

THE ORINDA NEWS

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Art in Public Places Soon to be a Reality

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Thanks to a group of dedicated volunteers, Orinda will soon proudly display a plethora of outdoor and indoor art pieces by Northern California artists. The City of Orinda's Art in Public Places Commission has been working on the project for the past year. The group has already selected the artists and pieces that will be on loan to the City of Orinda for one year. Work on the infrastructure to house the art pieces begins in early November with the actual art installed in mid-November, and a reception with the artists planned for early December.

"We have been working with Parks and Recreation director Todd Skinner who helped us design the program," says commission member Ted Urban, an architect and avid art collector. "The pieces will be mainly in outdoor spaces. Many will be fairly large, and all will have to be very sturdy to deal with the elements and climbing children."

The City of Orinda will provide the liability insurance for the artwork, which will cover up to \$50,000 per piece. The city already has two pieces of public art that have been on display for many years: a multi-colored metal sculpture by Joe Slusky in the Community Center lobby and Kevin



RIIS BURWELL

Riis Burwell's stainless steel and bronze sculpture "Bird" (L) and Kati Casida's painted aluminum "Emerging Square" will be part of Orinda's public art exhibition.



JOHN E. CASIDA

Christianson's bronze statue of a mother and child reading, which is the centerpiece of the library's sculpture garden.

"The city attorney has also been advising us on issues of liability, potential damage to the art, and even first amendment rights regarding the type of art displayed," Urban adds. "It's actually a very complex project."

Costs for the installation and de-

installation of the artwork, which range in size from approximately three to 11 feet, will be paid for with donations collected by the Orinda Arts Council. "The hiring of the crane operators, building of pedestals, and various foundations to support the art constitute the major costs," explains Urban. "We're very grateful to the Arts Council for its fundraising efforts."

Putting the commission in touch with local artists are Sharon Simpson, who coordinated the outdoor art at California Shakespeare Theatre, and art consultant Regina Almaguer, both of whom serve on the commission as at-large members. "We've tried to identify a variety of styles and scale," says Almaguer. "The result is a lot of fun, well-crafted pieces that we hope will encourage a dialogue about art." Almaguer envisions parents taking their children to see the artwork and then discussing what they like or don't like. "Art should be somewhat controversial. You don't have to like everything," she adds.

[SEE ART page 20]

Volunteer of the Year Nominations Due November 21

The Orinda Association is looking for nominations for its annual Volunteer of the Year and William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental awards. If you know of an individual or an organization that has made a difference through their volunteer efforts in the community or has contributed to preserving the environment, why not nominate that person or organization for either of these awards? Nominations can be made by mail (P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563) or via email at oa@orindaassociation.org. The deadline is November 21.

The winners will be announced in the January issue of *The Orinda News*. A gala awards dinner is planned for January 27 beginning at 6 p.m. at the Orinda House. For further information, call the Orinda Association at 254-0800.

Caring for and Coping with an Elderly Loved One

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

In today's busy world, we often find ourselves juggling work, personal life, and family responsibilities. There never seems to be enough time to accomplish everything we need or want to do. This dilemma becomes further complicated when one is also caring for an elderly relative or friend – an all too common occurrence for many in the so-called "sandwich" generation.

The sandwich generation refers to people who are caring for an aging relative or friend as well as children or grandchildren. These "meat in the middle" people often feel exhausted and frustrated as they try to fulfill their responsibilities. The approaching holidays add to the stress level as the media constantly show us the ideal family enjoying a merry feast, a vision that may be very far from reality for those caring for a loved one with dementia or memory loss.

The California Caregiver Resource Center estimates that there are 1.8 million households caring for someone aged 50 or older in California, more than any other state. According to the California Statewide Survey of Caregivers (Scharlach, et al, 2003), 75 percent of California caregivers are women, 60 percent are married, and the average age is 51.

Many of these caregivers struggle to balance the many demands on their schedule. As of press time, the California legislature had three bills on the Governor's desk that would give some respite to working caregivers. Assembly Bills 537,



SALLY HOGARTY

Multi-generational families are becoming more commonplace as we live longer lives. The Lakhotia family's household includes Sheena's mother Veena Krishna, aged 70; 5-year-old Shailli; Sheena; 4-year-old Sachin; and Sanjay.

727, and 836 address job-protected leave to care for adult family members, partial pay when work must be missed, and adds "familial status" to the list of prohibited bases for employment discrimination.

According to clinical social worker Monica Nowakowski-Carlson, the caregiver often develops physical and emotional problems as a result of caring for an aging family member. "The individual may suffer from insomnia, frequent body complaints, fatigue, irritability or poor concentration, and memory loss," she explains.

Nowakowski-Carlson, who specializes in psychiatric and mental health issues of the elderly and of family caregivers, further

[SEE CARING page 6]

Enjoy Orinda's Final Farmers' Market for the Season



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ana Ruvalcaba displays her flowers for sale at the Orinda Farmers' Market.

By BARBARA KOB SAR
Contributing Writer

Change proved positive for the Orinda Farmers' Market this season. "Moving our market from a side street to Orinda Way was great right from opening day in May," says Orinda market manager Janice Faust. A tree-lined street provides a natural-like setting and the array of just-picked, local produce and specialty foods is keeping everyone happy," she says.

The market's season winds up, as usual, on the Saturday before Thanksgiving

[SEE MARKET page 4]

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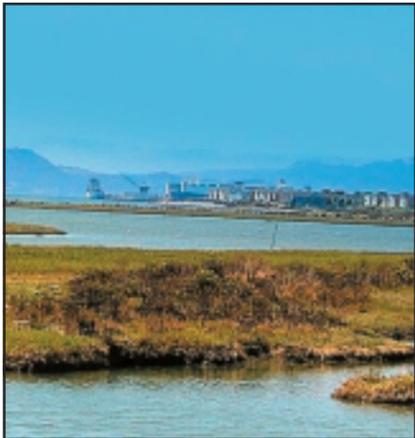
**Backyard Getaways and Beyond
Fall's the Time for
Point Isabel**



Bobbie Dodson

Looking for an outing to share with your children, or grandchildren, and perhaps a dog or two? Then Point Isabel is the place for you, and fall can be the best time of year to visit.

Located at the end of Central Avenue in Richmond, Point Isabel Regional Shoreline is a 23-acre park, and part of the East Bay Regional Park District, where you walk right along the shoreline of San Francisco



BOBBIE DODSON
Views from the Point Isabel Regional Shoreline Park include Point Richmond with Marin County in the distance or, more to the south, the San Francisco skyline.

Bay. Point Isabel, a natural promontory, was named for the daughter of heritage landowner Victor Castro. At one time, a boathouse stood at the point from which passengers were ferried to various places along the San Francisco Bay. Later, railroad tracks were put in on Central Avenue, running out to Point Isabel from the Southern Pacific Railroad main line. Dynamite was hauled out and stored where the Vigoret Powder Works (I.I. du Pont de Nemours Powder Company) was located.

During World War II, the Navy took over part of Point Isabel, as well as the Albany Racetrack, where they put in a rifle range. The Point Isabel Shoreline was acquired by the East Bay Regional Park District in 1975.

Today, the area provides an inviting shoreline trail that is wide, level, and runs 1.81 miles to the Richmond Marina. Along with the serious walkers and the meanderers, are parents and kids on bikes, roller-bladers, moms and dads with

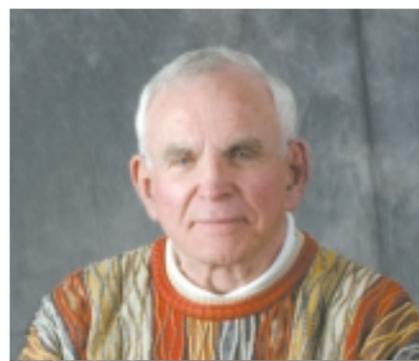
youngsters in strollers, and lots and lots of people with dogs on leashes. While not technically all-access, the main trail is wheelchair friendly. Views of the San Francisco skyline are spectacular, as are those of our area landmarks: the San Francisco Bay and Golden Gate bridges, Mt. Tamalpais, and Angel Island. On the return trip, you view the dinosaur-like cranes at the Port of Oakland.

But, there is a lot to see close-up, especially shorebirds. You may want to check the web for a tide table so you can be there at low tide, as that's the best time to see the ducks, egrets, long-billed curlews,

and avocets that frequent the area. You might even catch a bird or two trying to lunch on the shore crabs. Bird watching is especially good in the fall and winter months when the year-round avian residents are joined by migrating field and shore birds.

Those interested in plants won't be disappointed either as the area offers much in the way of wildflowers and native vegetation. We particularly noticed the smell of fennel, but other trailside plants include sagebrush, monkeyflower, yellow bush lupine, lizardtail, broom and coyote

[SEE BACKYARD page 20]



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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

**A Message From the OA Presidents
November is Annual Membership Drive**



Kate Wiley and Jim Luini

The Orinda News is brought to you by the support of readers like you. If that sounds a bit like a public television pledge drive, it should. Did you know that the Orinda Association (OA) has published and delivered *The Orinda News* free to all households and businesses in town for decades? We're able to do this thanks to the membership contributions of readers like you.

Have you and your family ever enjoyed the July 4th parade? The OA has presented and sponsored Orinda's July 4th parade for almost 25 years. It's a proud tradition that we hope to continue for another 25 years, at least. And we're able to do it thanks to parade-goers like you.

The OA also sponsors a number of community-based volunteer activities, which touch most residents either directly or indirectly. For example, six years ago we started the Volunteer Center to facilitate volunteer opportunities for students and adults looking to help out at one of our local nonprofits. We've also created Seniors Around Town, a volunteer driver program for home-bound seniors.

With our centrally located office on the ground floor of the Orinda Library, we are able to provide a convenient donation drop-off location for charitable groups that will then deliver the items to those in need. The popular Soccer-4-All program is one such example where the OA has served as the conduit for bringing concerned Orindans and good deeds together. And, this past

year, we began offering Red Cross disaster preparedness kits for sale. We do this in the interest of all residents.

Our work takes a civic turn when we host public forums on election issues. Additionally, various members of the OA board serve on local committees and commissions with the intent of representing the interest of Orinda residents.

All of this we're able to accomplish because of Orindans like you.

We are bringing these activities to the forefront because, this month, we begin our annual membership drive. If you are already a member, thank you. It's members like you who make these programs possible. We hope that you will continue your support – and, if possible, consider increasing your contribution.

If you're not a member of the OA, don't be left out! It's easy to join. Simply use the enclosed envelope and enclose your check in the amount of \$40 for an annual family membership or \$30 for seniors. Of course, we have other levels of support from which to choose.

You can also support the OA by becoming an active volunteer in any one of our programs, or by joining us on the OA board. We meet the second Monday of each month at 7:15 p.m. For more information check out our website at www.orindaassociation.org.

Barnaby Beck Joins Orinda Association Board

Barnaby Beck, shown here with his wife Karen, was recently appointed to the OA's board of directors. Barnaby and Karen have lived in Orinda for 10 years. Their youngest of three daughters is a junior at Miramonte High School. The couple own HLW Workspace Solutions, Inc., an office furniture recycler that helps small and large corporations turn their unwanted corporate assets into cash. They often donate excess products to Orinda schools and churches.



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The OA would like to thank out-going board members Cathy Reaves and Mark

Roberts, both past presidents, with a combined service to the OA board of 16 years!

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The Orinda Association is a nonprofit 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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Dealing with an Aging Family Member

In past November editorials, I've focused on giving thanks for all the special things in our lives – close friends, loving family, and good health. But, holidays can also be a stressful, often sad, time for many of us. Thanks in part to the media hype, many people have unrealistic expectations of how the holidays should unfold, which often leads to family strife or depression. This time can be especially stressful if you have an aging loved one with memory loss or other mental or emotional problems.

My family has been watching my mother exhibit some strange behavior for several years, but we had no idea that she was showing the early signs of dementia and some delusional behavior. We just thought she was being mean. In all honesty, I still feel that way some days when she has been particularly difficult.

Her disease progressed to the point that she decided her family didn't care about her and, fortunately, decided to move to a senior housing facility in Pennsylvania where a childhood friend also lived. What made this a fortunate choice for our family is that the facility includes assisted care, skilled nursing, and an Alzheimer's unit.

My mother, of course, doesn't even acknowledge that these other aspects of her apartment complex exist, but they are heaven-sent as far as we are concerned. The facility has a dining room where residents can get a nutritional dinner and socialize, similar to Orinda's own Senior Village. This is especially important for my mother who forgets to eat and had dropped to 86 pounds before moving to her new apartment. In her previous living situation, my mother had begun rejecting my attempts to take her out to eat or stock her refrigerator. Now, she goes to dinner each night with her group of friends and is slowly regaining some of her weight. Her new facility also checks on each resident every day – including those in independent living such as my mother – another big relief for my family.

Dealing with a family member with such personality changes or memory loss is not an easy task. The approaching holidays only add to the confusion. How do you incorporate these loved ones into the holidays and maintain your own sanity? How do you cope on a daily basis with an aging parent while also caring for your own children or grandchildren? In the article on



page one, I have attempted to list a few possible answers and, thanks to clinical therapist Monica Nowakowski-Carlson, resources to help you and your loved ones on this journey.

— Sally Hogarty, Editor

Editor's Note: In the October issue, we inadvertently misspelled Mary Grah's name as Mary Graf. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

◆ MARKET from page 1

(November 17), but some fall fruits and vegetables are "keepers." I'm leaving space in my market basket for several pomegranates and persimmons – both "keepers."

Pomegranates

I'm looking forward to the new crop of bright red pomegranates, even though I still enjoy looking at a bowl full of last season's fruit on my kitchen counter – dried to a beautiful deep burgundy color. Not all pomegranates dry successfully – choose only those without splits or cuts if you plan on keeping them for decoration.

Fresh pomegranates keep at room temperature for two to three weeks, but refrigeration extends their shelf life to two months.

The most common fruiting pomegranate arriving at market is called Wonderful – a large, deep red wonder. The showy, trumpet-shaped flowers that appear in the spring on fountain-shaped pomegranate shrubs or trees, bear fruits five to seven months later, with fresh harvest running through November.

Eventually, I need to make my way to the edible part of a pomegranate. Under the leathery skin are the shiny, red kernels waiting to be tossed on salads and entrees or juiced and strained to make jellies and sorbets.

Spongy white membranes divide the fruit into sections, each bursting with bright red, shiny kernels. Each kernel (or aril) is plump with tangy, sweet juice and contains a small woody seed (or pip) that is edible but a bit tough.

The heavier the pomegranate the better

– it's juicier. Signs of cracking don't deter me when I know it means the fruit is completely ripe and coming apart at the seams with plump kernels. Any fruits that split because of untimely rains are salvageable if used right away.

I always put on an old shirt before working with pomegranates – the juice is indelible and I invariably get some squirting my way. To get at the seeds, use a sharp knife to cut a thin piece off the crown of the pomegranate. Then, slit the skin from top to bottom in three or four places and pull the fruit open using both hands. Immerse the sections in a bowl of cool water and soak for about five minutes. Holding the fruit under the water, separate the seeds from the membrane. Discard the pith that floats to the top and strain the seeds which sink to the bottom. If making pomegranate jelly, the juice may be extracted by cutting the pomegranate in half crosswise and gently squeezing on a juicer.

Persimmons

Persimmons can hang on the tree for weeks after the leaves fall, making eye-catching autumn displays. California produces approximately 95 percent of the persimmons for the nation, and November is the busiest harvest period, producing the sweetest fruits. Differentiating between the two most common varieties, hachiya and fuyu, is more vital than in other fruits because of their distinct qualities.

Mature hachiyas and fuyus boast a lustrous, deep orange sheen when wiped lightly with a cloth. Each is topped with a calyx or cap as a result of being clipped from the tree in a fairly labor intensive process – and I appreciate every one.

Hachiya persimmons are acorn-shaped

and generally come to market at the firm stage. These need five to 10 days to completely ripen to the soft pudding stage – even a slightly under ripe hachiya contains enough tannin to pucker your mouth. Scoop the ripe pulp from the skin with a spoon to eat fresh, or use the pulp to make delicious puddings, cakes, cookies, and candies.

Fuyus do not contain tannin, so they are ready-to-go at any stage. The flesh of the tomato-shaped fuyu stays fairly firm and is sweet tart in flavor. You can eat it like an apple or slice crosswise to reveal a star-shaped design.

Ripe hachiyas keep two to three days in the refrigerator; fuyus two to three weeks. Both freeze well for eight to 10 months.

Olive, Pomegranate and Walnut Salad

- 2 large pomegranates
- 1 cup green olives, stoned and chopped
- Bunch of cilantro leaves, chopped
- 6 to 8 scallions, chopped
- 1 cup walnuts, coarsely chopped

Dressing:

- 1 1/2 Tbls. lemon juice
- 3 Tbls. olive oil
- Pinch of pepper
- Salt to taste

Cut open the pomegranates and extract the seeds (refer to method above). Combine with the olives, cilantro, scallions, and walnuts. Whisk dressing ingredients together. Pour over the salad, toss and serve. Serves 4.

The Orinda Farmers' Market closes on November 17 for the season. Thank you to the community, city, local businesses, and other nonprofits who have supported and contributed to a very successful market this

year. See you all next May!

Be sure to visit many of your favorite growers and vendors from the Orinda market at the year round market in Walnut Creek on Sundays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the corner of Broadway & Lincoln in Walnut Creek. For more information visit the website at www.cccfm.org or call the market hotline at (925) 431-8361.

New Administrative Services Manager



SALLY HOGARTY

Beverli A. Marshall is the City of Orinda's new administrative services manager. Previously, Marshall worked for the City of Berkeley as the finance manager for the public library and as the senior management analyst for the Parks and Recreation Department. Marshall, who lives in Martinez with her husband and two young girls, is responsible for managing the various internal functions of city hall such as finance, computer support, and human resources.

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Editor Sally Hogarty
 Assistant Editors Chris Lavin, Pat Rudebusch
 Advertising Representatives Jill Gelster, Candy Kattenberg
 Editorial Committee Sally Hogarty, Chris Lavin, Jim Luini, Cindy Powell, Pat Rudebusch, Kate Wiley
 Staff Writers Haleh Allen, Dorothy Bowen, Andrea Colombu, Bobbie Dodson, Valerie Hotz, Andra Lim, Jim Luini, Kathryn McCarty, Moya Stone, Kate Wiley, Emily Witt
 Contributing Writers Carol Barber, Barbara Kobsar, Bobbie Landers, Cinda Mac Kinnon
 Graphics Aspen Consulting: Jill Gelster & David Dierks
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Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis and should be no longer than 400 words. They must include the writer's first and last name, signature and telephone number.

Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, fax them to 254-8312, or email to news@orindaassociation.org. Letters to the Editor for the December issue are due November 5, 2007.

For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 or send email to jill@aspenconsult.net. The deadline for the January issue is November 19.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber of Commerce Unveils “Shop Orinda” Program

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

The Orinda Chamber of Commerce hopes to soon see flocks of local residents busily doing their holiday shopping in Orinda and storing their purchases in designer shopping bags. The bags, with a colorful logo by Cedric Cheng Design, will be provided free-of-charge to local merchants. Shoppers can purchase the sleek bags for \$1 with a \$20 or more purchase. “The business community is very excited about this project,” says Chamber president Keith Miller.

A collaborative effort between the City of Orinda and the Chamber, the campaign will build community awareness of local businesses and promote shopping within Orinda’s city limits. A \$10,000 grant from the city’s Community Promotions Program will fund the production of the bags as well as ads in local newspapers. The Chamber will contribute an additional \$3,000 to the project. “We really want to encourage people to do their purchasing within Orinda, which not only helps local businesses but also results in increased sales tax for the City of Orinda,” says Chamber executive director Candy Kattenburg.

The Chamber hopes to have the bags in local stores by mid-November in time for the Thanksgiving holiday and, of course, the Christmas season. “In addition to the newspaper advertisements encouraging local spending, we will have posters and brochures distributed throughout Orinda, and we’ll be promoting the program at all our Chamber events,” Kattenburg adds.

Not only do the bags promote local shopping, they are environmentally friendly. Purchased from Earth Wise Bag Company, the reusable bags reduce waste



THE ABOVE LOGO WAS CREATED BY CEDRIC CHENG DESIGN.

and pollution from plastic and paper bags.

The Chamber will assess the success of the program by tracking the sales of bags, surveying local businesses, and conducting user surveys through the city’s website. The Chamber hopes this will be the first of several promotions to raise awareness of local businesses. Next, they would like to initiate a program in the spring that would highlight dining establishments entitled “Taste of Orinda.” Kattenburg notes that all Chamber events – Orinda Country Club lunches, networking after-hours mixers, and business community breakfasts are open to the public.

For further information, contact the Orinda Chamber of Commerce at 254-3909.

The Orinda Association would like to thank **Orinda Motors** and the **Classic Car Show** for donating \$8,100 to the Seniors Around Town program.

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CARING FOR SENIORS

◆ CARING from page 1

notes that sometimes dangerous or threatening behaviors that would never be tolerated before the elder's illness may now be ignored or rationalized.

"Fear and pride often prevail for both the caregiver and the elderly with the emotional defense of denial or dementia acting like a magician's cape, sweeping away reality and creating a new one," she says. "For example, elders may insist on driving when no longer capable. They justify the decision by saying they only drive short distances or by blaming any problems on 'those

young people on the road.' An elderly spouse might demand that his wife not call 911 when he falls and instead help him up, which can result in back sprains for the wife." The caregiver may also put up with verbal abuse or anti-social behavior in public just to get through a medical appointment, pharmacy pick-up, or family event. "It's almost as if the concept of 'taking care' has strayed from the caregiver's memory. They can only relate that term to the person they are caring for and not to themselves," adds Nowakowski-Carlson.

Deciding when to "step in" and to what



SALLY HOGARTY
Orinda's new postmaster, Crystal Jones, has a close-knit family who includes (seated) her mother Louise Hughes, (L) her 101-year-old grandmother Cleo Jones, Crystal (standing left), and her daughter Eriss.

degree is a common dilemma for someone with an elderly loved one. How to juggle the myriad responsibilities while maintaining your own mental and physical wellbeing poses a difficult problem for many.

Luckily, the Bay Area offers a wide variety of resources to help guide people through this confusing time. Alta Bates Summit Hospital will hold a special session, "Coping with the Holidays," on November 14 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The session will include practical tips for celebrating holidays when a loved one has dementia or memory loss. Call Ellen Carol at (510) 869-6737 for reservations. The hospital also offers a free support group every third Tuesday from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. for family and friends who are caring for an elderly or disabled adult. Both groups are facilitated by Nowakowski-Carlson, who provides psychotherapy to individuals, couples, and families on relationship, grief, stress, health, and caregiver issues. She also offers free lectures and workshops to nonprofit and community groups. Her topics include "Parenting Your Parents," "Dementia Overview," and "How to Help When Someone You Care about Refuses Assistance." To book a lecture or workshop for your group, contact Nowakowski-Carlson at (510) 234-4100 or via email at monicaLscw@alum.calberkeley.org.

Resources are also available to help seniors understand the physical and emotional changes they are experiencing. One example is the Friendship Line, a telephone support system that offers emotional comfort and crisis intervention to a range of clients both in the Bay Area and across the nation. Call (877) 797-7299. Another resource for seniors can be found at www.seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org.

Resources for Caregivers and Seniors For Caregivers

A Place for Mom – (877) 666-3239
Free referral service helping families find nursing homes, assisted living, Alzheimer's care, retirement communities, and homecare.

Alta Bates Summit Support Group – (510) 234-4100

Free support group for family and friends caring for elderly/disabled adults; every third Tuesday from 2:30 – 4 p.m.

Alzheimer's Association Nationwide Contact Center – (800) 272-3900

Includes information on a wide range of thinking or cognitive problems, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Alzheimer Services of the East Bay – (510) 644-8292, www.aseb.org

Services to individuals with Alzheimer's or related dementia; support and education for caregivers.

California Caregiver Resource Center – (800) 445-8106, www.californiacrc.org

Comprehensive facts, policy updates, and resources for all aspects of caregiving.

Hospice of the East Bay – (925) 887-5678

A variety of support groups and workshops for adults, children, and teens experiencing grief following the death of a loved one.

John Muir Senior Services – (925) 947-3300

Geriatric care coordination, health education, and screening.

For Seniors

Alzheimer Services of the East Bay – (510) 644-8292, www.aseb.org

Services to individuals with Alzheimer's or related dementia, support and education for caregivers.

The Friendship Line – (800) 971-0016

Telephone support offering emotional support and crisis intervention nationwide.

Senior Center Without Walls – (877) 797-7299,

www.seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org

Various discussion groups for the homebound senior.

Seniors Around Town – 254-0800

Orinda Association provides free rides to seniors for shopping trips, medical appointments and more.

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COMMUNITY CENTER CLASS

Spice Up Your Fall with Salsa Lessons at Community Center

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

As fall begins and the opportunity for outdoor activities is narrowed, Tomaj Trendera has an alternative to bring back the heat of summer – salsa dancing.

“It’s fantastic exercise,” Trendera says. “You don’t feel like you’re even working out.” Salsa dancing can be good for weight control, and Trendera is proud of his students who attribute their improved health to dancing. “It’s great fun and a great community, besides,” he adds. “Who couldn’t use more fun, more exercise, and more community in their life? Salsa is a great place to find it.”

A professional dancer for 24 years, Trendera had been working as a professional modern dancer in Seattle for almost a decade, when he discovered salsa. “It was the mid-90’s before there was much of a salsa scene at all,” he explains. “I was really inspired by the music and the people and the level of dancing.” Trendera soon moved to the Bay Area where he decided to shift his focus completely to salsa.

“I was drawn to salsa because it’s incredibly alive and passionate – active and current. Salsa is happening right now, the bands are huge,” he said, noting that Bay Area clubs “are packed with people of all ages and sizes having fun dancing.”

Trendera is passionate about his students as well as his art. “Anyone can really learn



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tomaj Trendera leads a class in salsa dancing at the Orinda Community Center.

salsa,” he claims, sighting success stories of students who have been challenged kinesthetically, rhythmically, and spatially. He adds that those who want to learn salsa will succeed if they have the “determination to learn.”

He is particularly proud of a student who has lost over 100 pounds, crediting his loss to salsa dancing. Trendera currently trains hundreds of students in authentic, club-style salsa every week via group classes and private lessons throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

Trendera’s classes are complemented by his best-selling series of instructional videos and DVD’s to help students learn even more quickly.

Trendera uses a teaching method based on research into motor skills learning, movement memory and retention, and laying a solid foundation of movement. By building this foundation and stressing repetition, students gain a long-term memory of the movement.

He stresses that no experience is necessary to join the Orinda class and that students do not need a partner. “It’s a nice community of people,” he says. Due to the popularity of the salsa classes, Trendera expects another class in Orinda to be added soon. Trendera also hosts monthly salsa parties so that his student community can

meet.

“The parties are a great opportunity to meet a broad community of salsa dancers from all over the Bay Area,” he says. A popular teacher, Trendera works at the Mill Valley Community Center, Hayward/San Felipe Community Center, and ClubSport in San Ramon.

Trendera’s teaching credits are numerous, including serving on the dance faculty at the University of Washington, Cornish College of the Arts, the University of the West Indies, the National Ballet of Mexico, and the College of Marin.

As a professional dancer, he has

performed internationally with the Robert Davidson Dance Company, Men at Play, The SugaDance Company, and at the world’s largest Salsa Congress in Los Angeles with The SalsaMania Dance Company. Currently, he directs the SalsaFire Dance Company in San Francisco.

Salsa classes are held on Monday evenings at the Orinda Community Center. Beginning classes meet 7 – 8 p.m. and intermediate level classes meet 8 – 9:30 p.m. Fee is \$15 per person or \$25 per couple; drop-ins are welcome. For more info, go to www.salsawithtomaj.com.



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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Trendera helps a student with a new step.

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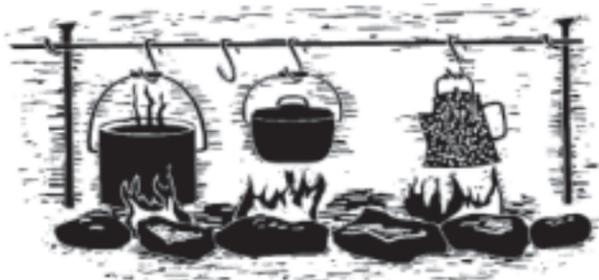
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POLICE BLOTTER

Compiled by Haleh Allen,
Orinda Police Department
September 2007

False Residential Alarms: Officers responded to 66 false alarm calls throughout the city.

Auto Burglary (theft from a locked vehicle): 6 incidents in the areas of Davis Rd., La Espiral, Bryant Way, Sleepy Hollow Ln., Brookside Rd., and Bates Blvd.

Petty Theft From Vehicle (theft of less than \$400 value from an unlocked vehicle): 2 incidents in the areas of La Espiral and Vida Descansada.

All Other Petty Thefts: 5 incidents in the areas of Camino Sobrante, La Espiral, Theatre Sq., Sundown Terr., and Moraga Way.

Grand Theft From Vehicle (theft of more than \$400 value from an unlocked vehicle): 3 incidents in the areas of El Sueno, Van Ripper Ln., and Bates Blvd.

All Other Grand Thefts: 2 incidents in the areas of Bates Blvd. and Hillcrest Dr.

Vehicle Theft: 4 incidents in the areas of Orinda Way, Miramonte Rd., Warford Terr., and Bates Blvd.

Residential Burglary: 7 incidents in the areas of Vida Descansada, Las Vegas Rd., Diablo View Dr., La Espiral, and El Camino Moraga.

Commercial Burglary: No reported incidents.

Vandalism: 9 incidents in the areas of Charles Hill Rd, Honey Hill Rd., Hillcrest Dr., Moraga Way, Del Mar Ct., La Espiral, El Toyonal, and Descanso Dr.

Identity Theft: 6 incidents in the areas of Snow Ct., Glorietta Blvd., Overhill Rd., Ardilla Rd., Altarinda Rd., and Robert Rd.

Credit Card Fraud/Forgery: 4 incidents in the areas of Altarinda Rd., Camino Sobrante, Moraga Way, and Overhill Rd.

Orinda's Very Handy Woman About Town

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

One of Orinda's best-kept secrets is that a former chemist for Dow Chemical, who also happens to be a woman, has been running a highly respected home repair/remodeling business for the past 16 years. Janice Gatlin is the low-profile owner of Always...the Best, specializing in home repairs and remodeling. "I never planned on owning such a business," explains the 1979 Saint Mary's College graduate. "But when I bought a rehab house in Berkeley in the early '90s, I was hooked."

Gatlin found the remodeling very creative and decided to leave Dow and take over the local home repair business. Her specialty was tile work, but now she concentrates primarily on managing the business both in the field and the office. "We have talented professionals who have 25 to 40 years of experience," she explains. "I'm always very careful who works for me. After all, they are working in people's homes, and I want to be sure they are not only good at their jobs but also respectful of our customers' space."

The customers are one reason Gatlin has remained in the business for so long. "We have a wonderful clientele, especially our older clients. I'm very protective of them," she says. "They've worked hard all of their



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Janice Gatlin has been the owner of Always the Best home repairs for the past 16 years.

referrals, Gatlin's clients obviously feel the same way. "For over 20 years, my wife and I have looked to Always the Best to help us maintain our home," says Palmer Madden. "Our home is quite a challenge. We had a bee infestation in the siding as well as damage from woodpeckers. We have had leaks in windows and skylights. I guess we've had just about any problem a homeowner can have. We always have looked to Always the Best for help. Janice supplies skilled, honest, good craftsmen who arrive on time and get the job done."

While 55 percent of her business is from Orinda, Gatlin's company also does remodeling and repairs to homes throughout Contra Costa and Alameda counties. Projects range from changing light bulbs and minor repairs to remodeling bathrooms and kitchens, installing decks and siding, and electrical work. "It's been interesting watching styles change," says Gatlin. "Right now Trek decks, fiberglass doors, and Hardy siding are replacing wood products. They look great, have low maintenance, and last longer than wood. We're also seeing a lot more recessed lighting and people replacing their brass and chrome with brushed nickel."

Truly a people-person, Gatlin trades in her hammer for a pair of skis each winter when she teaches physically challenged children and adults how to maneuver the slopes at Tahoe's North Shore.

For more information on Always...the Best, go online to www.atbremodel.com or call 254-9545.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
One of the lovely kitchens Always the Best has remodeled.

lives, and my workers and I make sure they get the respect and value they deserve. I love to be able to help and to not take advantage. It is a great honor to be that trusted."

With 85 percent of her business comprised of repeat customers and

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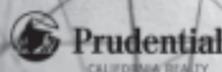
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AUTHORS / BOOKS

Calling All Bookworms: Book Lovers To Unite at the Orinda Library

By MOYA STONE
Staff Writer

If you have bibliophiles on your holiday shopping list, or happen to be one yourself, join Ron Shoop from Random House on November 7 at 7 p.m., in the Garden Room of the Orinda Library for a lively presentation of his reading picks for the fall season. Shoop presents regularly at Contra Costa libraries sharing what he thinks are the hot books of the season. The Orinda event is sponsored by Project Second Chance, Friends of the Orinda Library, and Orinda Books.

Project Second Chance, which will be the beneficiary of the evening's event, offers free and confidential literacy instruction to adults 16 years and older. Since 1984, the program has improved reading, writing, and spelling skills of over 4,000 adults. Shoop hooked up with Project Second Chance seven years ago when he was asked to give a talk on new books at the Pleasant Hill Main Library. Since then, he's a regular at local libraries, visiting Orinda twice a year. "This has been a great opportunity," says Shoop. "I get to talk about books I like, meet people, and support Project Second Chance, all while doing my job."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Ron Shoop from Random House discusses his reading picks for the fall season at the Orinda Library on November 7.

Friends of the Orinda Library is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and improving library services in Orinda. The all volunteer group provides the library with materials as well as sponsors children and adult events, runs the Friends of the Library Bookstore, and

[SEE PROJECT page 18]

Local Playwright to Discuss Her Plays at Orinda Books

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Bay Area playwright Kathryn G. McCarty will appear at Orinda Books, Saturday, November 10, from 3-5 p.m. to



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Playwright Kathryn McCarty will discuss her recently published collection at Orinda Books on November 10.

sign her book, *Defining Form & Other Plays*. The book, a compilation of her plays, all performed in the Bay Area, as well as Los Angeles, includes scripts of "The Fitting Room," "Bessie," "Defining Form," "Straight Laced," and "The Ladies Quintet."

McCarty, who teaches a creative writing for adults class at the Orinda Community Center says, "I practice what I preach!" adding, "Writing is a process, a discipline which is both creative and technical."

McCarty explains that as she goes through the final stages of re-writes, she shares her experiences with her class. "I think my students are amazed that as long as I've been writing, I still have to go back to the basics. I want to grow as an artist. It's the same goal for the beginning writer."

"Using your voice on the page is a wonderful creative outlet. It's cathartic. But when you realize you have the opportunity to share your work in order to potentially influence your readers' lives, you have a

[SEE MCCARTY page 18]

Grace Kaplan Launches New Series of Knitting Books

By PAT RUDEBUSCH
Assistant Editor

To see Grace Kaplan's work, you'd never guess that she took up knitting only six years ago. Her hand-knit items have been popular gifts and the hit of school fundraisers. And now, she's published two books – *Confessions of a Lazy Knitter* and *Crocheted Christmas Stockings* – and is at work on her third title. A common theme runs through her books: Anyone can knit something satisfying.

Kaplan, like many women today, learned how to knit and crochet when she was a child. And, like many, by the time she finished that first project, she had lost interest and was ready to put her needles away. Her needles and yarn may have

stayed in mothballs if it weren't for a teacher at Del Rey School, Fiona (Kelly) Gilmartin, in whose class Kaplan worked as a teaching assistant.

"Fiona wanted to teach the students to knit," Kaplan recalls. "I knew that if I was going to teach, I had better refresh my own memory. The first thing I did was go to the

[SEE KAPLAN page 18]



PAT RUDEBUSCH
Author Grace Kaplan (R) autographs one of her books for **Susan Sohrakoff**.



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SALLY HOGARTY

Lie on your left side. Raise yourself up on your left elbow, keeping your elbow at a 90 degree angle with your shoulder, relaxing your neck. Contract your abs to keep a tight, straight line from ankles to head. You may balance yourself with your right hand if you like.



SALLY HOGARTY

Hold this position as long as you can and perform leg lifts with your top leg. Change sides and repeat. Courtesy of Living Lean (925) 360-7051.

Orinda Chevron Nets 'Green' Award



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marty Gee, general manager of Orinda Chevron Service, and Korina Wipkey are proud of the Green award they recently won.

By CHRIS LAVIN
Assistant Editor

In a day when recycling and going green has taken center stage, one of the last places you might expect to jump into the spotlight would be a service station.

"Years ago, everything went into a dumpster," said Orinda Chevron owner and manager Marty Gee. "I hated that. Anything you can recycle, I recycle."

For the past five years, Gee has strictly focused his station's efforts on diminishing the human footprint on the Earth. His efforts and those of his employees netted the station a coveted award this fall from the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD), which named the station a recipient of its annual Pollution Prevention Awards.

Gee's station was recognized for its waste

minimization practices, safety, and hazardous spill training for employees, steps to prevent contaminants from going down sewer or storm drains, and what the district called a "vigorous" reuse and recycling program.

"This company has done more than just comply with water quality regulations," said CCCSD General Manager Jim Kelly. "They've implemented innovative practices that prevent pollutants from entering local waterways, and we commend them for helping to protect the environment."

Gee is so passionate about recycling that he doesn't even mind if those coming by with recyclables aren't customers, or whether they have old motor oil, transmission fluid, scrap metal – even a tire or two.

"If you have it, I'll take it," Gee says. "As long as it doesn't end up in a landfill."

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For The Girls: join us for hikes, book discussions, and ladies coffees/luncheons.

Call the Hotline (925) 941-4967 for membership information or email ldarwinobrien@yahoo.com.

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SUSTAINABLE GARDENS

The Sustainable Garden Part II: Plants

By CINDA MACKINNON
Contributing Writer

Previously, I wrote about gardening in a more sustainable manner, particularly shrinking your high-maintenance, water-guzzling lawn. This month the topic is what to plant to create an easy care, ecologically sound, and pretty garden.

But first a review: Composting and mulch are key to nurturing your soil – and hence your plants. This practice will retain water, add natural fertilizer, improve soil texture and health, and reduce weeds.

Going Native

Many Mediterranean plants work well in our area – we're at the same longitude - but



CINDA MACKINNON

The blue-eyed grass, a lovely spring wildflower, is actually a small bulb. It is easy to grow from a seed, but blooms in the second year.

if you really want to nurture the environment, go native. Planting native plants promotes the conservation of all living things native to California, and they require little maintenance. If you want to take this one step further, buy from nurseries specializing in locally native plants that are adapted to our soils and climate, provide valuable wildlife habitat,

and are genetically compatible with surrounding natural vegetation. Don't think they have to be scraggly-looking plants, either. There are hundreds of lovely, drought-tolerant plants.

I admit I have a patch of roses and a thirsty rhododendron, but as time goes on I'm starting to resent the ratio of their performance to the input of my labor and pocketbook. As their health declines with age, I've begun to dig them out and replace them with more appropriate plants.

Let's start with big-scale structures: trees. Appreciate your trees – they provide habitat and shade and leaf mulch. (If you should happen to have a madrone, treasure it – they are becoming endangered in Orinda as they are hard to transplant, and many have been lost to development and other civil uses.) The best time to plant most natives is at the beginning of our rainy season – although many trees are stalwart enough to install any time in our mild winter.

Next, consider where shrubs fit in – do you have sun or shade? There are many native plants. Mix different textures and shades of greens. On slopes, I've had success with low-growing manzanitas. Elsewhere you might try a meadow of wildflowers and bunch grass. Bunch grass does not need to be mowed and won't out-compete the wildflowers. Wildflowers are easily grown from seed sown after the first rain or in earliest spring. (Irises, however, do better from containers or get divisions in early winter from a friend.)

Water prudently the first year or two, especially during hot weather. After that you will find your garden will use much less water than a "conventional" garden. In fact you can kill some of these plants with kindness, so do not overwater or over feed.

Perhaps the most important thing you can do is never plant an invasive species. Better yet, remove them! In Orinda, some exotic species invading open areas and crowding

out natives include ivy (English and German), brooms, pampas grass, periwinkle, pyracantha, cotoneaster and olive.

Nurture Wildlife

When I started trying to be organic many years back, I was skeptical. Initially it was [SEE GARDEN page 22]

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- Charlotte Anahede Labdon

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HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Holiday Bazaar Celebrates 32 years at Orinda Community Center

By EMILY WITT
Contributing Writer

You know it's the holidays when Orinda's annual Holiday Bazaar opens its doors, which it does on Saturday, November 3 and Sunday, November 4, at the Orinda Community Center and its adjoining park.

The annual event, now in its 32nd year is sponsored by the Orinda Community Center Auxiliary. It brings an infusion of gifts and goodies for purchase during the holidays, while raising funds for the Orinda Community Center's facilities and programs.

Festivities commence at 10 a.m. November 3 with approximately 50 vendors and performers. Musicians will perform, Scooter the Clown will circulate, and magicians will entertain. Gourmet food vendors, with homemade jams, jellies, and other treats will be there, as well. Art Drop, an on-site babysitting service with arts and

crafts activities for the kids, will be available for \$5 per child during these two days.

Local nonprofit service organizations will have booths, including The Orinda Hospice, Orinda Woman's Club, and the Orinda Historical Society, which will offer the book "Historic Sites of Orinda," sponsored by the City of Orinda and the Historic Landmarks Committee. Purchasing the book helps support the development of the Orinda Historical Society's museum.

Raffle tickets will be sold by the Orinda Community Center Auxiliary members at the event. A free raffle ticket will be available to anyone who takes a blank bazaar card to every room of the bazaar to get it stamped. A silent auction will be held as well, where bidders may vie for favorite services and products donated by local businesses. Some of the items for bid this year will be a dinner for two at a local restaurant, automobile services, a visit to a



Two shoppers browse the many holiday items available at the Orinda Community Center Auxiliary's annual Holiday Bazaar.

SALLY HOGARTY

Bay Area spa, and crystal jewelry made by a local designer.

Holiday Bazaar coordinator Jennifer Robb says, "I got involved in the Auxiliary because I was new to Orinda. As a mother with a child under the age of 4, the Auxiliary experience gave me the opportunity to meet other young mothers and to begin to build long-term, mutually supportive relationships. Our kids have become known as the

'Auxiliary kids,' and have benefited from those long-time friendships, as well." Years later, this close-knit group of women continues to support one another through their work together on behalf of the Orinda Community Center.

Getting involved in the Orinda Community Center Auxiliary was Robb's first step toward a more in-depth [SEE BAZAAR page 22]

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THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving Day is About Giving Thanks for Our Good Fortune

By EMILY WITT
Staff Writer

When our editor said, "I need someone to write an article about Thanksgiving," I took the assignment on one condition: No turkey talk. Yes, the feasting is delicious, but, to me, it does not represent the true meaning of this national holiday. Why do we gather once a year and feast together on this day?

I am aware, too, that for many it is also

an opportunity to watch the "tellie" together while buff men in Spandex slam into each other in order to make the ultimate goal. For many, that is the high point of their Thanksgiving Day. For me, however, Thanksgiving is significant as it was the day on which I was born. The story goes that Mom and Dad were driving through Orinda with friends in 1949 and the birthing process started. I guess they had potholes back then, too.

For this article, my first thought was

taking an informal poll about giving thanks in front of Cafe Teatro, below the Orinda Library. One young father said, while running after his 1-year-old daughter, Maya, that he was thankful for "afternoon naps." Hearing the fatigue in his voice, I understood. Sometimes, it is the small manifestations for which we find ourselves giving thanks. One of those for me, a native of Orinda, is parking spots.

After approaching two gentlemen seated at a table in front of the cafe who did not want to give a response, I went to the Orinda Association office in search of reassuring support. Was I on the right track here asking this question to strangers? Upon opening the door, I found Sally Hogarty. I seized the moment and posed the question, "So, Sally, for what do you give thanks?"

"I am thankful for still being here and for all my friends," she said. Hogarty is a recent cancer survivor.

Then, I spoke with Eartha Newsong, who [SEE THANKSGIVING page 22]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Dodson family of Orinda gives thanks for their many blessings by participating in the Run to Feed the Hungry each Thanksgiving morning in Sacramento. "This way we are able to help others and burn some calories so we can partake of our own Thanksgiving feast together," says Bobbie Dodson. Shown above are Dodson's daughter, **Kathy Williamson**, (R) and granddaughter **Maya Friedman**.

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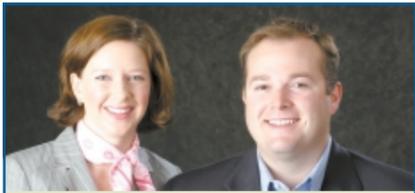
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Students and Parents Dig Deeper Into Kenya

By CHRIS LAVIN
Assistant Editor

Many Americans who visit Africa come back home finding themselves somewhat obsessed by the memories of the people they met and the places they saw. The experience affects their hearts.

That is what has happened to one Orinda family and to those who have joined them for the past four years as part of Miramonte High School's ABE Club, the members of which have returned from their most productive trip, out of several, yet. The ABE Club stands for "A Better Education" for students in Kenya.

"We planned the three weeks carefully," said Kathy McBride, who with husband Steve Isaacs and daughters Megan and Alex have virtually adopted a village in the Kasigau region in southern Kenya, about 90 minutes off the road between Kenya and Mombassa, along with the local high

school. "You could say the program has come of age."

Since 2004, the club and supporting families have raised money for scholarships, a library, a women's stop-over shelter with fresh water for resting along the long journey to collect firewood, and essentials such as school supplies, even flip-flops, which they cram into their luggage every summer. This year the ABE Club sponsored a regional soccer tournament,

English and AIDS awareness with Alex and Megan, one of her most memorable African moments came in the form of a chicken.

Reed had gone to seek out the mother of a student she and her family sponsor at school, and found her at a local store. The woman "erupted, just started screaming," according to McBride, when Reed introduced herself. The mother took her two fellow mothers back to her small farm, where she gave a tour of her simple, bare



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
(L-R) Miramonte High School ABE club members **Katy Reed, Alex Isaacs, and Shelby Van Rheenen** discuss AIDS with students at a school in southern Kenya.

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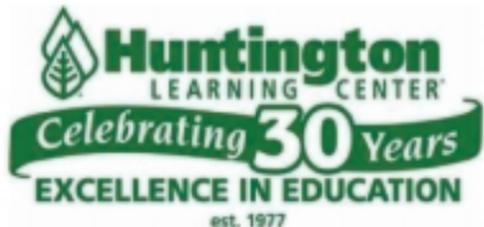


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and has plans to expand the effort. Students Shelby Van Rheenen and Emily Myers also made the trip, and all the club members hope this year will see even more involvement.

The Miramonte effort has expanded across the country, as well. Alex is a sophomore at Hamilton College in New York, and has convinced her sorority, Kappa Sigma Alpha, to join the cause.

"I love Kenya," Alex said. "Honestly, when I'm in New York, I miss home – and I miss Kenya."

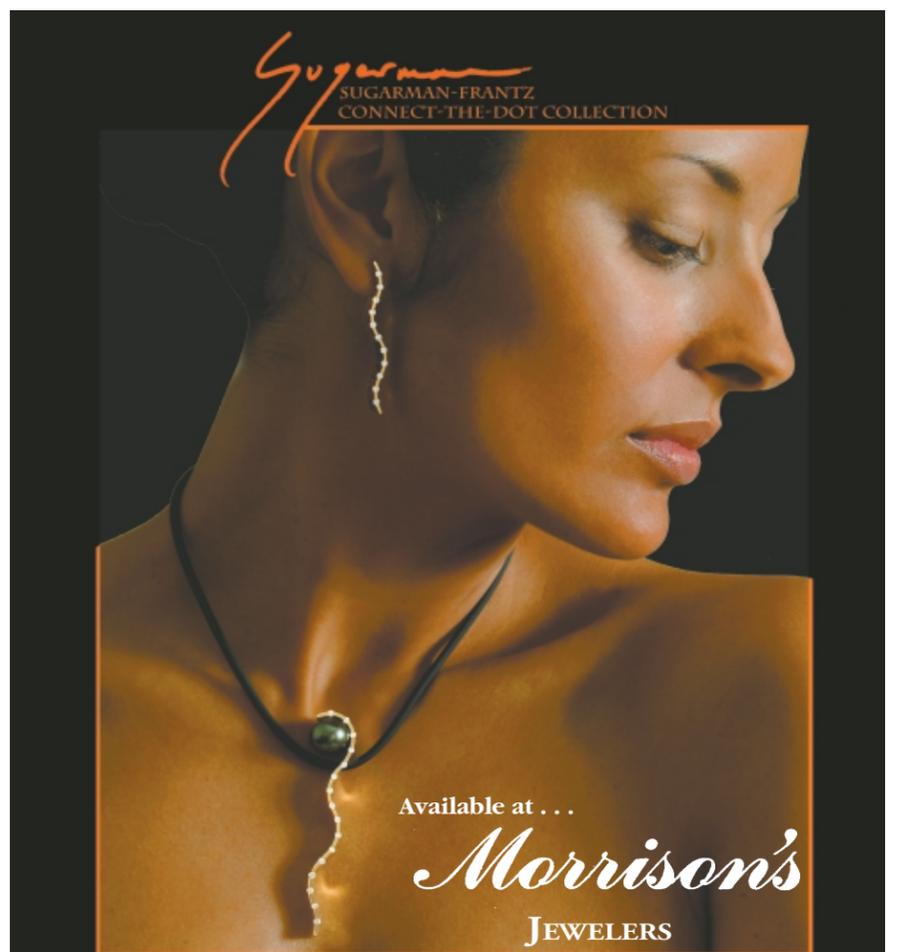
For participants like Liz Reed, whose children Katy, now a sophomore, and JJ, a junior at Miramonte, went along to teach

house and yard. Then she handed Reed a rooster. McBride got a hen.

"Oh, my gosh, I'd never held a chicken before," Reed laughed. "It was such an honor. She said she wished she could give us a goat, but they were too poor to afford something like that."

Since the club and its sponsors started their annual trips, they have built a house in the village to make logistics easier for their frequent trips. Their house-sitter makes a weekly journey to Voi back on the main road to plug into e-mail to keep in touch with McBride and others.

"We can really plan. I'm writing an e- [SEE KENYA page 15]



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SCHOOLS / STUDENTS

Bye Bye Birdie at Orinda Intermediate School



PETRA MICHEL

Ron Pickett rehearses students from OIS for their production of *Bye, Bye, Birdie*.

By CAROL BARBER
Contributing Writer

The Bulldog Theater Company at Orinda Intermediate School (OIS) will perform one of the most captivating musical shows of our time, *Bye Bye Birdie*, November 7 through November 10. The production will be directed by Ron Pickett and produced by Amy Bush and Kathy Simon. The show is performed by 70 OIS students in two casts with 25 additional OIS students as tech crew. Each of the actors' families has taken a behind-the-scenes role in the production by helping on set design, costumes, makeup, publicity, and many other critical tasks.

Bye Bye Birdie is a satire done with affection, imagination, and frivolity. It tells the story of Conrad Birdie, a rock and roll singer who is about to be inducted into the Army. Conrad's agent and secretary concoct one final national publicity plan before his induction. See what ensues when Conrad bids a typical American teen-aged

"I like to sing and act, but the most important fact is that it is fun!" said 8th grader Matthew Barber.

girl goodbye with an all-American kiss.

Working on a play can be a wonderful experience for the OIS students. As 8th grader Matthew Barber said at a recent rehearsal, "I like to sing and act, but the most important fact is that it is fun!" Many of the kids have been in productions over the years and developed friendships. For the

6th graders, it is exciting to be immersed so quickly into a school production. Amrita Newton comments, "I have been in several plays in elementary school, and I always loved the feeling of being on stage. I am really excited that I was cast to be a teenager in *Bye Bye Birdie*."

Tickets for the show at the school, located at 80 Ivy Drive, are \$10 for reserved seating and \$6 for general admission. The first two shows are preview shows, when all seats are \$5 general admission. Performance times are Wednesday, November 7, Thursday, November 8 at 4:30 p.m. (preview shows), Friday, November 9 at 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Saturday, November 10 at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

For tickets or more information, visit www.orindaschools.org/ois.

◆ KENYA from page 14

mail to the teachers at Moi High School right now," McBride said as she sat at an inside table at Cafe Teatro. "We can actually find out what they need that could fit into their curriculum."

ABE now has about 90 sponsors from throughout the Bay Area who send almost a third of all the village's students to school. "Now that some students are finishing high school, some sponsors are eyeing the possibility of sending their students on to technical schools for job training," McBride said.

For more information about the Kenya humanitarian trips, a Google search for "ABE Club Miramonte" will take you straight to the long website address.

Orinda Academy to Host Open House

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Friends of Wagner Ranch Welcome New OUSD Superintendent



(L-R) Reg Barrett, UC professor and volunteer at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area and **Lucy Hupp Williams** from the Orinda Historical Society hike through the Wagner Ranch Nature Area with OUSD superintendent **Dr. Joe Jaconette** and **Steve Gentry**, also a volunteer at the center.

BY DOROTHY BOWEN
Staff Writer

Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area (WRNA) decided to turn over a

new organic leaf in their relations with the Orinda Union School District and invited the new superintendent, Joe Jaconette, to lunch. They also invited everyone who had supported the WRNA and about 80 guests attended on a weekday afternoon in August. The Nature Area is located at the Wagner Ranch School site and operated by the Orinda Union School District.

Jaconette warmed the hearts of the nature lovers by describing how he had begun work to preserve a similar habitat when he was superintendent of the Carmel Unified School District. The eight-acre site in Carmel won state awards. He most recently worked for textbook publisher McGraw Hill in government relations. "My goal always was to get back to education," he said. "I'm delighted to be here and learn about this facility."

Guests at the luncheon took a walk on the many trails at the site and looked at a display of photos and booklets documenting the more than 30 years of the

[SEE WAGNER page 20]



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Stop Me If You Think You've Heard This One Before

Paradise Lost and Paradise Without Zac Efron
Andra Lim



Pop culture feeds us two stereotypes of little children: Either kids are shrieking, rampaging, out-of-control Erymanthian Boars who can only be captured and tucked into bed after eating the right brand of macaroni and cheese (Kraft), or kids are composed of sunlight and moonbeams and frolic around in meadows all day, chasing butterflies and skipping while belting out songs from *The Sound of Music*.

On the other hand, teenagers have a variety of stereotypes to choose from. We can be jocks, cheerleaders, rich kids, scholars, slackers, science geeks, or Holden Caulfields. It's like a salad bar: You take lettuce, tomatoes, chicken, hard-boiled eggs, avocado, sprinkle a little vinaigrette on top, and you get a Cobb salad.

You take the rich kids, the slackers, and the Holden Caulfields, and you get the unmotivated elite with bipolar disorder – the clique to which our current president used to belong.

The hit Disney channel movie *High School Musical* ends with the banishment of social hierarchies and the whole school dancing to a pop song about how everyone is special and dreams *can* come true. Essentially, at the end of the movie, East High School is a utopia. The unscrupulous blond twins get what they deserve, everyone is equal, and there's horrendous bubblegum pop.

This utopian high school society is so tempting that a great number of teenagers were unhealthily excited to see Troy and Gabriella actually touch in the premiere of *High School Musical 2*.

I am not a fan of *High School Musical*. However, like the average human being, I savor the idea of a perfect society where what goes around comes around, where good always prevails, where Rose and Jack grow old together. And then I had a revelation.

I spent my summer sitting on a lifeguard chair, scanning the pool to make sure no one was drowning, but also looking for kids who were – to cut to the chase – being mean.

There are tons of little kids out there who are adorable, smart, and funny. Some little kids, like the boy who once said to me, "That's my dad, in the visor. I hope I'm not boring like him when I grow up," can make me laugh more than an episode of *The Daily*

Show.

Then there are kids who shove their little sister out of the line for the diving board, kids who manipulate their friends into breaking pool rules, kids who boss their friends around, saying, "No, *I'll* be the princess, and *you'll* be the ugly uni-browed toad with warts all over."

That's when I realized I could create a utopia.

"Hey, you! Yeah, that's right, I'm talking to you!" I'd yell at the devious 5-year-old. "You're going to have to put away that kickboard. Only swim team members and adults are allowed to use them."

With a few exceptions, even the cockiest, most bravado-filled 7-year-olds get embarrassed when a lifeguard yells at them. By making up rules that were sensible enough and then enforcing them only on the miniature manipulators, I could punish all the conniving children by taking them down a few notches in front of the entire pool population. The result would be a society where people got what they deserved, where the good guys won; a society that was a haven for those who didn't quite stick to the status quo.

But here's where I hit a snag in the plan. Everything you just read came to me while I was sitting in that chair, and if I spent all my time on that chair trying to balance the flow of life, this column would not exist.

Even if I did manage to create a harmonious society like that of *High School Musical*, kids would be oblivious. Upon asking various kids at the pool if they'd seen the premiere of *High School Musical 2*, I got a lot of confused stares. These are the kids who are drawn to the strains of the hip-hop song "Walk It Out" emanating from the lifeguard office as if we gave them candy every time they listened to it, but loudly protest whenever I put on "Ladies' Choice" by Zac Efron from *Hairspray*.

But maybe – just maybe – the pool ended up as a utopia anyhow, because as Marcel Proust said, the only true paradise is paradise lost, and paradise without Zac Efron's strident voice.

Santa is Coming to Orinda!

■ Annual tree lighting and visit by Santa Claus scheduled for December 8.

Santa Claus will once again ride in on his big red fire truck to greet youngsters at the annual Tree of Lights ceremony. Sponsored by the Orinda Chamber of Commerce and Hospice of the East Bay, this year's event takes place on Saturday, December 8, at 4:30 p.m. in the Orinda Village parking lot (by Bank of America).

Participants will enjoy choral music by local elementary and junior high school students before Mayor Steve Glazer turns on the 1,400 lights in the centuries-old oak tree. Each light represents the life of a loved one who is being honored or remembered. Cider, popcorn, and cookies will be served while youngsters wait to discuss their holiday wishes with the jolly old man in red.

For more information, call the Chamber of Commerce at 254-3909.

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RUSSIANS / SISTER CITY

The Russians Come to Take Back Land Tips on Selling Property



CHRIS LAVIN

Madina Bikbulatova, a real estate agent from Moscow, spoke to the Orinda Rotary at its October 3 meeting.

By **CHRIS LAVIN**
Assistant Editor

The refrain “the Russians are coming!” rang through Orinda last month when real estate agents from the former Soviet Union landed in Orinda to learn how Americans conduct property sales. Hosted by the Orinda Rotary, 11 agents spent more than a week visiting with businessmen, agents, and government officials.

The guests, ranging in age from their 30s to their 50s, came from towns and cities throughout Russia, and were hosted locally by Rotary members’ families.

“It is amazing to me how people have been so hospitable and opened up their homes,” said Larisa Kotlyarova, of Novosibirsk, through an interpreter. “Coming to America, I really didn’t know what to expect. I knew there were natural resources, nice environments, but I discovered that the people are the main asset of this country.”

Organized by Dick Burkhalter, Lance Cowles and other Rotarians, one of the tricks to the trip was arranging ways to communicate once their guests arrived. Linda (Becky) Jenkins managed to find Lana Sommerville, a fluent Russian speaker, practically in her back yard in Orinda by sending out an e-mail plea that got copied to other friends and family.

“She saved the day,” Don Jenkins said of Sommerville, who worked many hours as an interpreter.

All of Russia’s land was owned by the state until 1991, when land became privatized. According to the Russian guests, about 60 percent of the apartments and land was turned over to their residents, none of whom had ever sold or purchased property. Galina Kharitonova of St. Petersburg founded a real estate brokerage in 1993, making her a pioneer in the Russian business. She now employs 20 people.

Vladimir Beketov, of Moscow, originally visited the United States two years ago, and went back with a lot of knowledge about how to conduct real estate sales. “My agents were very happy and made money. Now I am back to find out how to make money myself,” he said to loud laughter from his colleagues. He said a typical real estate commission in Moscow is five percent, but commissions can approach 10 percent in other parts of the country.

At a Rotary lunch, Cowles introduced Madina Bikbulatova, a Rotarian in Russia who directs the Center for Citizen Initiative in Moscow, which sponsored the delegation. She reiterated her thanks for Orinda’s hospitality, and emphasized that

[SEE RUSSIANS page 18]

Sister City Foundation to Sponsor Czech Trip Next Fall

By **BOBBIE LANDERS**
Contributing Writer

The Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation will sponsor a delegation to The Tabor Meetings, a 10-day medieval festival, which begins on September 10, 2008. The Meetings include a torchlight parade on Friday evening with fireworks and costumed participants. There also will be live entertainment in historic Zizka Square on Friday and Saturday, with another costumed parade on Saturday, followed by a concert that night.

During the day, many vendors will share their home-crafted items in booths decorated as in medieval times and various foods and barbecues abound in the Marketplace. Guided tours of Tabor’s catacombs will be offered, as well.

Leaving Tabor, participants will travel south through the Bohemian countryside to visit a brewery in Cesky Budejovice

(forerunner of our Budweiser label). Bavarian accommodations will be in Cesky Krumlov, the UNESCO-designated historic city.

The next stop will be the dazzling white, fairy tale landmark castle, Hluboka. The night will be spent in the former guest housing of the castle, which is now a hotel surrounded by parkland and overlooking the lake.

In Prague, the delegation will stay in an historic hotel within strolling distance of the Charles Bridge. Prague tours will include the famous Prague Castle, gold street, the historic old square, and the Alphonse Mucha art museum.

Only 30 travelers, in addition to foundation members, can be accommodated. Anyone interested in joining the Orinda delegation is invited to an organizational and informational meeting on Thursday, November 29. Phone (925) 254-8260 for the meeting time and place.



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Orinda Community Center Auxiliary's 32nd Annual Holiday Bazaar

This is the Orinda Community Center's largest fundraising event. Over 60 vendors from near and far. 100% of the proceeds benefit the Orinda Community Center parks and programs.

Saturday, November 3rd 10:00 - 5:00pm

Sunday, November 4th 11:00 - 5:00pm

Orinda Community Center 26 Orinda Way

~ Raffle Prizes and Silent Auction ~

~ Children's Art Drop Off ~

While you shop, drop-off your child, ages 3-8, in the art room \$5.00 per child, per hour. Saturday 11:00 - 3:00 and Sunday 12:00 - 3:00

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 and much more!

OCCA is the sponsor of the annual Concerts-in-the-Park, Halloween Parade, Spring Egg Hunt and this Holiday Bazaar.

For more information, please call the Orinda Community Center at 925-254-2445 or go to www.ci.orinda.ca.us/parksandrec.

CONTINUATIONS

◆ **KAPLAN** from page 9

Yarn Boutique in Lafayette and ask about projects that would be easy to knit. They set me up with some yarn and size 15 circular needles, and within three hours, I was able to make a hat. I was hooked."

Knitting is routinely taught in Waldorf schools and Gilmartin saw it as a way of helping address the needs of students with different learning styles. With her newfound enjoyment for knitting, Kaplan was able to step up to the task of teaching 9-year-olds how to cast-on and knit. If the activity was originally intended to reach a select group of students, the knitting craze soon took off at Del Rey. Teachers started knitting at lunch and after school. Students could be found in the lunchroom and on the playground knitting. It wasn't long before you started seeing young boys bringing their knitting projects to baseball games so they would have something to do while they waited for their turn on the field.

"It was a wonderful tool in the classroom," Kaplan says. "Knitting helped students focus, and they became more engaged in the classroom. It also helped develop their small motor skills by doing something other than playing video games. All of the students took to it – boys and girls." Gilmartin is now on leave from her teaching position but Kaplan continues to introduce Del Rey students to knitting through an after-school enrichment class.

If knitting was a way to foster better focus in the classroom, it's also provided an

avenue for Kaplan to focus her boundless energy. "I had pretty much worked through all of the projects I could," she says. "I'm one of those people who needs to be constantly challenged – I like to try new things." It was this need that led to Kaplan's authorship of her books.

"Most people are intimidated when they are looking to knit a garment. I wrote the books because I wanted to provide a way for people to take on knitting and be successful," Kaplan says. Both *Confessions of a Lazy Knitter* and *Crocheted Christmas Stockings* meet her goal. The books present patterns that can be finished in short order and with relative ease as most patterns are knit in the round (a technique that employs circular needles and eliminates the need to seam pieces).

Always the coach and teacher, Kaplan says to new knitters, "Don't worry about what you're knitting, just do it until it becomes second nature." When teaching school-aged children, Kaplan urged them to ignore mistakes and "just keep knitting." Eventually, when they got to a certain point, she'd help them fashion their handiwork into something usable. With Kaplan's creative eye, rows and rows of straight knitting could be fashioned into scarves, cell phone holders, doll clothes, or any number of items.

"Just keep knitting' became my mantra," she jokes. "When getting started, the idea isn't to think 'I'm going to make a hat but it doesn't even look like a hat.' It's really more about developing your muscle

memory. It's hard for adults to understand – we want perfection immediately," she says.

"It's not about the product, it's about the process," Kaplan continues. Ask just about any knitter and they'll agree. In today's global marketplace, with cheap labor to be found across the globe, it's unlikely that the recent craze for knitting was in response to a need for more sweaters. If anything, the droves of adults learning, or returning to, the craft are doing it for emotional rather

than purely practical reasons.

Making something with your hands can be a very satisfying pursuit. And, as the holidays approach and we look for ways to bring calmer, more meaningful traditions back to the season, knitting may be the answer. After all, who wouldn't appreciate a hand-knit scarf or hat to ward off winter's chill?

Grace Kaplan's books are available at Orinda Books or may be ordered from the publisher at www.koolerdesign.com.

◆ **MCCARTY** from page 9

responsibility to continue your development," McCarty says.

Whether her own students' aims are to be published writers or to write solely for themselves, McCarty encourages her students not to give up. "It's good to be in an environment with other writers, to share common experiences of the art form," she continues. "Having a story, having something you want to say is over half of your battle. Technique, you learn through practice." In the Wednesday night class, students bring their material in and McCarty helps them to learn that technique.

Her students come from all walks of life:

"We work on finding your true writing voice and the skills you need to be understood by your reader," McCarty says.

doctors, teachers, stay-at-home moms, and accountants. The students write in their choice of genre, ranging from personal essay to novel to poetry to comic book.

"We work on finding your true writing voice and the skills you need to be understood by your reader," McCarty says. "After college, you don't have to always write in complete sentences. You do, however, have to be understood." She explains that the writer must take control of the language, of his voice, and that individuals who learn this become better communicators in other aspects of life.

All levels of writers are encouraged to enroll in her classes. "What I love most about teaching is the students who have studied for awhile with me who now are able to help others who've just begun," she says. "Helping others strengthens these writers as much as my lecturing does."

Writers interested in joining the Wednesday class should contact the Orinda Community Center, 254-2445. McCarty's website, www.kgmccarty.homestead.com, has more information about her book and writings.

◆ **PROJECT** from page 9

organizes book sales.

Executive Director of Project Second Chance, Susan Lynn, says that they started these book events to help increase the program's support base. "We knew that people who love to read would care about people who can't read," says Lynn. The events have proved very successful, resulting in a mailing list of over 800 people who donate time and money to Project Second Chance.

Shoop's presentations last around 30 minutes, during which time he tells a story about each book designed to "whet appetites." Ample opportunity will be given for questions and audience discussion. Shoop provides handouts with basic information, such as title and author, as well as plot points and book cover images. This event at the Orinda Library has grown in popularity with average attendance now at 30 to 35 people. Acting branch librarian Caroline Gick says Shoop has developed a following of devoted fans that find his recommendations provocative and fun and his descriptions entertaining.

Lynn says they call Shoop's following The Shoopets. "Ron knows how to pique people's interest," says Lynn. "He's very casual and approachable and he engages the audience."

While all the books Shoop discusses are available in the library, they also will be available to purchase at the event, with a portion of the proceeds going to Project Second Chance. Copies will also be available for purchase at Orinda Books after the event.

For more information about Project Second Chance visit: www.ccclib.org/psc/psc. For more information about Friends of the Orinda Library visit: www.ccclib.org/friends/ori.

◆ **RUSSIANS** from page 17

the communication and friendship goes two ways.

"We are very appreciative," she said. "Everyone is learning a lot."



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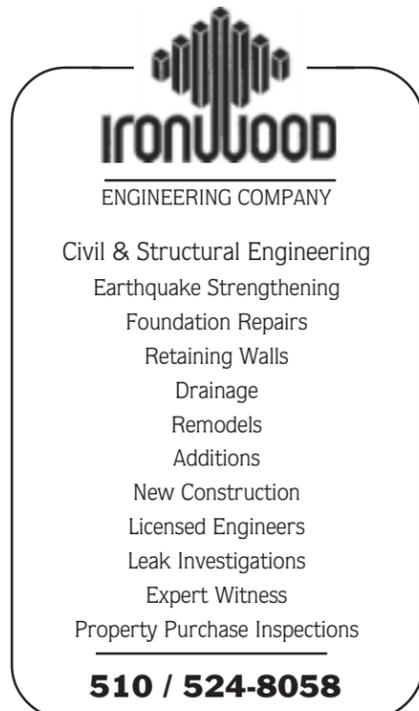
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY / OUT AND ABOUT

Orinda Historical Society Receives Collection of Miniature Buildings

By DOROTHY BOWEN
Staff Writer

A collection of clay models of historic buildings made by former Orinda artist Dorothy Roos was discovered among the objects at a garage sale at the late artist's home. The sale was held by her heirs to benefit Hospice, and when Roos' son and daughters-in-law came across the collection of miniatures, they recognized their value and donated them to the Orinda Historical Society (OHS). It had always been Roos' wish to give the models to OHS, but until recently, the Society did not have adequate facilities to hold the fragile artifacts as it does now in its new home on the ground floor of the Orinda Library.

By happy chance, Lucy Hupp Williams, president of the Orinda Historical Society, had just acquired a large glass display case with a mirrored back that allows viewers to see all sides of the models. Roos always said that her models were better than historic photos because most people don't take pictures of the backs of buildings.

The nine models include the Santa Maria Chapel, built in 1892 and demolished in 1950; the Bryant train station, built in 1893 and since resurrected and preserved at the Crossroads; the Bryant House built in 1875 and called the Lace House because of its Victorian gingerbread carpentry; the Moraga Adobe, which is now an historic landmark dating back to 1841; the Orinda Park Hotel built in 1885, where it once stood at the corner of Bear Creek Road and Camino Pablo; a school house from 1882, which is now covered by San Pablo Reservoir; and the Miner Ranch house built in 1880.

Before she began work on the buildings, Roos did considerable research on her subjects in *The History of Orinda* by Muir Sorrick and *Pictorial Orinda: History of a Suburb* by Burl Willes, as well as other sources found in libraries and civic records.

Roos had a head start in learning about local history because she had once been a nurse for the babies of Edith Miner of the pioneer Miner family. It's been said that she treasured a scrapbook from the Miner girls



The Orinda Historical Society has a collection of **Dorothy Roos'** miniature creations of Orinda buildings, including the Orinda Hotel (far right) which stood at the corner of San Pablo Dam Road and Bear Creek Road.

of photos and poems about the days at Brookbank, the Miner family farm. The photos were hand-tinted, as was the custom then, and show young girls in ruffled dresses on spirited horses against the open hillsides of what is now Sleepy Hollow.

When a serious illness forced her to give up nursing, Roos looked for something she could do at home. When her sons were Cub Scouts, she realized that they knew little about local history, "and they weren't the only ones."

She began studying art history at Diablo Valley College and went on to the California College of Arts and Crafts,

graduating when she was 52. She decided to make the scale models of Orinda's historic buildings "so we cannot forget the past. It's easy to read a book and forget, but when you see something, you remember," Roos once said. "It's easy in the West to forget. I remember when Walnut Creek was a squint in the eyes. When you've been close to death, as I have, it makes you want to do something more with your life - leave something behind."

The models are on permanent display in the OHS Archives below the library, open 3 to 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or by request. Call 254-1353.

Out and About

Pat Rudebusch



Every fall for the past 10 years or so Orinda book lovers have found their way over the bridge and to the **National Kidney Foundation's Authors Luncheon**. The annual event - now in its 19th year - brings some of the most current and exciting authors to the Bay Area for an afternoon of food, stories, and book signings. This year's program, on November 10, promises to be as informative and inspiring as those of previous years.

Orinda resident **Tyler Hofinga** will serve as chair of the event along with honorary co-chairs **Ann Getty** and **Amy Tan**. Hofinga first became involved with the National Kidney Foundation 12 years ago when he was invited to co-chair the Authors Luncheon. He was sufficiently impressed with the work of the organization that he has continued his involvement.

Hofinga notes that the Authors Luncheon, which has come to be considered the premiere literary event in San Francisco, is the largest fundraising event for the Northern California chapter of the National Kidney Foundation. It provides critical funding to enable the organization to provide services to over 15,000 people who are undergoing dialysis, transplant surgery, or various stages of kidney disease.

This year's luncheon features seven internationally acclaimed authors. **Tom Brokaw** headlines the event as he introduces the audience to his latest book, *Boom!: Personal Reflections on the Sixties and Today*. Brokaw is joined by best selling author **Diane Ackerman**, whose numerous

bestsellers include *A Natural History of the Senses*, *An Alchemy of the Mind*, and her latest book *The Zookeepers Wife: A War Story*; **Halran Coben**, author of over a dozen legal thrillers including this year's bestseller *The Woods*; and **Lisa See** whose latest novel, *Peony in Love*, should join *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* as a book club favorite. Local authors include Pulitzer Prize winner **Michael Chabon** discussing his latest novel, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*; **Michael Krasny**, host of KQED radio's *Forum*, sharing stories from his just-released book, *Off Mike: A Memoir of Talk Radio and Literary Life*, and prize-winning children's author **Judy Sierra** talking about writing for a younger audience and her latest book, *Mind Your Manners B.B. Wolf*. Comedian **Brian Copeland**, whose one-man show, *Not Your Average Black Man*, just finished an engagement at the Dean Leshner Center for the Arts, will serve as master of ceremonies.

The 19th Annual National Kidney Foundation Authors Luncheon will be held on Saturday, November 19 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Hilton San Francisco. Tickets are \$125 per person or \$1,100 for a table of 10 and can be purchased online at www.kidneyca.org or by contacting the foundation at 415-543-3303 ext.114 or authors@kidneyca.org.



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CONTINUATIONS

◆ WAGNER from page 16

Nature Area. Marjie Muscante, a fifth grade teacher at Del Rey School, often brings her classes to the nature area. She began taking students to the area when she was a new teacher at Sleepy Hollow and Warren Arnold oversaw the nature area programs. Arnold was working on his master's thesis, which looked at ways to teach about nature.

When Arnold retired, Toris Jaeger was hired to replace him. "It was a baptism by fire," she said. "Once I got my head above water, I realized what a gift this is. It's had its ups and downs. The last seven years have been a bumpy road," she said, referring to plans to relocate the OUSD and City of Orinda maintenance facility to the nature area.

After a grassroots response, the school district looked at other alternatives and is currently pursuing the deLaveaga property at the Orinda Crossroads' northwest corner.

The tour of the nature area was a trip down memory lane for many teachers and parents attending the luncheon. Lucy Hupp Williams, president of the Orinda Historical Society, made sure that Jaconette saw the

memorial garden named for her mother, Lucie Hupp, organic gardening guru, where sunflowers were blooming.

"Mom talked about the nature area all the time – a lot," she remembered. "It was going to be her pride and joy. She liked to teach kids, even more than adults." Her mother told Jaeger that the nature area could have any plants from her home on Vallecito Lane when she died in 1997. "So there are little pieces of Mom still growing there," Williams said.

Carl and Flo Weber remembered that their daughters, Gretchen and Liz, went to Pioneer Days as students at Wagner Ranch, and now their grandchildren are continuing the tradition. Steve Gentry is best known as the beekeeper at the Farmers' Market and owner of the '39 Ford truck in the Fourth of July Parade. When he was a boy, he and his buddies rafted down the creek in the nature area to the waterfall over the dam near Bear Creek Road.

Andy Juska and Michael Bowen remember their delight when Arnold dared them to lick banana slugs as a survival technique on a hike in the nature area. Today, Juska works in forestry management and Bowen for the Coastal Conservancy. "Everyone in the conservation movement has some kind of childhood experience like that," he says. "Otherwise, there's no connection."

A number of infrastructure improvements, including improved trails

and new tables and benches, have been completed. Future plans include upgrading the kitchen area and improving more sections of trails. "We're forging ahead," says Jaeger. As to the luncheon, Jaeger says, "It was the happiest day of my life, since we discovered red legged frogs in the Peter Morton Memorial Pond."

◆ BACKYARD from page 2

brush. In the spring, you might also see wild radish and mustard. The main draw to Point Isabel, however, may be the dog park, which is the largest off-leash dog park in the United States. It receives over 500,000 canine visitors a year. We were amazed that all of the dogs we saw romping in the fenced park seemed to get along well together. The park does have a set of rules including the stipulation that owners must keep their dogs under voice control and within sight at all times, and immediately leash any dog showing aggressiveness toward people or other dogs. Dogs also must be on-leash while on the trail.

A popular spot next to the dog park is the Mudpuppy's Tub and Scrub: Do-it-yourself dog bathing using their elevated tubs, warm water, shampoo, towels, and brushes costs \$11; or, full-service, professional dog washing and spa treatments start at \$16 for small dogs. Would your favorite four-footed friend like a blow dry? It's \$5, as is an herbal flea dip.

While Fido is getting gussied up, owners can relax at the Sit and Stay Café. The menu includes coffee, chili, soups, sandwiches

and sweets — all very reasonably priced. We brought along a lunch to eat at a picnic table near the water where we watched the dogs chase balls into the wavelets, or race along the shore after Frisbees.

If you are in the market for a canine pet, this is the place to see different breeds in action. There are all varieties: large and small, long, short or curly-haired; white, brown, black, and all colors in between. Owners are most obliging when asked about their pets and why they favor their particular breed.

The Park Service has done a fine job of providing interpretive signs. One tells about the Native Americans who lived here 2,000 years ago. Their boats, made of tule, have been found here. Another sign tells about the marshland and efforts being made to reclaim it. It used to be that the wetlands were considered wasteland and were filled in to be made useful. As a result, much of the marshland and its native inhabitants were lost. If you're lucky, you might spot the clapper rail, a secretive bird that creeps through the marsh.

Besides using the dog park and the trails, one may fish from the shore where striped bass, various surf perch, jack smelt, sturgeon, leopard shark, and flounder might go for your hook. But be aware that a license is required. Windsurfers find it a good spot to sail, and visitors can enjoy watching the graceful sailboats that dot the bay waters.

If you are up for a longer walk or bike ride, the Eastshore Park extends 8.5 miles along the East Bay shoreline from the Bay Bridge to Richmond. The major entrances are located at these interchanges along Interstates 80 and 580: Powell Street in Emeryville, Ashby, University and Gilman streets in Berkeley, Buchanan Street in Albany, and Central Avenue in Richmond. Get complete directions on the East Bay Regional Park website, www.ebparcs.com.

Getting There: From I-580 or I-80, (the Eastshore Freeway) in Richmond, take Central Avenue west to Point Isabel, adjacent to the U.S. Postal Service Bulk Mail Center. Convenient parking can be found by the Mudpuppy's Tub and Scrub building.



BOBBIE DODSON
Bicyclists enjoy the path at the Point Isabel Shoreline Park.

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◆ ART from page 1

The commission will focus primarily on contemporary art – both figurative and abstract pieces – by Northern California artists, with an emphasis on Bay Area artists. The initial artists include Roger Berry (ceramic/wood), Patricia Bengtson (cut marble), Riis Burwell (steel/bronze), Kati Casida (painted aluminum), Jeff Downing (ceramics), Archie Held (cut steel), Stan Huncilman (concrete/wood/steel), Bruce Johnson (redwood/copper), Vickie Jo Sowell (painted metal), John Toki (ceramic), Gale Wagner (steel), and Bill Wareham (painted steel). "I'm just amazed that these wonderful artists are willing to loan us their work for up to a year," Almaguer says. "They are just so generous and cooperative."

Art pieces will be displayed at the library plaza, including the waterfall/pond area, the Community Center, the upper level library sculpture garden, and city hall. "We hope to make the art part of the environment," says Urban, who notes the pieces will also be for sale. "At the end of the loan period or when a piece sells, we will install new works."

The Art in Public Places Commission consists of representatives from the Friends of the Orinda Library, the Community Center, the Orinda Arts Council, the Public Works Department, the Aesthetic Review Committee, and two at-large representatives. The commissioners serve three-year terms.

For more information on the commission or the public art program, go to the City of Orinda's website at www.ci.orinda.ca.us.

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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- 2 **The Hearst Art Gallery** of Saint Mary's College presents *Footloose in Arcadia: Artists and Authors in Piedmont from 1895 to 1920*. Preview lecture and reception: 5 to 7 p.m., Presented through 12/16.
- 3 **Orinda Community Center Auxiliary** Annual Holiday Bazaar, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Orinda Community Center. Repeats 11/4 from noon to 3 p.m.
- 7 **Bulldog Theater Company** presents *Bye Bye Birdie*, preview show 4:30 p.m. at Orinda Intermediate School. Preview repeats 11/8 at 4:30 p.m., with performances 11/9 at 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., and 11/10 at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. See information at www.orindaschools.org/ois.
- 8 **Orinda Woman's Club's** Festival of Trees, San Ramon Marriott, 10:30 a.m., 254-4900.
- 10 **Orinda Books**, playwright Kathryn McCarty discusses *Defining Form and Other Plays*, 3 to 5 p.m., 254-7606.
- 15 **Orinda Books**, author Jean Pfaelzer discusses *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against Chinese Americans*, 254-7606.
- 18 **Chamber of Commerce** Breakfast, 8 a.m. at Orinda City Hall. Public invited. Call 254-3909.
- 20 **World Affairs Book Group**, 3 p.m. at Orinda Books, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic* by Ray Takeyh, (925) 935-1565.
- 25 **Page by Page Book Group**, 7 p.m. at Orinda Books, to discuss *Sister Mine*, by Tawni O' Dell. New members welcome, 254-7606.
- 28 **WomenSing**, holiday concert, *Veni Domine* and more including traditional carols, Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 8 p.m., (925) 974-9169.
- 30 **St. Stephens Church** Sing Along *Messiah*, 7:30 p.m., 254-3770.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events open to the public and are free unless otherwise marked.

- 7 **Paws to Read**; Sign up to read to a friendly dog, for grades 1-5, at 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Repeats 11/14, 11/21, 11/28. Sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library.
Publisher Presentation, 7 p.m., Orinda Library Garden Room, with Random House representative Ron Shoop, who will talk about books for general readership as well as make suggestions for holiday gifts. Sponsored by Project Second Chance and Friends of the Orinda Library.
- 13 **Toddler Lapsit**, with stories, songs, and bounces for infants to 3-year-olds and their caregivers, 10 a.m., repeats at 10:30 a.m. Please attend just one storytime a week. Repeats 11/14, 11/20, 11/21, 11/27, and 11/28.
- 14 **"Mark Twain,"** 7 p.m., the ghost of Mark Twain returns to the Orinda Library Auditorium to share his experiences of Virginia City, Nevada, and Orinda.
- 15 **Fairy Tales and Fairy Program**, 3:30 p.m., with stories, games, and crafts. Come dressed as your favorite magical creature. Sponsored by Friends of the Orinda Library.
- 17 **Saturday Morning Live!** Family storytime for 3- to 5-year-olds, 11 a.m. in the Toddler Alcove. Repeats 11/24.
- 27 **Fireside Chat**, 7 p.m.

For more information on library programs, call 254-2184.

CLUB MEETINGS

- Friends of Orinda Creeks**, Orinda Library, May Room, fourth Wednesday, 8 a.m., 253-1997.
- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary**, Postino's in Lafayette, 7 a.m. every Friday, 254-0440, ext.463.
- Orinda Lions Club**, Europa Restaurant, 64 Moraga Way, every Tuesday at 12:15 p.m., 254-0482.
- Orinda Rotary**, Community Center, every Wednesday at noon, 254-5537.
- Orinda Association**, Orinda Library, May Room, second Monday, 7:30 p.m., 254-0800. 4th of July planning meeting, second Thurs., 7 p.m.
- Orinda Historical Society**, third Wednesday of the month, OHS Museum, 3 - 5 p.m., 254-1353.
- Orinda/Tábor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation**, fourth Thursday of the month, 7 p.m. social, 7:30 p.m. meeting, call 254-8260 for location.
- Orinda Women's Club**, second Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m., 254-3881.

CITY/FIRE/SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

- Acalanes Union High School District**
First and third Wednesdays, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette, 7:30 p.m.
- City Council**
First and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.ci.Orinda.ca.us.
- Historic Landmarks Committee**
Fourth Tuesday, 3 - 5 p.m., Library Garden Room, (925) 788-7323.
- Moraga-Orinda Fire District**
Third Wednesday, 7 p.m., Administration Building, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga.
- Orinda Public Safety Advisory Commission** second Thursday, 7 p.m., Community Room, City Hall.
- Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees**
Second Monday, 4 p.m., OUSD Conference Room, 8 Altarinda Road, www.orinda.k12.ca.us.
- Planning Commission**
Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, 253-4210.
- Parks and Recreation Commission**
Second Wednesday, 7 p.m., Community Center, room 7, 254-2445.

CALENDAR BY CHRIS LAVIN

Send calendar items to chrislavin@earthlink.net

Do a Double Take: Yes, That's Mark Twain

■ Water Ski Through the Caldecott? You bet.

By CHRIS LAVIN

Assistant Editor

For more than 100 years, the stories and yarns penned by Samuel Clemons have been standard fare for avid readers and schoolchildren. But unlike many great American storytellers, the writer known as Mark Twain seemed to speak. Dozens of impersonators, Hal Holbrook in particular, have moved his stories to the stage.

This month, such an event not only happens in Orinda, it happened to Orinda, for it is well-known that Twain spent much of his life in these parts. What is lesser known is that impersonator McAvoy Layne of Incline Village in Tahoe used to live in Orinda.

And boy, does he have some stories.

Twain - or Layne, if you prefer - performs November 14 at the Orinda Rotary Club, as well as Orinda Intermediate School and Miramonte High School. A performance for the general public will be held at 7 p.m. at the Orinda Library. The Rotary is paying for Layne's trip, so all events are free.

"It's going to be great," said Frank Darling of the Orinda Rotary (and of Guitars Not Guns when he's wearing another hat).

In a regular column in a local newspaper in Tahoe, Layne often recounts his Tom Sawyer-like exploits, many of which happened right here. As a young lad driving a tow truck, Layne recounts rousing a friend from sleep at 2 a.m. after he had pulled all the stuck cars out of a flooded Caldecott Tunnel. Yes, there were water skis, a tow rope and a speeding truck involved.

WomenSing's Holiday Concert to be Joyful Anticipation

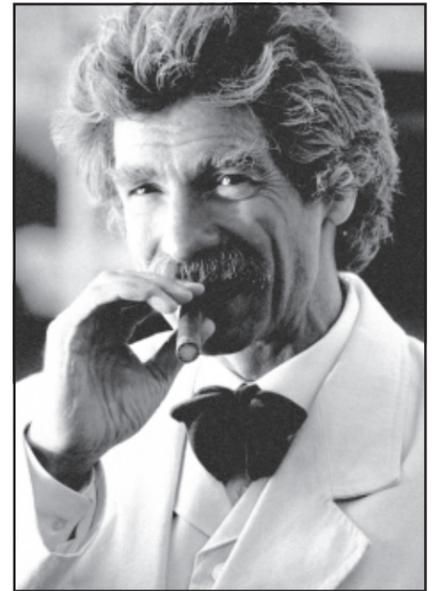
■ Takes Place November 28 and December 2

By LYNDA LEONARD

Contributing Writer

This holiday season revel in the music of WomenSing as they perform Mendelssohn motets, traditional carols, and lilting lullabies on November 28, at 8 p.m., at the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church and on December 2, at 4 p.m., at the First Congregational Church in Berkeley.

"Veni Domine and Other Great Expectations is the title of our holiday



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Former Orinda resident McAvoy Layne impersonates Mark Twain in several performances scheduled for November 14 in Orinda.

His story about breaking into the locked swimming pool at Saint Mary's College while the San Francisco 49ers practiced outside is too precious to give away. Let's just say a metal swing and a buff football player's most sensitive area, sans protective cup, are involved.

"It's like being a Monday through Friday preacher, whose sermon, though not reverently pious, is fervently American," Layne has said.

Layne has performed as Twain all over the world, as well as for A&E Channel's biography of Mark Twain and the Discovery Channel's documentary, "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn."

For more information about Layne's performances, call the Orinda Library at 254-2184.

concert, which is centered on the idea of renewal and joyful anticipation of things to come," says artistic director Martín Benvenuto. Interludes by a guest guitarist will connect the sets.

"An acoustically varied *Sanctus Tryptich* will open the second half of the program with works by Orbán, Fauré, and featured composer Ron Jeffers," says Benvenuto. The program will close with a rousing arrangement by Kirby Shaw of Manhattan Transfer's hit "Operator" followed by Rutter's lush arrangement of "Silent Night." For information, call (925) 974-9169 or go to www.womensing.org.

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BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 24

Quenchers Expands With Success

After five successful years serving up mouth-watering smoothies, Quenchers has substantially expanded its base of operations to include wholesale delivery to public school lunch programs across the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nick Tan and Debbie Yang have joined Scot and Ali Gordon of Quenchers to help run the company's expanding wholesale business.

Bay Area. Orindans need not despair, as the Quenchers retail shop, located at 21 Orinda Way (near Village Pizza) is still open Monday through Friday from 3-5 p.m.

"We have been serving the Orinda and Moraga schools for some time now, and by the end of the year, we will be serving Lafayette schools, as well," says Scot Gordon, president of Quenchers. "We began our business in retail and enjoy our customers. We prepare thousands of smoothies every day, and with this large wholesale volume, we have had to reduce our retail hours. It is important that our customers know we are continuing in operation and our hours have changed accordingly in order to accommodate the wholesale production," he adds.

As the business expands, Nick Tan and his fiancée, Debbie Yang, are joining Gordon as partners. "Debbie is taking over our retail operation. She was formerly an accountant with Sephora and is fantastic. Nick and Debbie are currently enjoying a six-month long sabbatical travelling across Asia at the moment. I have known Nick all my life, and I am looking forward to working together," explains Gordon.

With Governor Schwarzenegger's new mandate for healthier lunches for California's public school students, it is no wonder Quenchers has become an approved vendor to the public schools. Selections include Strawberry Splurge, Purple Pucker, Mango Magic, Pineapple Paradise, and

Blueberry Blast. There is even Super Soy, with soy milk, strawberries, and bananas.

"We do not use high volumes of ice and sherbets, so our smoothies are as healthy and natural as possible, with an abundance of the freshest fruits available. We have never been late to a delivery, nor have we ever missed a single order, and we intend to keep it that way," comments Gordon, who is married to Ali Gordon. The couple has a 2-year-old daughter and resides in Alameda. Ali is beginning a career in the fashion design business.

For more information about Quenchers, please visit the website at www.quencherssmoothies.com.

Christian Science Reading Room

Stepping inside the Christian Science Reading Room, at 31 Moraga Way (adjacent to the Bank of the West), one can't help but be impressed by the quiet and serene environment, especially since the hustle and bustle of the Crossroads continues right outside the window. The bright rooms are furnished with beige leather chairs, reading tables, bookshelves, and light Berber carpet. A sign bearing a quote from the founder of Christian Science, Mary Eddy, reads, "Hatred cannot pierce peace, nor penetrate the solid armor



VALERIE HOTZ

Candace Olsen is the librarian of the Christian Science Reading Room in Orinda.

of Divine Love."

The Christian Science Reading Room is always open to the public. In just about any town where you find a Christian Science Church, there will also be a Reading Room. "Mary Baker Eddy wanted to establish a place for anyone who wants a place that is quiet. She established the Christian Science Monitor in the 1920s to counter the act of yellow journalism being practiced by William Randolph Hearst. She felt the need for a magazine and newspaper that would

provide balanced reporting," explains Candace Olsen, librarian of the Orinda Christian Science Reading Room.

The logo of the *Christian Science Monitor*, a Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper, expresses Baker Eddy's intent "To injure no man, but to bless all mankind." According to Olsen, "Its purpose is to provide news in a positive way and to solve problems." Although The Mother Church in Boston publishes it, the *Monitor* is not a religious publication.

Here, you will also find issues of *Science and Health*, which has been published since the 1860s, *The Sentinel*, a weekly magazine that has been published since 1898, and the monthly *Christian Science Journal*, published since 1885. A computer program will locate the subject you are looking for, reaching back as far as 1885.

"There are books for children's CD's and musical tapes available. Taped broadcasts of the weekly radio program, "The Sentinel

Radio," are available, as well," says Olsen. "A lending library is available to the public, where one will find articles on a range of topics including physical and mental health, relationships and financial issues. A computer allows one to access the Christian Science website, www.spirituality.com at no charge," adds Olsen, who is a third generation Christian Scientist. She has belonged to the church in Orinda for 25 years and is very knowledgeable and enjoys explaining how Christian Science can be used in practical everyday life. "It is based on Jesus' healing and teachings. He came to show us that turning to God allows one to heal anything. Mary Baker Eddy felt that this approach is as current now as it was during Jesus' time," says Olsen.

Interested individuals may listen to the weekly broadcast at 7:30 a.m. Sunday mornings on KNEW AM 910 on your radio dial. For more information please call Candace Olsen at 376-4386.



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BUSINESS BUZZ

Business Buzz Putting a Personal Face on the Face of Business

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Orinda Taxi Arrives (925) 482-7112

Julian Juricevic is filling a niche, having established the first Orinda Taxi service this fall. The colorful kiwi green hybrid Ford SUV bearing the canary yellow logo is conveniently stationed at the Orinda BART station. This attractive color scheme attracts the attention of BART commuters, who spontaneously exclaim, "I did not know

selection," he comments. The couple has two children, Sandra and Juri, who is a junior at Miramonte High School.

"I enjoy seeing smiling faces and giving people a ride home. They enjoy the pleasant surprise of a taxi being available at BART. I have received positive feedback from BART, because the immediate availability of my taxi service further encourages people to use public transportation," says Juricevic. Prior to the arrival of Orinda Taxi on the scene, travelers had to call a cab



VALERIE HOTZ

Julian Juricevic of Orinda Taxi provides a service for local residents: "No longer do Orinda residents traveling by BART need to get off in Rockridge in order to get a taxi home. Now, we have taxi service right here in Orinda."

Orinda had a taxi service. May I have your card? This is wonderful!"

"People are always so pleased to see the Orinda Taxi. The Ford Escape hybrid is perfect for the hills in Orinda. It is quiet and roomy, with a convenient rooftop luggage rack providing additional space for luggage," explains Juricevic. "My customers predict I will have to form a hybrid taxi company for Lafayette," he adds. If Juricevic is on a route, he is sure to be back shortly, limiting the wait for weary travelers.

Juricevic was a government economist in his native Croatia, (formerly Yugoslavia) and emigrated to the U.S. in 1988. He recently retired as the foreman of a floor covering business due to the necessity of having surgery on his knees. This is his first venture into the taxi business. He is married to Tanja Juricevic, who is in sales at Floor Dimensions in El Sobrante. "Tanja is exceptionally knowledgeable about the types of flooring available and is excellent at helping customers make the right

company based in Walnut Creek, and the wait time was excessively long. An additional fee is imposed because the cab driver has to drive from Walnut Creek to Orinda.

Not so with Orinda Taxi, which is available 24/7. Juricevic lives in Orinda, so even if he is not waiting at BART, he is only 10 minutes away anytime, night or day.

This is a great alternative to driving to the airport. The one-way rate for a ride to the Oakland International Airport is \$65 and to San Francisco International it is \$75. Please call Orinda Taxi for your next ride at (925) 482-7112.

[SEE BUZZ page 23]

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SUSTAINABLE GARDENS

◆ PLANTS from page 22

NATIVES: A FEW EASY FAVORITES

Trees

Oaks - both Coast Live Oaks and Valley Oaks demand little or no water.

Big Leaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) a gorgeous large tree especially when they turn golden in the fall.

Buckeye (*Aesculus californica*)— clever smaller tree loses its leaves in summer to conserve water. Attractive white flowers and lovely foliage in late winter-spring followed by chestnuts. Sun to part shade

Large Shrubs

Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*) – colorful berries in late summer.

Pink-flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*) - clusters of flowers in early spring have a spicy fragrance. Sun to part-shade. Fruit attracts birds.

Wild Lilac (*Ceanothus*) - Range from small trees to ground covers; blue flowers in spring, they prefer very little water once established. Plant in sun.

Redtwig Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) – fall color and red bark. A riparian that prefers moist, partial shade.

Medium to Small Shrubs

Coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*) – evergreen, dark shiny leaves. Can grow slowly to 14' but most stay medium sized. Sun or shade.

Manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos*) - small trees to low ground covers; attractive smooth reddish bark. Flowers small white-pink urns in spring. Plant in full sun.

Perennials

Monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) – golden trumpets bloom all summer in the sun. They prefer gravelly soil or at least good drainage and minimal summer water.

Penstemon (*Penstemon*)- colorful bloom all summer; many species. Plant in sun.

Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) fern-like silvery leaves. Plant in full sun. Little water.

Sage (*Salvia*) many to choose from in a variety of colors. Plant in full sun.

Grasses

Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), **Idaho Fescue** (*Festuca idahoensis*), **Purple needlegrass** (*Nassella pulchra*), **Deer grass** (*Muhlenbergia rigens*).

Wildflowers

Native Iris (*Iris douglasiana* is popular), **California poppies** (*Eschscholzia californica*), **Checkerbloom** (*Sidalcea malviflora*), **Blue-eyed grass** (*Sisyrinchium bellum*)

Mediterranean plants that go well with the above natives include lavenders, rose guara and blue marguerites.