical*, theatre, 750 Moraga Way, 4 p.m. Also March 18 and 19 at 7 p.m. and March 26 at 4 p.m. Call 925-280-3930 or visit <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte>. See article p. 13.
Miramonte High School Band Festival, gym, 750 Moraga Way, 7 p.m. Call 925-280-3930 or visit <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte>.
- 18 **Holden High School Arts Fest**, 10 Irwin Way, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., featuring original artwork, student performances, food and refreshments. Visit www.holdenhigh.org.
- 19 **Wagner Ranch Elementary School** March Masquerade Madness fundraiser, Wilder Quarry House, 8 Quarry Hills Rd., Orinda, 6 p.m. Visit <http://wr-orinda-ca.schoolloop.com/> for tickets and information.
- 25-26 **Sleepy Hollow Elementary School** presents *The Music Man*, 20 Washington Lane. Visit <http://sh-orinda-ca.schoolloop.com> or call 925-254-8711.

Something to Howl About...

Animal Tales

When To Call The Vet



Jennifer Conroy

A friend of mine who has a sweet golden retriever called me the other day with a frightening question. Her dog was vomiting and had diarrhea, and she wanted to know if she should take Sally to the veterinarian. I don't think a phone connection was needed for my reply to be heard all over the East Bay.

"Yes," I yelled and added, "Hang up right now, put Sally in the car and get her to the vet."

Perhaps the most shocking part of this exchange was that it even happened at all. The humans in my circle know how I feel about animals and the absolute requirement that they receive the best care possible. This includes knowing when a non-routine trip to the veterinarian is necessary.

All companion animals require regular veterinary check-ups. In the Bay Area, there are veterinary specialties for virtually every species and every physical need. Orthopedists, ophthalmologists, small animal, large animal, you name it. Routine check-ups include preventive measures such as vaccinations, dental care and general physical examinations, but, in the course of your animal's life, there may well be visits to the veterinarian for a variety of other reasons. When one of those reasons occur, do not try to wait out whatever is distressing the animal or apply home remedies that may cause more harm than good.

Obvious cases requiring immediate veterinary attention are ones involving traumatic injury, bleeding from wounds or orifices, foaming at the mouth, and blatant signs of distress, such as ongoing whining, coughing, unusual lethargy, vomiting and diarrhea. One of my "girls," a yellow Lab, managed to scarf down a little frog (I kid you not) and within seconds green foam curled out of her mouth. Yep, it was a poi-

sonous frog but we got to the veterinarian in time for an emetic to save my dog – but, alas, not the frog!

In the Bay Area, we are always hearing of humans and animals becoming deathly ill from wild mushrooms. If you see them in your yard, pick them and bury them in the trash so your pets and kids can't get to them. Foxtails are another significant hazard and can find their ways into ears, nostrils, mouths, between paw pads, and other parts of an animal's body, working their nasty way inside the animal and doing terrible damage.

The point is that there are hazards all around us, and while we do our best to keep our animal and human family members safe, "stuff" happens. When it does, don't wait. Check with your own veterinarian to find out where to take your animal in an emergency during off hours or holidays. Your vet may have her or his own emergency number and can certainly recommend an emergency veterinary facility to use should that be necessary.

Remember, next to YOU, your veterinarian is your animal's best friend!

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SCHOOLS / STUDENTS

MHS Baseball Helps Furnish Home for Shelter Family

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Ever wonder what you could do to help a homeless family transition into a home? Valerie Mollahan and sons Ben and Charlie heard about Grateful Gatherings, a nonprofit that helps groups organize the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of **Miramonte High School's baseball team** made many trips up these stairs delivering furnishings for a homeless family transitioning into their own home.

collection and delivery of needed furnishings for homeless families transitioning into their own homes. The boys, who are on the Miramonte High School baseball team, brought the idea to their teammates. Anna Tague and her son Tim thought it was a great idea, as did the other 36-plus families with boys on the freshman, junior varsity and varsity baseball teams.

On Jan. 30, the team members achieved their goal by entirely furnishing and setting up an apartment for the Solis family (Rigoberto, Jocelyn, Wendy, Cindy and baby Daisy), who were transitioning from a shelter run by Shelter, Inc. to a two-bedroom apartment in Antioch.

Shelter, Inc. of Contra Costa County gives families a safe place to live and meets their most basic needs while offering services such as education, employment development and counseling. Families live in the shelter housing until permanent housing is available.

Grateful Gatherings is a nonprofit group founded in 2011 by Donna Somerville and Chris Flitter to provide better living environments for families and at-risk youth. Their Oakland-based headquarters attracts many volunteers. "You can't help everyone. But everyone can help someone," says Donna's husband, KTVU news an-

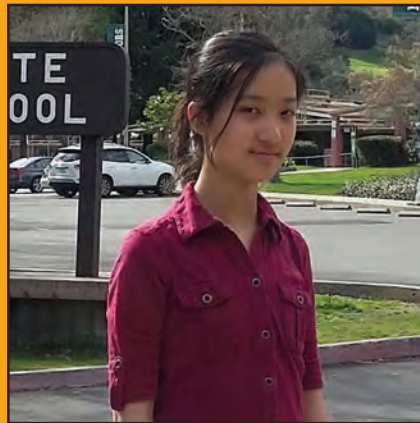
chor Frank Somerville. They guide people through the process of setting up a donation drive for a family in transition, neighbors helping neighbors. A request is sent out which identifies what gently used furnishings and household items are needed. On a selected date, donors drop off items and volunteers sort, deliver and set everything up in the new housing.

The Mollahan boys asked Miramonte High School's principal and athletic director to approve the Grateful Gatherings event. Their request was granted and participants gathered in the school parking lot on the designated day to drop off items to furnish the apartment. Students and their families used www.signupgenius.com to request needed items. See www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4aa4af23a02-miramonte for more information and to learn about the Solis family.

The donated items were sorted, loaded onto a truck and delivered to the Solis' family apartment in Antioch. An important part of the busy day for students was meeting the Solis family and welcoming them to their newly furnished apartment. "Thank you so much, we are so filled with joy in our new home," Jocelyn Solis told team members. "Your team gave a warm touch of love."

For information on Grateful Gatherings, see www.gratefulgatherings.org. For information on Shelter, Inc. visit www.shelterinc.org.

Student Takes Grand Prize in Code-in



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miramonte junior **Hannah Pan** was the Grand Prize winner in the sixth annual Google Code-in, a seven-week coding contest that included 980 students from 65 countries. She will join other Grand Prize winners for a four-day trip to the Google campus where they will meet with engineers and attend the award ceremony.

Miramonte Presents *Legally Blond The Musical*



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Students rehearse a song from *Legally Blond the Musical*.

Miramonte's drama and music departments proudly present the international award-winning musical based on the adored movie, *Legally Blonde The Musical*. It follows the transformation of Elle Woods, played by Eleanor Roeder, as she tackles stereotypes, snobbery and scandal in pursuit of her dreams. This action-packed musical features memorable songs played by a live student orchestra and dynamic dances choreographed by drama student Erin Mohr. The show runs Mar. 17 and Mar. 26 at 4 p.m. (\$5 student special), Mar. 18 and Mar. 25 at 7 p.m. Tickets are available on the Miramonte Webstore <https://miramonte.revtrak.net/tek9.asp?pg=products&grp=141>.

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Glorietta Hosts Director of Documentary on Education

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

Glorietta Elementary School Parents Club recently hosted producer/director Vicki Abeles for a screening of her newest movie, *Beyond Measure*. The film follows a diverse group of teachers, students and administrators from public, private and charter schools across the country as they pioneer new approaches to learning, while investigating education's "cookie-cutter teaching methods." These communities "are innovating from the inside, subverting our high-stakes education culture, and putting forth a much richer, engaging and purposeful vision for education," according to Abeles.



PAUL GREENSTONE
Producer/director **Vicki Abeles** screened her new film *Beyond Measure* for the Glorietta Elementary School Parents' Club.

Glorietta is one of more than 90 schools across the United States to screen *Beyond Measure* since it premiered last October at the Mill Valley Film Festival, where it was an Official Selection. Abeles said her team is "fielding hundreds of requests to screen the film from communities across the country. I've attended screenings in the Bay Area, Indianapolis, Boston, New York, Utah and Arizona, to name a few."

The documentary is a companion piece to Abeles' book, *Beyond Measure, Rescuing an Overscheduled, Overtested, Underestimated Generation*, which she calls "a playbook for change in our homes and our schools."

Abeles said she hoped *Beyond Measure* would "fill a void we saw in today's education debate." She described the film as "an appetizer, the first step in many steps." She asked the Glorietta audience: "Where do we go from here? Change at local levels leads to bigger policy changes. We have power to create change as parents and educators."

In writing the book, Abeles said her creative team "wanted to challenge the assumption that solving our education problems lies mainly in the hands of policymakers and there is little the rest of us can do to fix it in the meantime. What we found was a revolution brewing in public schools at the local level."

Yasaman Lee, co-president of the Glorietta Parents Club, said she had seen Abeles' 2010 award-winning *Race to Nowhere*, so when parent Sarah Bennett approached her about Abeles' new book and movie she thought the parents' group might be interested.

"In addition to many Glorietta parents,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Troop 303's newest Eagle Scouts are (L-R) **Kyle Wallace, David Whisnant** and **Jonathan Date-Chong** who recently fulfilled requirements to achieve this top scouting honor.

Orinda Troop 303 Honors Three New Eagle Scouts at Award Ceremony

By JAMES BROVELLI
Contributing Writer

Boy Scout Troop 303 in Orinda is proud to induct three new Eagle Scouts. Kyle Wallace, David Whisnant and Jonathan Date-Chong have earned the highest rank in Scouting by fulfilling requirements in leadership, service and outdoor skills. In addition, an Eagle Scout must earn at least 21 merit badges and organize and lead a service project benefiting his community. These three young men join the less than four percent of all Scouts who achieve

Eagle rank.

Wallace is a senior at Miramonte High School. His Eagle service project was designing and building a rainwater harvest system and garden bed for his former preschool. The project cleans, collects and stores up to 330 gallons of rainwater used to water vegetables and plants in the garden bed. The project educated the young students about water conservation and provided hands-on learning opportunities.

Whisnant is a freshman at Campolindo High School. His Eagle project included the construction of a wood-framed stair system leading from the parking lot of the Oakland Zoo up to the zoo's veterinarian clinic. It was an intense process of grading the hillside before assembling the wooden stringers and risers and securing the assembly to the ground. This project was a necessity for the zoo, as it provided staff with an easier way to transport sick and injured animals to the clinic.

Date-Chong is a senior at Miramonte High. For his Eagle service project, he designed and directed the construction of four wooden benches at Wagner Ranch Elementary School. The benches, painted to match the trim of the school buildings, were installed in areas where there was previously no seating for students.

Orinda Boy Scout Troop 303, chartered by the Rotary Club of Orinda, honored the new Eagle Scouts at a Court of Honor Award Ceremony on Feb. 21 at Grace Presbyterian Church in Walnut Creek.

For more than 52 years, Troop 303 has provided boys with a variety of hiking, camping, community service and leadership opportunities. To learn more about the troop, visit www.bsatroop303orinda.com or call Scoutmaster Jim Brovelli at 925-997-8437.

key education leaders from our community attended the event," said Lee, adding that OUSD interim Superintendent Kathy Marshall, two OUSD board members, local OUSD and private school administrators, and many teachers were instrumental in bringing the film and Abeles to the school.

The documentary also includes interviews with global leaders in education including Lynda Weinman, the film's executive producer and founder of www.lynda.com, Sir Ken Robinson, Linda Darling-Hammond and Carol Dweck.

Abeles has high hopes for the parents and teachers at Glorietta, as well as communities across the country that see her work. "I hope it will stir a new conversation about what school could look like and to take real steps toward that collective vision. Many elements of our traditional education system are so ingrained in our learning culture. The stories in this film challenge those assumptions and offer hope that successful alternatives are out there," she said. "We are just getting started."

For more information, visit www.beyondmeasurefilm.com.

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AWARDS / FORUM

Woman's Club Donates to Schools, Food Programs and Much More

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

The Orinda Woman's Club (OWC) hosted an awards ceremony and talent show on Feb. 9 at Orinda Community Church. Each year the group chooses two beneficiaries whose programs support children and families. This year's recipients are SEEDS Restorative Justice program of Berkeley and White Pony Express of Pleasant Hill. Each received \$12,000.

The SEEDS program began two years ago in two Berkeley schools. Now, the group teams with over 21 schools in Antioch, Mt. Diablo, Berkeley, Pittsburg and Napa. They aim to create alternatives to punitive disciplinary policies as well as detention, suspension and expulsion. SEEDS' executive director Jeff Sloan said that this year's first semester report reveals a 34-percent reduction in disciplinary actions involving at-risk children. He believes the organization's work is helping to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline. See www.seedsrc.org for more information.

Gary Conner, president of White Pony Express, says the food donation program has distributed 2,600,000 pounds of food in Contra Costa County in the past two years. Last year, they were delivering 3,000 pounds of food seven days a week; this year nearly 5,000. Their 400 volunteers work with 54 charities that serve 60,000 people in need. Eighteen mobile boutiques deliver clothing and children's toys and books. "When people see our trucks coming, they can't wait to meet our runners," said Conner. See www.whiteponyexpress.org for more information.

Following the awards, Holden High School students presented their annual talent show. Kristen Lamoureux, the school's admissions director, began by introducing Sofia Garcia who sang *Stitches* by Shaun Mendez. Next, Drew Bracken performed *Hallelujah* by Panic at the Disco. Cameron Kvech accompanied the singers on acoustic guitar. Emma Rodensky played an instrumental version of Led Zeppelin's *Babe I'm Gonna Leave You* on electric guitar. The OWC also made a donation to Holden's performing arts program.



SALLY HOGARTY

L-R, Orinda Woman's Club (OWC) member **Kathy Kerr-Schochet**; **Jeff Sloan** of SEEDS Restorative Justice; **Isa Campbell** and **Gary Connor** of White Pony Express; and **Adeline McClatchie**, **Gail Roche Van Wye** and **Elene Lee** of OWC. All were present at the Feb. 9 beneficiary awards and talent show hosted by the OWC at the Orinda Community Church. Both 2016 beneficiaries, SEEDS Restorative Justice program in local schools and White Pony Express, which provides food for the hungry in Contra Costa County, received \$12K.

The talent show continued with a lineup of OWC members emceed by Kay Norman. Singer Leslie O'Brien, accompanied on piano by Myrna Witt, sang *Tonight, Tonight* and *Counting My Blessings*. Adeline McClatchie recited *An Old Lady's Poem* (anonymous) and *Daffodils* by Wordsworth. Vicky Yancey sang a famous Patsy Kline song (written by Willie Nelson) called

Crazy. Sue Farmer, accompanied by Myrna Witt on piano, crooned *Somewhere Out There* from the film *American Tale* and finished with a hilarious parody of *My Favorite Things*. Gail Roche Van Wye regaled the crowd with the history of "The Chicken Dance" – then taught everyone the moves! For more information about the OWC, visit www.orindawomansclub.org.

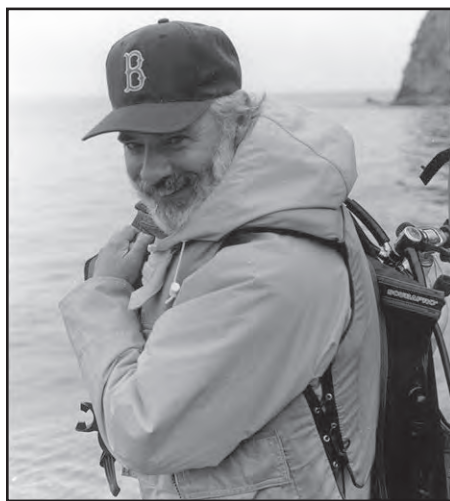
Ships, Shipwrecks Unveil Clues to Our Past at Next First Friday Forum

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Learn about local maritime history when Dr. James Allan presents *On Land and Sea: Ships and Shipwrecks of the San Francisco Bay* at the First Friday Forum on Friday, Mar. 4, at 1:30 p.m. The public is welcome to the free lecture at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Refreshments will be served at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

"My talk will cover the connections between the early growth of San Francisco and today's modern development projects," said Dr. Allan. "They frequently reveal that our early history is still encapsulated beneath our feet, as archaeologists today continually encounter, recover, preserve and interpret the remnants of those who came before us."

Some 1,400 vessels entered the San Francisco Bay in 1849 and 1850 and nearly 225 are recorded as having sunk. Only a few of those shipwrecks have been found, according to Allan. While ship discoveries underwater have produced minimal results, land searches have been more fruitful, especially in San Francisco's financial district, which was once part of a harbor before it was filled in. Allan cites several ships that have been found during new construction such as the "Candace," a whaling ship that is now being restored.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. James Allan will talk about shipwrecks in the San Francisco Bay at the Mar. 4 First Friday Forum.

Allan, who received his Ph.D. in anthropology from U.C. Berkeley, is an adjunct professor in St. Mary's College Anthropology Department, specializing in terrestrial and maritime archaeology. He is founder and executive director of the Institute for Western Maritime Archaeology.

For more information, visit www.lopc.org.



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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

MARCH

- 2 **13th Annual Visual Arts Competition** features 200 works by local high school students, through March 30 at Orinda Library Art Gallery. Awards ceremony March 4 from 4 to 6 p.m. with light refreshments. See article page 8.
Orinda Books, Story Hour with Cathy Goshorn for children 2 to 4 years, every Thursday, 276 Village Square, 10 to 11 a.m. Call 925-254-7606.
- 4 **Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church**, First Friday Forum features Dr. James Allan discussing "On Land and Sea: Ships and Shipwrecks of the San Francisco Bay," 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. See story page 15.
Orinda Chamber of Commerce presents "A Night of Comedy," featuring "Fun Size" Brad Williams and comedian Ben Feldmen, Orinda Theatre, 7:30 p.m. VIP seating (with champagne) \$100; general seating \$30. For tickets visit www.lamorindatheatres.com.
- 7 **Orinda Books** hosts Cynthia Leslie Bole (and guests) who will present her collection of poetry, *The Luminous In-Between*, 276 Village Square, 4 p.m. Call 925-254-7606.
- 9 **The Second Wednesday Book Group** will discuss *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* by Marie Kondo at Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. The group meets monthly and welcomes new members. Call 925-254-7606.
- 10 **California Independent Film Festival** presents *The Big Lebowski*, starring Jeff Bridges, Orinda Theater, 7 p.m. Free (sponsored by Orinda Theatre Square). Visit www.caiff.org/#!events/c17as.
- 12 **Cal Shakes'** 21st Annual Gala fundraiser, O Brave New World, City View at Metreon, San Francisco, 6 p.m. Tickets start at \$400. Contact events@calshakes.org, 510-809-3297, or visit www.calshakes.org/gala.
- 13 **Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation** fundraiser Dinner and the Opera, features *The Bartered Bride* (in Czech with English subtitles), Orinda Community Center, 6 p.m. Dinner will feature Czech cuisine. Tickets are \$50. For reservations, send check payable to Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation to: P.O. Box 265, Orinda, CA 94563, by March 7.
- 15 **Orinda Books** hosts Karen Tyler presenting a workshop on succulent plants and gardens, 276 Village Square, 10:30 a.m. Call 925-254-7606 to register.
Orinda Books, The World Affairs Book Group will discuss *Once Upon A Revolution: An Egyptian Story* by Thanassis Cambanis, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. New members welcome; the group meets bimonthly. Call 925-254-7606.
- 16 **Orinda Books** hosts C.W. Gortner introducing his latest historical novel, *Vatican Princess: A Novel of Lucrezia Borgia*, 276 Village Square, 10 a.m. Call 925-254-7606.
- 18 **St. Mark's United Methodist Church** Candlelight Maundy Thursday Worship Service, 451 Moraga Way. A soup and bread supper will be served after the service. Visit www.stmarksorinda.org.
- 20 **East Bay Children's Theatre** presents *Aladdin and the Lamp*, Orinda Library Auditorium, 1 and 3 p.m.. www.ebctonline.org.
- 26 **Orinda Rotary** Orinda Spring Egg Hunt for toddlers to age 7, Orinda Community Center Park, 28 Orinda Way, 11 a.m.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. The library will be closed March 27. For more information, call 925-254-2184 or visit www.ccclib.org/locations/Orinda.html.

- 1 **Math Lounge.** Drop-in math tutoring for students K-12 sponsored by MathElf, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Open to all students. Also March 8, 15, 22 and 29.
- 2 **Paws to Read.** Would your child like to practice reading with a friendly dog? Children in grades 1 to 5 can sign up for a session at 3:30, 3:50 or 4:10 p.m. Visit or call the library. Also March 9 and 16.
- 3 **English as a Second Language Conversation Circle.** Practice English in an informal, small-group setting, Study Room A, 1 to 2:30 p.m. Preregistration not required. Also March 10, 17, 24 and 31.
Special Book Sale. Hosted by Friends of Orinda Library, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 5 **Weekend Paws.** The same as **Paws to Read** but includes a favorite grown-up reading to younger children, 2:30 or 2:50 p.m. Visit or call the library to sign up. Also March 19.
Author Event. Bay Area Author Adina Sara talks about her debut novel *Blind Shady Bend*, Fireside Room, 1 p.m.
- 8 **Toddler Lapsit.** Stories and songs for children aged 1 to 3 and their caregivers, Gallery Room, 10 and 10:30 a.m. No registration required, but attendance limited to once per week. Also March 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29 and 30.
Peek-A-Boo Time. Story time for children ages 0 to 5, 11:30 to 11:55 a.m. Also March 15, 22 and 29.
- 12 **Saturday Morning Live.** Family story time for children 3-5, Picture Book Area, 11 a.m. Also March 19 and 26.
SAT Practice Test. Gain valuable experience taking a full-length mock test with free consultation about results from C2 Education in Lafayette, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Call the library to register.
- 18 **Mystery Book Club.** Members discuss *Slash and Burn* by Colin Cotterill, Study Room A, 3 to 4:30 p.m. Adult event.
- 23 **Teen Advisory Group.** Help guide the library's teen collection and events, plus fun activities. Open to teens that live or go to school in Orinda, Gallery Room, 4 to 5 p.m.
- 24 **Contra Costa Tale Spinners.** A monthly story swap with featured speaker keeps the oral tradition alive, Gallery Room, 7 to 9 p.m. Share a story or just come to listen. Adult and teen event. Call 925-478-8488.

CLUB MEETINGS

- Diablo Star Chapter #214.** Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m. Orinda Masonic Center, Karen Seaborn, 925-689-0995.
- Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe.** Third Monday, 7:30 p.m., Gallery Room, Orinda Library, www.moragaadobe.org.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks.** Fourth Wednesday, 9 a.m., May Room, Orinda Library, 925-253-1997.
- Guided Meditation.** Tuesdays, 7:15 p.m. and Wednesdays, 9 a.m., St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way, Orinda, focuses on health, harmony and wholeness, 925-254-5965

Solo Opera Brings Magical Performance to Orinda

This year's July Opera in the Park features a show certain to entertain children and adults alike – *The Computer Kid's Magic Night*. But you don't have to wait until July; you can see the show Mar. 4-5 at Walnut Creek's Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr. and then, of course, see it again in July!

Sponsored by the Orinda Rotary, *The Computer Kid's Magic Night* tells of a little boy who spends all his time playing computer games, neglecting his studies, his friends and his piano. His parents are also obsessed with their computers and phones. One magical night, several characters pop out of the computer to teach this family to use their technology more wisely.

– Sally Hogarty, Editor



Shown above: (standing) **Megan Stetson** (Mrs. Patetic), and **Michael Orlinsky** (Mr. Patetic). (seated) **Daniel Ostrom** (Mickey).

- 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 Bird watching** for seniors. Wednesdays, 9 to 11 a.m., free. Call 925-254-2445 for weekly meeting place.
- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary.** Every Friday, 7 a.m., Lafayette Park Hotel, 3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, www.lamorindasunrise.com or 925-283-8288.
- Montelindo Garden Club.** Third Friday, 9 a.m., September through May, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephen's Drive, www.montelindogarden.com. Speaker Anna Campbell, owner of The Floral Cultural Society flower shop in Oakland, will demonstrate her farm-to-table floral designs.
- Orinda Garden Club.** Fourth Thursday, 10 a.m. to noon, September through May, Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante.
- Orinda Junior Women's Club** community service group. First Tuesday, September through June, 7 p.m., www.orindajuniors.org.
- Orinda Rotary.** Every Wednesday, noon, Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante, 925-254-2222.
- Orinda Association.** Second Monday, 7:00 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.** General meeting Mar. 16 at 6:30 p.m., Orinda Community Church with Toris Jaeger from the Wagner Ranch Nature Area as speaker. 925-254-1353.
- 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 <https://sites.google.com/site/orindawomansclub>.

CITY/FIRE DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

- City Council.** First and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.
- Historic Landmarks Committee.** Fourth Tuesday, 3 to 5 p.m., Library Garden Room. Call 925-788-7323.
- Moraga-Orinda Fire District.** First and third Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m.. Visit www.mofd.org/board/meetings meeting location will be posted on the agenda.
- Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees.** Second Monday, 6 p.m., OUSD Conference Room, 25 Orinda Way—Suite 200, Orinda, CA 94563. For the latest listing of dates, please check the website at www.orindaschools.org.
- Planning Commission.** Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.

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



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Santa Maria Basketball Champs



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Santa Maria's 3rd grade CYO Warriors finished an undefeated (12-0) season by winning the Diocese Championship beating a tough Christ the King team. (L to R): Coach **Jessica Smith, Julia Q., Franny G., Sophie C., Katie B., Josslyn G., Jocelyn S., Ava O., Charlee S., Kimya K., Maren T.** and coach **Brian Chinn.**

Move of the Month

Beach Mountain Climber



1. Assume a press up position so your hands are directly under your chest at shoulder width apart with straight arms.
2. Your body should form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles.
3. Lift your right foot off the floor and slowly raise your knee as close to your chest as you can.
4. Return to the starting position and repeat with your left leg.
5. Continue alternating for the desired number of reps or time.

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

Everyday Changes
Spring is Coming!

Bonnie Waters



Unless you are an avid *Game of Thrones* fan, your battle cry has got to be "Spring is Coming!" This year spring officially begins with the vernal equinox on Mar. 20. Spring heralds nature's renewal. Worms begin to emerge from the earth, ladybugs land on screen doors, green buds appear everywhere and we get a hint of warmer weather. Spring is about renewal and new beginnings, and I hope that you find personal inspiration from these wellness and beauty tips.

When it comes to beauty, this season's trends are eclectic and run the full gamut. Find inspiration from the plethora of perfectly imperfect braids, twists and knots. Are your locks a bit short but you're still longing for a change? Try face framing fringe, freshly shaved sides, a cropped cap or tousled unkempt curls. Eye makeup trends include slashes of electric blue (think mermaid eyes), bold glittery lids and, of course, all variations of the smoky eye. Lips are painted in classic shades like crimson and pink and gorgeous nudes should be on the top of every trend list. No need to powder that shine – a dewy glow and hydrated skin is something to celebrate. When it comes to foundation this season, less is more. This look is dependent on healthy skin. A smooth, even complexion is the

perfect canvas for a flawless spring look. The French manicure is back, so stifle the yawn and check out the unique shapes and colors that make French tips oh-so-fresh! All in all the looks this season are playful, organic, romantic and angelic.

M&Ms still top the wellness charts. No, not the candy – massage and meditation! More people are recognizing that, with today's hectic lifestyle, massage and meditation are a must for healthy living. Nutrition scientists have shown over and over that people who eat more natural plant foods – vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts and seeds – are less likely to be afflicted with life-threatening diseases. The trends towards more plant-based diets encourage us to flood our bodies with the protective substances contained in plant foods. Leading the plant food polls are the newly popular sea vegetables such as kelp, nori and wakame. These tasty miracles from below the sea are being touted as the new kale and are packed with magnesium, vitamins A, B and C and much more to boost immunity.

Hopefully, you have found an idea or two that you can't wait to try. Take care of yourself inside and out. As you enjoy the transformative days of spring, remember the three Rs: Relax, Renew and Repeat!

Miramonte Graduate
Coaches in Super Bowl



TOD FIERNER

A star quarterback for the Miramonte Matadors, **Ken Dorsey** went on to become a record-setting passer at the University of Miami before being drafted into the NFL. The retired player has spent the last three years coaching quarterbacks for the Carolina Panthers. Shown here Dorsey (L) gives **Cam Newton** some pointers during the recent Super Bowl at Levi Stadium.

◆ BINDER from page 8

represent myself but everything the people I encounter expect that I should be as an American, as a woman, or as anything that is different from them.

"We are all a part of the same human family, all with hopes and dreams for ourselves and our children. I think we would all be less afraid of new and foreign things if part of our education had to be in another corner of the earth."

Binder hopes her book "will inspire people of all ages to travel, to immerse themselves culturally, and to embrace more of life in all its beautiful expressions. Life is so much richer when we do."

Mile 46 is currently available for pre-order at www.JoniBinder.com. It will also be available in April at local bookstores. In addition, photographs from the book are available, with 100 percent of sales going toward FWV's efforts.

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– Glenda Cohn

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BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 20

his home high in the Orinda hills. Well into its 18th year, everything you ever wanted to know about cooking can be learned here. A graduate of the California Culinary Academy, Vollmar's classes emphasize essential culinary skill and technique work, nutrition and wellness.

Attracting clients primarily from the Lamorinda area, Berkeley and Oakland, the Epicurean Exchange experience appeals to everyone – young professionals who want to learn how to cook, couples wanting to work together in the kitchen and retirees. "My goal is community building. Every month I bring together 100 people and we connect through food and wine, having a great time along the way," says Vollmar.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Charles Vollmar operates Epicurean Exchange, which has expanded its offerings to include trips to exotic destinations.

In addition to hosting corporate team-building events, private small group and private classes, Epicurean Exchange offers Epicurean Excursions to exotic destinations in France, Italy and Spain, as well as New Orleans and our local feature, Point Reyes. "The story of these trips is that a couple of

Congratulations to Local Businesses

SALLY HOGARTY

The Orinda Chamber held its annual recognition and awards luncheon on Feb. 12 at the Orinda Country Club. (L-R) Front Row: Chamber president **Roy Hodgkinson**, **Janet Magleby** (Cal Shakes - Local Business Award) **Sylvia Jorgensen** (exemplary service as a Chamber Board Member for eight years), **Susie Falk** (Cal Shakes), **Patti Camras** (exemplary service as a Chamber Board Member for 17 years), **Supervisor Candace Andersen**, **Candy Kattenburg** (exemplary service as the Chamber's Executive Director for 10 years), **Lindsay Pirkle** (2015 Chamber Member of the Year – Lamorinda Theatres). Back Row: **Michael Karp** (2015 Business Person of the Year – Fourth Bore, Table 24), **Assemblywoman Catherine Baker**, **Eric Jorgensen** (2015 Ambassador of the Year), **Mayor Victoria Smith**, and Piccolo Napoli owner **Maria Eberle**, kitchen manager **Ben Holmen** and owner **Peter Eberle** (2015 New Business Award – Piccolo Napoli).

years ago I wanted to get back to Paris," says Vollmar. "I took eight people to Sceaux - which is about 30 minutes from Paris – where we stayed in a large home, cooking and dining together. The camaraderie and friendship we developed over those two weeks was delightful and now Epicurean Excursions is part of our annual offerings."

Next month features two trips, first to the Tuscany region of Italy and then the Catalunya Wine and Food Tour near Barcelona, Spain. September will see Vollmar teaching his students in the Piedmont region of Italy and then it is Provence and the Cote d'Azur in the south of France.

"We offer very good value and a set itinerary every day of each excursion. Not only do we enjoy memorable moments cooking together, we visit the top local destinations

before finishing each day gathered around the table sharing great food and wine and the day's experiences together," says Vollmar. "I enjoy introducing people to an enhanced life through cooking and preparing fine meals."

Passionate about cooking and nutrition, Vollmar points out that his work is the fabric of his life. "I do not turn it on and off. I never tire of cooking. Every minute I am not doing my work, I am with my family. Our kids, Aidan and Amelia, are the center of my world," he says.

Working in collaboration with Mike Nicols, M.D., Vollmar this year published *Eat Real Food or Else...A Cookbook for the 21st Century*. "It is comprehensive and promotes health with nutritional advice based on a broad view of the body. We provide tools to help people make informed choices," says Vollmar. Copies may be ordered through the Epicurean Exchange website.

For more information, visit www.epicureanexchange.com or call Charles Vollmar at 925-368-4181.

Cine Cuvée joins Orinda Chamber of Commerce



DAVID DIERKS

Chamber of Commerce members welcomed Cine Cuvée to Theatre Square with a ribbon cutting in February. Owner **Derek Zemrak** wields the scissors while co-owner **Leonard Pirkle** (2nd from right) and his daughter manager **Lindsay Pirkle** look on.

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BUSINESS BUZZ

Business Buzz Putting a Personal Face on Local Business

Valerie Hotz



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EchoGrove: Handmade Gifts By American Artists

This unique boutique features delightful original handmade items created by artists from across the United States, with strong representation from West Coast artisans. Husband-and-wife team Dean Shutt and Mags Doty have a passion for promoting the diverse talents of craftsmen. EchoGrove is located in Theatre Square, near the 4th Bore Tap Room and Grill.

Strolling through this shop is literally reminiscent of being in the gift shop of an art museum. The variety and novelty of items available here impresses, making it the go-to place to find that special graduation or hostess gift. A concept whose time has come is the reusable cotton produce bag produced by Zen Threads in California.



VALERIE HOTZ
Dean Shutt and his wife Mags Doty (not pictured) own EchoGrove in Theatre Square.

Tired of pulling numerous plastic bags in the produce section every time you get groceries, much less contributing to the miles of plastic accumulating in the Pacific

Ocean? These handmade bags are of 100 percent cotton and machine washable, making them simple, yet brilliant.

For the youngster on your list, there is the crayon wallet made by "A Twisted Thread." These cotton wallets are perfect for carrying crayons and come with a pad of paper. Every cook will appreciate practical cotton cloth bowl covers by Chez Sucre-Chez. Sold in packs of three different sizes, they can be used to cover bread dough while it is rising, cover a dish for the next potluck or the potato salad for summer picnics.

The diverse gift offerings include hand-painted glassware, exquisite hand-crafted wood earrings that reveal the wood's fine grain, handbags of recycled cork made in San Francisco, Hardmill aprons of heavy duty oil cloth, abalone shell photo frames and bird houses crafted from recycled license plates. "Our vision is to share the originality and creativity of artists across America and to accomplish this we carry recycled and handmade items for our customers," says Dean Shutt.

Shopping here never fails to surprise. Fragrant candles by Penelope in Oakland beckon, as well as the variety of bracelets, earrings, wallets, glass bowls and handmade scarves by Gertie Baxter in a dazzling array of colors are tempting. A perennial favorite includes soap balls made by Ten Good Sheep. These fragrant soap balls are concocted with herbal olive oil and wrapped in soft merino wool with silk and bamboo accents.

A member of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce since opening in 2014, Mags Doty serves on the board of directors. You can find EchoGrove online at www.echogrovestore.com or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/echogrovestore. For more information about EchoGrove, stop by the shop in Theatre Square or call 925-255-5697. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Shelby's Undergoes Interior Renovation

This local favorite eatery – a mainstay in Theatre Square for 22 years – has been closed for interior renovation and Orindans are looking forward with much anticipation to its reopening in mid-March. In their keen efforts to better serve customers, owners Carlos Rangel and Arno Kober have applied for and received a liquor license, so along with a gleaming new interior, diners will be able to enjoy a variety of cocktails.

"We are excited to feature a full bar, along with the casual ambience our customers enjoy," says Arno Kober, Chef de Cuisine at Shelby's. "While our kitchen remains the same, we are looking forward to the new décor, an increase in seating capacity and offering customers a full bar

so they may enjoy their favorite cocktail before dinner."

The menu is abundant with delicious dishes based on a European and California fusion. Open for lunch seven days a week, and dinner Tuesday through Sunday, Shelby's offers a breakfast menu on Saturday and Sunday.

"Our lunch favorites include the salmon burger, grilled Caesar salad, chicken mango salad and a combination of sandwiches, while dinner is more upscale featuring German, Italian and French influences," said Kober. "Boeuf stroganoff, lobster ravioli and pork goulash are very popular dinner dishes."

A native of Germany, Kober served four years as an apprentice at the Soerenberg, a French restaurant in Stuttgart, before relocating to Rudesheim, where he served as Commis de Cuisine at Hotel Traube. After arriving in California, Kober was the banquet chef at the Waterfront Plaza Hotel in Oakland for eight years before assuming ownership of Shelby's with Carlos Rangel. Clearly, you will find excellent Wiener Schnitzel here. Be sure to check out the specials that Shelby's offers on the menu every day of the week.



VALERIE HOTZ
Chef Arno Kober owns Shelby's with Carlos Rangel (not pictured).

Breakfast is served Saturday and Sunday only, with an emphasis on dishes made with organic eggs. Pancakes, waffles, French toast and breakfast burritos are an option, and don't forget the Mimosas. Owners and managers of Shelby's since 2005, Rangel and Kober appreciate their customers and give back to the community, with Rangel serving as a member of the board of directors of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce.

Shelby's is open for lunch seven days a week, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dinner hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 5 to 8:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 5 to 9:30 p.m. and Sunday, 5 to 8 p.m. Breakfast is Saturday and Sunday only from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, visit www.shelby-seatbetter.com, where you can also make a reservation, or call 925-254-9687.

Epicurean Exchange Focuses on Excursions Afar

Orinda's Charles Vollmar operates his culinary school, Epicurean Exchange, from [SEE BUZZ page 19]

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