

THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis
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The Orinda Association, Publisher
Delivered to 9,000 Households and Businesses in Orinda

12 Issues Annually
March 2008

Lamorinda Faith Communities Reach Out to the Homeless

By PAT RUDEBUSCH
Assistant Editor

The sub-prime mortgage debacle has brought heightened awareness to the housing crisis. And, while the immediate Bay Area and Lamorinda remains somewhat insulated from large-scale foreclosures, the story is vastly different in the outer parts of Contra Costa County. As more families lose their homes, services such as Shelter, Inc. and the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County's Winter Nights program become ever more critical.

It's estimated that on any given night,



SALLY HOGARTY

Rico, Jr. happily plays in the nursery at St. Timothy's in Danville. The youngster and his family will be among the homeless sheltered in Orinda in March as part of the Winter Nights program.

7,000 people are homeless in Contra Costa County, over two-thirds of which are families with children. Shelter, Inc., an independent nonprofit organization established in 1986 by the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors to help alleviate homelessness, finds its services remain in high demand due, in part, to the high cost of living in the Bay Area.

Both Shelter, Inc. and the Interfaith Council's Winter Nights program provide critical services and a sense of hope to the families they serve, with many Lamorinda residents volunteering their time and resources to help those in need.

For the past five years, Roxy Klein, has coordinated St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's outreach support of Shelter, Inc. Volunteers from the church, working in teams of four or five, provide dinner for the Shelter's guests for a week at a time. Those who aren't able to commit to the dinner service will help by donating cash or food and household supplies to keep the shelter's pantry stocked. While the need for services hasn't diminished, Klein says that she's always amazed and heartened by the outpouring of volunteer support. Next month, St. Stephen's will host several homeless families as part of the Winter Nights program.

[SEE SHELTER page 4]



SALLY HOGARTY

Volunteers and clergy from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church prepare for the Winter Nights guests. (L-R) Brendy Free, Mindy Bush and Roxy Klein (co-chairs of the outreach program), Rev. Jan Holland, Father Larry Hunter, and Father Tom Trutner.

The Stars Will Be Out in Orinda This July!

BARBARA BONTEMPS
Contributing Writer

Orinda will "Reach for the Stars" to commemorate the 25th year of its Independence Day celebration this July 4th with a multi-day, blow-out festival that will include something for everyone – games and entertainment for the kids, wine, music, art and dancing for the grown-ups, and (with the help of local businesses) the entire town dolled up in red, white, and blue.

It's hard to imagine that it's been 25 years since the first All Volunteer Pick-Up Marching Band took its debut stroll down Orinda Way, to the delight of everyone lining the parade route. Over the ensuing years, their ranks have grown as sons and daughters have joined their parents in the annual musical march. Likewise the parade itself has grown, with participants (classic car aficionados, service groups, swim clubs, and school groups) nearly outnumbering the spectators! From the flag-raising ceremony to the Fun Run, the pancake breakfast to the parade and after-party in the Community Park, Orinda's 4th of July traditions have endeared themselves to our community. In "Reaching for the Stars" this year, we turn the spotlight on ourselves and celebrate Orinda as a very special place to live.

Plans are underway for a truly spectacular gala, but events won't happen without community support. As has been the case for every 4th of July celebration, the Orinda Association needs sponsors for each of the events planned. With two full days of activities, there are many opportunities for individuals, groups, and businesses to get involved to make this a memorable 25th anniversary!

Orinda Motors owner, Allen Pennebaker, has already stepped forward to demonstrate



SALLY HOGARTY

Last year's events in the park were a big success. The OA has even bigger plans for this year's celebration.

great leadership in making the first "Red, White, and Blue" level donation with a \$5,000 sponsorship for this year's festivities. In addition, they are organizing another Classic Car Show for revelers to enjoy on the Fourth. "We are honored to sponsor our hometown 4th of July on its 25th Anniversary," says John Vanek. "It's always a great party, and we hope everyone will come out and enjoy the fun!"

Your family or business can make a huge difference to the success of Orinda's 25th Anniversary 4th of July by becoming sponsors, as well. Any donated amount is appreciated, and those contributing \$100 or more will be acknowledged. Four sponsorship levels have been created with commensurate levels of recognition before, during, and after the events:

At the highest level (\$5,000), "Red, White, and Blue" sponsors will receive top billing in large print on event banners and posters, promotional and keepsake items;

[SEE STARS page 4]

The Easter Egg Hunt Is On!

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Calling all children ages, 5 and below. The annual Easter Egg Hunt is the place to be on March 20 at the Orinda Community Center Park. The hunt begins promptly at 11 a.m. so don't miss out on the opportunity to bring home bounteous booty from the Easter Bunny. Be on time, or better, be early, because youngsters are divided by age with separate areas for infants and toddlers. You will want to be in the correct place.

There will also be the opportunity for photos with the Easter Bunny; crafts activities including removable tattoos, and cereal necklaces. Juice and cookies will be provided. More than 100 kids are expected.

This is the 30th year the Rotary Club has sponsored this event, and the second that the Orinda Community Center Auxiliary (OCCA) has joined with them to put on the hunt.

Shannon Fuller, president of OCCA says, "We do this because it is a wonderful and safe environment for little children, and is a great community-building activity. We are also pleased to showcase the community park."

Rotary Club member Dick Burkhalter adds, "We are a community service club that enjoys giving back to the community, so this free event is a natural for us. I think it's a hoot. The kids clean the field in minutes; they are like a flock of locusts! We always keep some eggs in reserve for those who don't find any, but that isn't nearly as much fun for them, so I remind everyone to be on time."

A reminder: Parking lots fill up quickly, and RiteAid will tow cars parked in their lot. Try the old library lot, if needed.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Children enjoy hunting for candy and eggs at last year's annual Easter egg hunt.

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ROTARY

Twelfth Annual Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Dinner and Auction on March 15

This year's Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary's gala event takes place on March 15 from 5 to 9:30 p.m. at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street, in Moraga.

Funds raised at the event are used for various community and international service projects, such as learning materials to Lamorinda schools, the Three-Quarter Century Club luncheon for seniors,

financial and volunteer hours to local homeless shelters, funding wheelchairs for the handicapped, and upgrading facilities at the Lafayette Community Center. The evening includes a silent and live auction plus a delicious dinner.

For more information, go to www.lamorindasunrise.org.

— Sally Hogarty, Editor

Miramonte Students Speak on Rotary's Four-Way Test



SALLY HOGARTY

In February, four students of long-time public speaking teacher Sandra Maguire impressed Orinda Rotarians with their speeches utilizing Rotary's four-way test: is it true; is it fair to all concerned; will it build goodwill and better friendships, and will it be beneficial to all concerned. (L-R) **Alina Hasanain** spoke on U.S. aid to Pakistan. A friend of Benazir Bhutto, Hasanain argued against sending primarily military aid to her country. **Tony Wang** discussed the U.S. immigration problem and whether or not the Immigration and Reform Act of 1986 was being enforced. **Elise Washburn** highlighted the plight of returning veterans and what needs to be done to reduce the numbers of homeless among this population, and **Christina Pabst** tackled the problem of how to deal with the ever-increasing amount of electronic waste. For more on Miramonte's public speaking program, see page 22.

Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship Winners Speak at Meeting

Mei-Ling McNamera and David Jimenez spoke at a recent Orinda Rotary meeting. Both are Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars, who have received scholarships to study for three months to two years in a variety of countries. McNamera, who lives in Brentwood, will study in England while Jimenez, a native of Columbia, is currently studying at UC Berkeley. Scholarships range from \$11,000 to \$25,000.



SUE BREEDLOVE

Mei-Ling McNamera

For more information on the program, contact Dr. Paul Giers at 925-254-4667. Applications for 2009-2010 school year are due April 15, 2008.



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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

**A Message From the OA Presidents
A Salute to Our Members**



Kate Wiley, Jim Luini

This issue is dedicated to all of the members/supporters of the Orinda Association. It is with your generous and continuous support that we are able to provide the important programs and traditions you count on.

This July will mark Orinda's 25th anniversary of the July 4th parade and celebration as we know it. We've been told by some "native" Orindans, who remember as children, the parades in Orinda actually

date back well before the 40s. In honor of this year's anniversary, however, the July 4th committee is planning multi-day events, with more music, more food, and more activities for all ages. For the next few issues, Barbara Bontemps will be bringing you the highlights and details of the events. So stay in Orinda this July 4th! As Kate's non-stop, world-traveling husband has always said, "there is no better place on Earth, than Orinda."

Orinda Association Members Receive Local Discounts

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Membership certainly does have its privileges thanks to a new program the Orinda Association (OA) will begin in April.

"We have been working with our local business community to offer our membership special discounts, benefits, and services," explains OA membership chair April Meagher. The business sponsor for April is Subway Sandwiches, located in Theatre Square. When OA members purchase a regular Subway sandwich and drink, they will receive a second Subway sandwich for free.

Meagher has already lined up sponsors with great deals for OA members through June. In May, FedEx Kinko's will be offering a special discount with Treble Stationers offering member perks for June.

Letters went out to current OA members in February enclosing the new membership cards. Meagher says the membership rewards program is a way of saying thank-you to local residents who have been so supportive of the OA. "Thanks to our members support over the years we have been able to publish *The Orinda News*, establish a senior ride program, sponsor public forums, collect items for those in need, run the Volunteer Center, and much, much more," Meagher explains.



Manoj and Sadhana Tripathi (L) recently opened the Subway store at Theatre Square. Shown with them are OA membership chair **April Meagher and Zola**, a Subway employee.

Each issue of *The Orinda News* will have an ad announcing that month's business and the membership benefit.

To receive more information on the program or to join the OA, contact Meagher at aprilmay_27@yahoo.com or call her at 254-5776.

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Local Residents Help Others This Winter

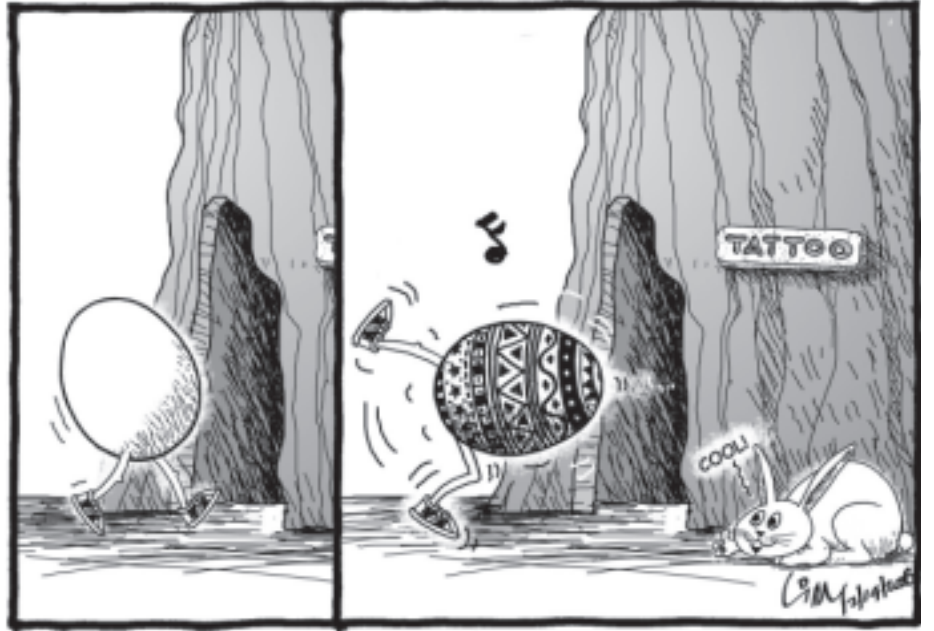
As spring approaches, it's time once again for that old bunny rabbit to come out of its burrow and hide eggs and other goodies for local children to enjoy. This year's Easter Egg Hunt, sponsored by the Orinda Community Center Auxiliary and the Orinda Rotary, takes place on March 20 at the Orinda Community Center park.

But, while some youngsters will be hunting for eggs, others will be hunting for a safe place to stay. As spring brings forth its myriad of blossoms and warmer weather, the Winter Nights program comes to an end. On any given night, approximately 7,000 people are homeless in our county. The Interfaith Council's Winter Nights program have been providing warm beds, good food, and tutoring to 26 people in need this winter, 16 of whom are children. The families have spent one to two weeks at various churches throughout Contra Costa County. Currently, St. Stephen's Church here in Orinda is hosting five families with the Orinda Community Church providing

shelter for them for the last two weeks of March. Santa Maria Catholic Church and St. Mark's Lutheran Church are coordinating volunteers to provide breakfasts and dinners during their stay in Orinda.

Countless volunteers in Orinda, and the other communities who participated in the Winter Nights program, are giving selflessly of their time to prepare meals, setup sleeping quarters, and help youngsters with homework. But soon these families will be back on their own — trying to access county services and looking for that elusive job that will allow enough money for a deposit and first month's rent on an apartment.

The Winter Nights program continues through April 28. To volunteer time, money, or services, call 925-565-0737. If you would like to help young families achieve longer-term stability, call Shelter, Inc. in Martinez at 925-335-0698 or go online to www.shelterincofccc.org. Shelter Inc. of Contra Costa County is dedicated to



preventing homelessness, promoting self-sufficiency, and providing affordable housing. An innovative leader in homeless

services, Shelter, Inc. helps over 3,000 Contra Costa residents each year.

— Sally Hogarty, Editor

◆ SHELTER from page 1

Nights program.

Earlier this winter, Temple Isaiah in Lafayette provided meals and a warm bed for two weeks to five families totaling 26 people who had no place to go. Their outreach was particularly poignant because 16 of the guests were young children. Temple members were able to offer shelter during the Christmas holidays when many churches are filled with activities for the season.

“Our temple members enjoyed hosting families and providing a Christmas for them,” says Susan Mautner. “It’s a huge undertaking, with buying gifts and



SALLY HOGARTY

Heather O'Connell plays with Rico, Jr. at St. Timothy's in Danville. O'Connell coordinates the educational aspect of the Winter Nights program. “It’s great to feed and house people, but the children really need help with learning,” says O'Connell. “We provide tutors to help with homework and with basic skills.”

arranging for Santa to visit the children, but it was quite a fun project that I was glad to have the opportunity be a part of.” Temple Isaiah has hosted families for the past several years and Mautner, like St. Stephen's Klein, is impressed by “the huge outpouring of energy from the congregation.”

The Orinda Community Church (OCC) will also host several homeless families for two weeks at the end of March. This will be the third year that OCC has provided Winter Nights shelter, but the church has a longer history of coordinating with others in the Interfaith Alliance to address homelessness. Similarly, OCC will join forces with Santa Maria Catholic Church and St. Mark's Lutheran Church in coordinating volunteers to provide breakfasts and dinners for their Winter Nights guests.

Bay Area Ski Bus Trips for Teens

Snowboarding and Ski Trips for Mar/Apr

3/1 Sierra	4/2 Alpine
3/8 Sierra	4/5 Sierra
3/15 Kirkwood	4/12 Sugarbowl
3/22 Sierra	4/13 Northstar
3/23 Sugarbowl	4/15 Northstar
3/27 Squaw**	4/19 Kirkwood
3/29 Alpine	

Per trip fee: Residents \$99; Non-residents: \$109

****Squaw/Heavenly per trip fee:** Residents: \$109; Non-residents: \$120

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Winter Nights provides shelter for families from mid-October through the end of April. Many of the families served have only recently become homeless and often have at least one adult working a full-time job. For instance, one family receiving shelter this winter had been renting their home when the property's owner went into foreclosure. Suddenly, the family, who had been paying rent, found themselves homeless. According to Sandy Anderson, who chaired Temple Isaiah's effort and sits on the Homeless Summit, Winter Nights works with their guest families to help them find permanent solutions to their temporary homelessness. Last year, she says, all but one person found a permanent arrangement by the end of April.

Anderson adds that the Winter Nights program sells “wonderful aprons” as a means of raising funds. A practical symbol of hearth and home, the aprons can be purchased for \$20 through participating churches and temples or by contacting Anderson directly at ssaorinda@comcast.net.

Letter to the Editor Article Incorrect

The *Orinda News* article (“Bringing the Campaign Home” by Pat Rudebusch, February 2008 issue) identified Thomas P. O'Neal, the former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, as “the late senator.”

Mr. O'Neal, whose nickname was Tip, never served in the United States Senate. He was elected to the House in 1952 and served as Speaker from 1977 to 1987.

Mr. O'Neal was a Democrat from Massachusetts and died in 1995.

— Richard S. Colman

◆ STARS from page 1

recognition in all publicity, including up to five issues of *The Orinda News* and other print media; repeated recognition from the parade reviewing stand during the parade and car display ad for vehicles in the parade; a free corner booth during the festival with sponsor signage, as well as flag sponsorship and in-park signage during the after-parade celebration. Thank you to Orinda Motors for being the first to step up and become a lead sponsor!

Gold-level sponsors (\$1,000 to \$2,500) receive similar recognition in large print on sponsor banners at events, recognition during the parade, in the monthly event advertising in the newspaper, on promotional and keepsake material, a free booth during the festival, flag sponsorship, and in-the-park publicity.

Silver-level (\$500-\$999) and Bronze-level (\$499) sponsors will receive recognition, as well, with medium billing on event banners, in monthly news advertising, from the reviewing stand during the parade (Silver), flag sponsorship, event posters, and in-park publicity (Silver and Bronze).

Those interested in becoming sponsors can obtain information and a sponsorship packet by calling the Orinda Association office at 254-0800 or by visiting our website at www.orindaassociation.org and selecting the “Forms to Download” menu option. For questions about sponsorships, call the sponsor chair Sylvia Deaton, at 510-224-8548.

Let's keep our Independence Day traditions going —and create a few new ones! With your help, Orinda's 25th Fourth of July celebration will be the best one yet!

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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 April issue are due March 5, 2008.

For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 or send email to jill@aspenconsult.net. The deadline for the May issue is March 19, 2008.

POLICE / BUSINESS



POLICE BLOTTER

November 2007

False Residential Alarms: Officers responded to 111 false alarm calls throughout the city.

Auto Burglary (theft from a locked vehicle): 4 incidents.

Petty Theft From Vehicle (theft of less than \$400 value from an unlocked vehicle): 4 incidents.

All Other Petty Thefts: 2 incidents.

Grand Theft From Vehicle (theft of more than \$400 value from an unlocked vehicle): 4 incidents.

All Other Grand Thefts: No reported incidents.

Vehicle Theft: 2 incidents.

Residential Burglary: No reported incidents.

Commercial Burglary: 1 incident.
Vandalism: 1 incident.

Identity Theft: 2 incidents.

Credit Card Fraud/Forgery: 1 incident.

Arrests

Drug Possession: 1

Possession of Unlawful Weapon: 1

False ID to Police: 1

Warrant Arrest: 5

Alcohol - Persons Under 21: 1

CVC - Driving Under Influence: 2

Burglary - Commercial: 3

Receiving Stolen Property: 1

– Compiled by Jeanette Irving,
Sr. Admin to the Chief

Orinda's Village Associates Wins Regional Honors

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

While the sub-prime housing disaster has certainly affected the economy nation-wide, many local real estate companies have continued to provide excellent service to homeowners and potential homeowners in the Lamorinda area.

One company, Village Associates, has managed to achieve the highest 2007 sales of any single residential real estate office in Contra Costa County, according to MaxEBRDI rankings. The firm was also honored as the Residential Real Estate Firm of the Year by the *East Bay Business Times*. Village Associates president and CEO Ignacio Vega credits the firm's results with

its ability to provide counsel to homeowners as well as its commitment to the Lamorinda area. "We started Village to serve this area, and eight years later, we continue to focus our energy on being an active, knowledgeable community resource for our clients," says Vega.

In 2007, the company had escrow closings totaling \$334,031,519, which represented the sale or purchase of nearly 300 homes in Lamorinda and other communities in Contra Costa County. Operating from a single office in Orinda, Village Associates has 30 experienced agents. "Each of our agents live in Lamorinda, where they raise their families and send their children to local schools," explains Vega. "This allows them to speak authoritatively on Lamorinda."

Friday Forum to Host Editor Tom Vacar

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Tom Vacar, the well-known consumer editor for KTVU Channel 2's Fox News, will speak at 1:30 p.m., March 7, for the First Friday Forum in the Fellowship Hall at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. His topic will be "Consumer Rights from Energy Prices to ID Theft."

Vacar says he plans to include the latest scams and consumer concerns. "I think scams aimed at consumers are some of the most prolific areas of crime," he said. "Unfortunately, they are the least policed because of other priorities. As a result, people really have to be their own police force, operating at their peril."

With his ability to search out such things as recalls, product safety, and advertising issues, Vacar is an advocate for consumers. The Society of Professional Journalists presented him with its Medal for Distinguished Public Service for his landmark work on insurance reform. Many experts agree this led to the California insurance revolt in 1988.

Vacar has won more than 40 major honors, including five Emmys, five Golden Mikes, and the American Bar Association's



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Well-known KTVU-TV personality Tom Vacar will speak on March 7.

Silver Gavel Award. He also holds the Aviation and Space Writers Association's highest award for his work on why airliners don't crash.

Vacar passed the Ohio and federal bar examinations in 1978 after graduating from the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. He is a former business executive in the automobile industry as well as a worker for "Nader's Raiders" in the late 1960s.

Refreshments will be served at 1 p.m. before Vacar's lecture. For information, call 254-7743.

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Reach for the Stars

Orinda's 25th Anniversary Fourth of July Celebration

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March 16 Design Competition Finalists on display, Library Gallery

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April 15 Deadline for All booth applications

June 23 Deadline for all parade applications

July 1 Concert-in-the-Park

July 2 "Reach for the Stars" party at Orinda Theatre Square; music, art auction, car show, food & wine

July 4

Pre-Parade Celebration:

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PHOTOGRAPHER / OUT AND ABOUT

Works of Famed Civil Rights Photographer on Display at Orinda Community Church

By PAT RUDEBUSCH
Assistant Editor

A dozen photographs by internationally acclaimed photographer Matt Herron depicting the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s are on display at the Orinda Community Church through April 14. Herron, who studied under Minor White and has worked with the likes of Dorothea Lang and George Ballis, is a documentary photographer and writer whose work chronicles the Civil Rights, animal rights, and peace movements. The exhibit at the Community Church features photos from his work with The Southern Documentary

Project. Throughout his career, Herron has focused on advancing issues of social justice. The Southern Documentary Project, which he organized in 1964, brought together a team of eight photojournalists to record the voter registration and education work underway in Mississippi and other southern states. That same year, Herron won the World Press Photo Contest for his photo of a Mississippi highway patrolman attacking a 5-year-old child. In the 1970s, his work brought international attention to the anti-whaling and harp seal hunting campaigns. Today, Herron serves as the director of Take Stock, an Internet

site housing over 100,000 images from the Civil Rights and Farm Workers movements. Earlier this year, the Orinda Community Church welcomed the photo exhibit as part of its celebration of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "The exhibit of Herron's work, which is open to the public, is our way of sharing something with the community that we feel very strongly about," says church member Diane Ramsey. "Orinda Community Church is open and affirming, meaning that we believe strongly in building a community based on acceptance and tolerance." Herron's work, which is included in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution, the George Eastman House, and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, found its way to Orinda through Joy Elkington Walker, a member of Orinda Community Church who also



PAT RUDEBUSCH
Joy Elkins-Walker is pleased to facilitate the exhibit of brother-in-law Matt Herron's photos depicting some of the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement. Herron also spoke at the church last month to commemorate Black History Month. The photo exhibit is open to the public and will remain at the church until early April.

happens to be Herron's sister-in-law. The Herron exhibit is in the Orinda Community Church sanctuary and open to the public most days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. until April 14. To arrange a visit, call the church office at 254-4906.

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With the winter rains still in the forecast, the wildfires that devastated portions of southern California might seem like a distant memory to those of us in the Bay Area. But for the handful of Orindans who helped with the rescue and recovery operations, the images of utter devastation remain vivid. So, too, do the images of hope, survival, and the power of people coming together in times of crisis. Fifteen firefighters from the **Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD)** were deployed to help fight last October's wildfires in the San Diego area. While the most devastating in terms of loss of lives and property, the California wildfires were just one of a dozen calls for wildfire help MOFD responded to last summer. Fire districts routinely share resources, especially in response to large-scale disasters. **Fire Chief Pete Nowicki** says that his department gets requests every year, with some calls coming in as soon as June. MOFD is equipped to send both type-1 units, i.e., equipment to save structures, and type-3, or wildland units. The Southern California fires were one of four calls that firefighter **Dave Mazaika** went on last summer: "The fires in southern

California tended to get the most publicity because homes were involved, but there were other fires last summer that were bigger. We answered calls from as far south as San Diego to as far north as the Oregon border." Mazaika, who's trained in medical support, chain saw for fighting wildland fires, and working with helicopter crews, notes that fire personnel from different agencies are used to working together, providing for seamless operations. Joining Mazaika in southern California were MOFD firefighters, **Battalion Chief Bryan Collins, Battalion Chief Stephen Healy, Captain Steve Rodgers, Captain Sean Perkins, Captain Ken Consiglio, Dennis Aquilina, Mike Murphy, Al Mathews, John Whittington, Chris Davis, Tim Williams, Julie Muliken, Brian Oliver, and Janet Brandi.** An estimated 375,000 acres were destroyed and 350,000 homes were evacuated. Unfortunately for many, the loss of property wasn't covered by insurance. Orinda resident **Sheila Newton** (who was profiled earlier this year as someone to watch in 2008) spent a week in Southern California helping some of the area's most

[SEE OUT AND ABOUT page 22]

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 [SEE MEMBERS page 8]



OA membership chair Mark Roberts (L) presents Gene Gottfried with his Volunteer of the Year award at the annual awards banquet on January 27, 2008.

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Orinda Resident, William Penn Mott, Jr., Was The Prophet of the Parks

By CINDA MacKINNON
Contributing Writer

Many Orindans are familiar with the William Penn Mott, Jr. Award, an

annual environmental award presented by The Orinda Association. But few know that Mott was himself an Orindan, and a visionary who rose to national prominence through his work as a dynamic landscape architect and parks manager. He was a dominant influence in the bold creation and development of parks in California – including the open space surrounding Orinda, and even open spaces across the nation.

The Mott family moved to Orinda in 1934 and, in spite of positions in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., retained their home. Bill Mott's first job was with the National Park Service (NPS) in San Francisco in 1933 and later he became

superintendent of parks for the City of Oakland. Oakland blossomed, and in the 1950s, he created Children's Fairyland – perhaps the first original theme park. He also became the first to hire nature interpreters for educational purposes. In 1962, a small regional park district hired him for his creative ideas. This district grew from 10,500 acres to 22,000 acres during his five-year stint as general manager. We know it today as the East Bay Regional Park District.

Gov. Ronald Reagan invited him to be state parks director of California in 1967. Mott tackled the job with enthusiasm and earnestness, expanding interpretative programs and giving people "a greater awareness ... of their responsibility to maintain the quality of the environment." Two dozen new parks were opened under Mott's seven-year tenure and 154,000 acres were added. He founded the nonprofit California State Parks Foundation in 1969 and continued as its chief executive officer for 16 years.

Mott initially turned down the position of director of the National Park Service, offered to him by President Richard Nixon. However, Reagan persuaded him to accept the job in 1985 - despite the poor environmental record of that administration and a demoralized NPS. Even with a budget cut and hiring freezes, Mott added 15 national parks and revitalized the NPS. He was a leader in transforming the historic San Francisco Presidio into a national park. When Mott died in 1992, he was still

working on that project. He was 82.

William Penn Mott, Jr. received many state and national honors for his countless innovative contributions. But long before he became a national figure, he was famous in Orinda as a driving force for many volunteer projects. He founded the Orinda Association back in 1946. It is a fitting tribute that the Orinda Association created the William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award in 1993 to honor fellow Orindan volunteers who make a difference to the environment surrounding our community.

A biography of his life is available under the title *Prophet of the Parks: The Story of William Penn Mott, Jr.*, by Mary Ellen Butler.

Past Recipients of the William Penn Mott, Jr. Award are:

- Toris Jaeger – 1993
- Sue Graf – 1994
- \$500 to Orinda Oaks Park in lieu of the award – 1995
- Orinda Trails Council – 1996
- Dan McDonnell and Bill Eddy – 1997
- Cinda MacKinnon (Friends of Orinda Creeks) – 1998
- Susan DiStefano – 1999
- OA Trees Committee (Carl Weber, Joyce Helsel, and JoAnne Frudden) – 2000
- Ron and Rosemary Clendenen – 2001
- Toni Fauver – 2002
- Linda Mizes – 2003
- Norah Bains - 2004
- Susan Watson – 2005
- Maya Rappaport – 2006
- Reg and Kathy Barrett – 2007.



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CHRIS LAVIN

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Bobbie Dodson



“Let’s get together this year.” Perhaps this was a message on some of your holiday cards. You mean to, but keep putting it off. Don’t! Here is an idea that worked for me and could be just right for you.

Two women friends from Idaho Falls, Idaho and I met in Las Vegas for five days last year and had a grand time. There’s non-stop entertainment in this glitzy city. Restaurants of every sort abound, and you can go to the hotel swimming pool to relax and talk when you need a rest from all the activity. Often, there are specials for air fares and hotels.

Las Vegas’ image has changed to family friendly. Certainly, it’s a place where, as a single woman, I felt safe walking alone at midnight when I wanted to go out to take pictures of the dancing waters at the Bellagio.

The Bellagio is my favorite hotel on the strip. Where else could one watch choreographed fountains dance accompanied by such artists as Luciano Pavarotti or Frank Sinatra, for free, while gazing at the Paris Hotel’s Eiffel Tower in the

Bellagio fountains were ninth.

Cirque’s newest show, “Love,” at the Mirage Hotel celebrates the music of the Beatles. Sitting next to me was a man who dealt 21 at the Bellagio. He thought the Cirque du Soleil’s revamped “Mystere” at Treasure Island was the best show on the strip. With their amazing acrobatic skills combined with clowns, any of their productions can be enjoyed by young and old alike.

Check the Internet for headliners who appear in the various venues for short stints. Such stars as Jay Leno, Rich Little, and Barry Manilow will be coming, as well as the Moscow Circus. I highly recommend the Backstage Walking Tour which takes you behind the scenes at the Bally. One of the beautiful show girls (ours was a college graduate) of their long running “Jubilee” presentation talks about running up and down stairs with heavy headdresses, quick costume changes, and how the performers are chosen, plus a myriad of other topics as you walk through the costume rooms and visit the theater. The “Blue Man” show continues to be very popular.



BOBBIE DODSON

Bellagio’s dancing water fountain.

background? Just as intriguing is the lobby with the marvelous glass sculptures of Dale Chihuly. His work is seen in several places in the hotel including the conservatory and botanical gardens, which feature more than 10,000 blooming flowers, a diverse array of plant life, and water shows that change with the season. If you’d like to purchase a replica, there’s a Chihuly shop at the Bellagio.

My favorite show, “O,” one of the Cirque du Soleil productions, plays at the Bellagio, as well. The Cirque du Soleil in Las Vegas placed second in a recent listing of top 10 attractions in the United States, while the

One of the best free events is the nightly show on Fremont Street which sports a canopy of more than 2 million lights synchronized to make pictures flow along a four-block area, accompanied by music.

Public transportation runs up and down the strip and a monorail serves part of the strip. However, it’s a great walking town with numerous attractions along the route. You might be going by the Treasure Island Hotel when their free pirate battle takes place out front; or in the Forum at Caesar’s Palace where the statues of Greek gods seem to come to life every hour; or you may

[SEE BACKYARD page 22]



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Hey, This is prv8. So Don't Read On

By KATHRYN McCARTY
 Contributing Writer

rb@u! a3. prv8. 9. LOL.
 Did you read that correctly? A bit perplexed?

Texting and instant messaging are quickly revolutionizing our language, and Orinda mom Christina Temple-Wolfe has come up with a product that helps parents and their children communicate a little better by understanding text jargon with a product called My Textalk™. According to Temple-Wolfe, My Textalk is an online destination for children to share texting terms and learn more about each other at the same time.

"My Textalk provides pocket glossaries for boys, girls, and parents to learn the language of texting," said Temple-Wolfe. "Each pocket glossary contains more than 1,000 texting terms."

On the My Textalk website young people, typically 10 to 16-year-olds, submit texting terms selected for the company's printed pocket glossary. The glossary, which includes new entertainment content such as trivia and factoids, is updated quarterly and customized for each gender.

Temple-Wolfe hopes it will help both kids and parents bridge the communication gap. She found impetus to invent My Textalk when a young girl began texting Temple-Wolfe's young son dozens of times



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Michael Wolfe and Micah Spalding, both seventh graders at Orinda Intermediate School, text each other.

a day. The girl's constant abbreviations made it difficult to understand and, "As a parent, it is important for me to know what they are discussing," she said.

According to Temple-Wolfe, there is usually a correlation in the timing of when children start using cell phones and start learning about the opposite sex. Because of that, the site includes "age-appropriate information about each gender," said Temple-Wolfe, who adds that focus groups and online discussion groups are leveraged to gain insight into each child's perspective. Temple-Wolfe explains her product is "about helping the generations stay connected."


Communication is difficult enough for people with great command of the English language. But as texting and online messaging grows in popularity, an entire new "language" is developing. Phrases like "LOL," which stands for "laugh out loud," have entered our common speech. As texting language develops, Temple-Wolfe says, "each iteration comes through and the kids share more online."

Being able to connect with her son and his friends means speaking the same language. "If they speak a different language, and we can't relate, that causes greater distance." As a parent, she is responsible for ensuring that her son learns to connect with the opposite sex in a way that enables him to establish valuable friendships before entering into dating. "I really want my son to understand women," she said.

Temple-Wolfe's hope is that Textalk becomes "a positive communication tool created by kids, for kids," and that it helps "parents stay in touch and share something with their children so the love and trust continues beyond puberty."

Launched in December 2007, the pocket glossaries are available in independent [SEE TEXT TALK page 22]

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SALLY HOGARTY

National Women's Dirtbike Champion Heather Wilson, who was the featured speaker at the 2005 Sister-to-Sister Summit, returns for the 2008 event.

By KSENIJA SOSTER OLMER
Staff Writer

■ Ninth Annual Sister-to-Sister Summit Offers New Perspectives for Middle School Girls

"I wish I was skinny like her." "Why are those girls so mean to me?" "It's so unfair that my parents won't let me watch MTV."

These are only a few of the comments overheard in the hallways and on the grounds of Orinda Intermediate School during a typical day. These concerns and other girl issues are usually not covered in the normal school curriculum. But there is a place to discuss them in a safe and supportive environment — the ninth annual Sister-to-Sister Summit, under the sponsorship of the Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette branch of American Association of University Women (AAUW). This highly successful summit, held specifically for middle school girls, offers a forum for the girls to support each other as they cope with the challenges of navigating the middle school years and preparing for the transition to high school.

A unique component of the summit is the small discussion groups led by highly trained high school facilitators. Forty-seven selected girls from the four high schools in the Acalanes High School District have been learning listening, facilitating, and leadership skills while training with volunteer professional counselors and will become a formidable team working together in different roles on the day of the summit. They also remember how it feels to be a girl in middle school. They themselves have probably grappled with (and hopefully resolved) issues such as: Can one be smart and cool at the same time? What makes other girls more popular and

is it worth it? How does one develop enough self-confidence to withstand peer pressure? Where do boyfriends figure in all this?

They will be well prepared to address the challenges that the middle school girls may present on issues, as well as behaviorally, because through the fall and winter they have listened to presentations from experts in the field of adolescence and participated in custom exercises and role playing. Trainers Valarie Burgess, Mary Holzheimer, and Gail Tsuboi have been working with facilitators for many years so they can take into account the needs in specific areas that come to their attention after each summit, when the current crop of facilitators reports on their successes and challenges.

The number of former middle school graduates of the program who return to become facilitators is a tribute to the effectiveness and positive influence on our girls at these summits. They bring fresh new ideas, new components, and improvements that make this day productive, but also exciting and fun.

The high school facilitator team under the guidance of AAUW volunteers also plans many organizational details of the summit. They work in committees that search for interesting and inspiring presenters (this year motorcycle racing champion, Heather Wilson), lively music, fun games and activities, meaningful information and gifts, colorful decorations, and an assortment of food that will satisfy young girls' palates.

This year's summit, with the theme of Nautical Adventure, will be held on Saturday, March 15, 2008, at Acalanes High School in Lafayette. "This represents a huge expansion of our program. We will no longer need to limit attendance to 100 middle school girls, as in the years before," says Eddy Schwartz, the co-chair of the summit.

[SEE SISTERS page 18]

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Miramonte Students Present *Les Miserables*



SALLY HOGARTY

Miramonte students rehearse the blockbuster musical *Les Miserables*, which performs March 13 - 22.

By VALERIE HOTZ
 Staff Writer

On any given winter's weeknight Miramonte High School is humming with activity. The soccer team practices on the field, basketball players convene in the gym, a parent meeting is taking place in the cafeteria, and a host of thespians are rehearsing this year's musical production based on Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*.

Choreography is under the direction of Cassandra Montgomery, who, with one leg in a cast, is incredibly nimble and demonstratively expressive as she leads the students through a rehearsal of the bar scene and "Master of the House." *Les Miz* marks Montgomery's fourth Miramonte production. "This is a fun musical that teaches the history of France in the early 19th century. There are so many different levels to it. The fact that it is opera-based, and our choral director, Sarah Downs, has an opera background, combine to make it a great experience for everyone," says Montgomery.

Over 40 students have been rehearsing 15 hours a week over the past two-and-a-half months. "Recordings have been given

to every student prior to beginning rehearsals, so everyone was able to learn the lines very quickly. The students are really excited, and there is a lot of enthusiasm," says Sarah Downs, choral instructor and musical director of the production. Drama instructor Heather Cousins directs the show, which will be accompanied by Miramonte orchestra students under the direction of music instructor John Schroder.

Sophomore Max Coleman portrays the lead character, Jean Valjean. "What makes this musical different is that it is entirely sung. There is no dialogue whatsoever, which is great for me because singing is my passion," says Coleman. The female lead characters of Cossette, Eponine, and Fantine are double-cast, with Suvi Gluskin and Kelsy Bergman portraying Cossette, Sarah Ames and Katie Behnke appearing as Eponine, and Emilyn Kowaleski and Caitlin Goustad appearing as Fantine.

"Double-casting our female leads really gives our production of *Les Miserables* some diversity. I am excited about the fact that the entire show is sung, from beginning to end," says junior Suvi Gluskin.

[SEE MUSICAL page 16]



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I'm a busy health professional and an avid (obsessed) surfer. The faster life moves for me, the more difficult it is to find the balance between eating, resting, and working out. I decided to try the Living Lean Program to re-discover healthy eating habits and to prepare for the upcoming winter surf season. Stated simply, the program changed my life. I lost 20 pounds in three weeks and continued to lose another 10 over the next 2 months. My clothes fit better, but most importantly for me, I feel healthy, light, and young. I'm surfing better and more confidently and my new eating habits have been easy to maintain. The program was easy to implement; in fact, the eating and exercise regimen simplified my schedule (and my life) by reducing the amount of food (and in some cases, time) choices. I'd recommend this program to friends, family, patients, and colleagues.



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Living Lean Team

SCHOOLS / STUDENTS

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

Q&A With Mr. Davis



Andra Lim

This article serves as a follow-up to last month's column, which was about the benefits of taking Latin at Miramonte High School.

Matt Davis, known to his students as "MD," "Magister," and, of course, "Mr. Davis," has been teaching Latin at Miramonte for seven years.

Why take Latin?

Lingua Latina est vita! (Latin is life!) It gives you a great understanding of language, grammar, history, and life. Sixty percent of English vocabulary comes from Latin and it is the foundation of the humanities, science, and our government. By knowing Latin, you gain a deeper understanding of the world while also being exposed to great literature and excellent stories and myths. Besides, it is fun!

Many people say that Latin is a dead language. What is your response to this common belief?

Latin is the most successful language. It's in the way we think, the way we approach the world. Some of the most common languages in the world are based on Latin. Few people speak Latin, but it influences everything that we do every day.

When did you first start taking Latin?

In college. At 8 o'clock in the morning.

What made you become so passionate about the Latin language that you decided to teach it?

I loved it from day one. It sounds really

dorky, but it's true. I love the insights and wisdom in the literature of the ancients, and the power of understanding that Latin gives me in language, grammar, and life.

How do you make Latin an interesting and fun class?

When you teach Latin, you have to make it relevant and useful for the students by making connections between modern and ancient times and by helping students see how Latin has influenced their lives.

What type of activities do Latin students participate in on Divus Augustus' birthday?

To celebrate the first Roman emperor, we do some bird watching, and then we do a play about Augustus' life and sing Latin songs.

Bird watching?

Before any festivals, the Romans had to ask the will of the gods by seeing birds fly across the sky. We throw a stuffed animal bird – not an actual bird – across the classroom before beginning the festivities.

What is the Magis Project?

Each semester, students take Latin and study the ancients and they bring their knowledge to the community or express their appreciation of it in their own ways. They can create art inspired by ancients, do service projects that promote Roman values, or further their own academic knowledge of the ancient world.

[SEE DAVIS page 16]

High School Musical and Mary Poppins at Orinda Library Auditorium



BARBARA BOSTER

Students rehearse for the upcoming production of *High School Musical* at the Orinda Library Auditorium in mid-March.

By SALLY HOGARTY

Editor

Orinda Ovations Musical Theatre culminates its Community Center classes with two well-known shows that highlight the talents of the young thespians.

From fairly humble origins as a Disney satellite channel TV movie, *High School Musical* has grown into a gigantic industry, which has already spawned a sequel, a best-selling album, an ice show, and an infinite variety of stationary products. In this incredibly popular musical, Troy, the school jock, and Gabrielle, the science nerd, defy peer pressure to fulfill their dreams of starring in their high school musical. The

energetic, heart-warming musical entertains while sending a message to young people about acceptance and individuality. The show performs March 14 at 5:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the Orinda Library Auditorium.

Next up is everyone's favorite nanny, *Mary Poppins*. The popular musical, which starred Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke in the Disney film, was based on the *Mary Poppins* series of children's books written by P. L. Travers. The story of the nanny, who utilizes more than a little magic to keep her rambunctious charges in line, comes to the Orinda Library Auditorium on March 15 at 11:30 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. Call 510-531-4400 for more information on the performances.

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Locally Owned / Family Business	Yes ✓	No
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Local Community Support and Involvement	Yes ✓	No

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CONTINUATIONS

◆ DAVIS from page 15

What is the one thing you want your students to learn in Latin class?

To always strive for excellence and never give up.

Describe the state Latin convention.

The California Junior Classical League (CJCL) sponsors the convention each year. About 1,500 Latin students from around the state come together to compete, celebrate, and meet other Latin students. There are

academic classes, a quiz bowl-type competition, a chariot race, a catapult contest, oratory contests, a talent competition, music competitions, swimming, tennis, soccer, basketball, and the spirit competition.

The spirit competition?

All the schools come together and compete by performing cheers and singing songs to show their spirit. Miramonte's cheers include *unda*, where you say, "Unda!" and do the wave. We also sing

"Gaudeamus" while linking arms and swinging back and forth in unison. Last year, we won first prize and received a stuffed giraffe that sings "Your Love Is Lifting Me Higher" and moves up and down. My 5-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son especially love it, and so do all my Latin students.

Tell me about your visit to Rome.

I went to Rome in the summer of '94. I was studying Latin with Reginald Foster, who works in the Vatican translating documents into Latin for the Pope. He opens a classroom each summer for Latin teachers and students from around the world. We traveled around Rome and Italy and saw the places where great Roman literature was written and the places it described. So, for example, we visited the poet Horace's villa and then read his poems describing his villa and the surrounding areas.

What is the one Roman landmark you think everyone should see during his or her lifetime?

The Pantheon. It's absolutely amazing.

Which Latin quotes do you find yourself using most often?

"Labor omnia vincit" (Work conquers all) and "Facta non verba" (Deeds, not words).

If you were Juno and found out that your husband, Jupiter, was having yet another affair, what animal/inanimate object would you turn his lover into?

A *mustela* (weasel).

If you had to perform one of the 12 labors of Hercules, which one would you do?

The Nemean Lion. It's one of my daughter's favorite stories. In the actual story, Hercules kills the lion, but in our family's version, the lion can talk and decides to swear off eating people and become a vegetarian. I think my daughter would be excited if I was able to reenact that story and the lion became a nice lion.

Scipio vs. Napoleon. Who wins?

Definitely Scipio. Scipio knew Latin.

◆ MUSICAL from page 14



SALLY HOGARTY

Students rehearse a song from *Les Miserables*.

If you could witness one event in Roman history, what would that event be?

Virgil reciting his *Aeneid* to Augustus and his family... *The Aeneid* is just beautiful. It's very moving, but it also has much to say about modern times.

Which Roman do you admire the most?

Cicero. He believed in democracy and he loved his country. He was a great statesman, but he was also a man of literature, a scholar.

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SCHOOLS / STUDENTS

Student Perspectives

Damsel in Distress

Grace Ho



It's been a long time since I last wrote. I wish I could say that, in this time, I've become the perfect daughter, student, sister, friend...but no, I am still as flawed as ever, as my parents kindly remind me.

It's funny how parents can lecture you all your life and still find material to rant about. The most common spiel nowadays – apart from the given academic concerns – only arose recently. The subject even used to be somewhat taboo. Now, suddenly, it is incessantly brought up. What can this topic be?

Boys.

It might sound a bit late, considering that puberty hit about six or seven years ago. The thing is, all through high school, boys in any romantic dimension were hardly discussed as a reality. They were merely theoretical beings, existing far in the future e.g., my father's earnest question of "Would you want to date someone like me?"

Every boy I mentioned, even in the most casual of contexts, was regarded with utmost suspicion. My poor lab partner, who frequently called to consult me on our calculations, probably got the worst of it. When we decided to study for our chemistry final together, my parents refused to let him come over, even if my mother would be at home. We ended up studying in the art room after school (though how that is better than being right under my mother's nose, I am unsure). My mother plied me with instructions beforehand: I must sit in this part of the room, keep a door open so people outside could rescue me if he tried anything funny, and be alert at all times. I rolled my eyes. He was my lab partner, not a rapist. My mother insisted that you can never know, but I knew, and that was enough for me. I did not quite subscribe to the idea that a boy and girl together in a room would inevitably draw together like magnets, especially when neither was attracted to the other.

Given this atmosphere, it is not surprising that I felt disinclined to inform my parents of my two relationships when they came about. They were eventually discovered anyway via the infamous but infallible Parent Radar, but even then, were only brought up once in a long while when my father listed all the things he disliked about the boy. I endured these sessions quietly, wondering if any boy would ever be good enough for him and if he might not be happier if I became a nun.

This year, the situation abruptly flipped. I am not sure what's been in my parents' water, but they are both suddenly eager for me to find a boyfriend, now that I have been single for quite some time. This sentiment

has inspired them to buy me a new dress coat to replace my unflattering, bulky parka, talk openly enough that I felt comfortable casually introducing to them the boy I currently like, and – of course – lecture me.

As if there wasn't enough wrong with me previously, there is now a whole host of new things to complain about. The latest, my voice is too loud. I must speak in a softer, more feminine tone! I pointed out that my ringing voice can be traced back to my fourth grade days when my father said that I spoke too softly and should speak up so he could hear me better. From then on, I zealously projected my voice to avoid a scolding, and now it's engrained. That little story was ignored completely as he barreled on, noting that I speak so loudly I will surely give my husband headaches, and who needs headaches? I flippantly declared that I will marry someone half deaf. Then I left the room.

This leads to the next point: both parents insist I am too argumentative. I must be gentler, more feminine. This is a very clever statement indeed. To say nothing would indicate my agreement but, since saying anything at all would constitute arguing, I cannot refute them without proving their point. What a tricky lose-lose situation for me. It's hard to defend yourself against a very smart professor and a lady who's been hanging around him for half her life.

My brother doesn't help matters either. Once, in the car, I was angrily pointing out that it is totally unfair how my brother's girlfriends get to come over to work on projects with him while my guy friends are not allowed to come over to study with me. What kind of double standard is that? My mother said that boys and girls are different, and that she is, of course, protective of me because I am a girl. I declared that I never heard of such a silly reason in my life; wasn't she afraid of my brother taking advantage of girls? My mother answered, "No, of course not, I trust my own son! But I don't trust other people's sons around you. What if they bully you?" As I sat with my mouth agape at the injustice of it all, my brother chirped from the backseat, "Mommy, I don't think you need to worry about boys bullying her. The boys' parents should worry about her bullying them."

If my jaw could have dropped any further, it did. My mother laughed merrily in agreement.

It seems that I am a ferocious beast. In any case, all this talk of being more feminine reinforces the odd notion I've always held that I should have been born a

[SEE PERSPECTIVES page 20]

Young Poet Gets Published in *Highlights Magazine*

By MOYA STONE
Staff Writer

A young Orinda resident, 8-year-old Vivian McGowan, has achieved what many aspiring writers dream about. She has published her first poem. A third grader at Sleepy Hollow Elementary School, Vivian sent her poem titled, *I Can Fly*, to *Highlights for Children* magazine two years ago. It's a long process and a long wait, but worth it when you consider that Vivian's poem was chosen from among 35,000 submissions that *Highlights* receives from children all around the world each year.

Highlights for Children was founded in 1946 by the husband and wife team, Garry Cleveland Myers and Caroline Clark Myers, both educators and children's magazine editors. Today, a fourth generation of the Myers family continues to contribute to the success of the monthly magazine, which has a circulation of about 2 million and is often used by teachers.

Vivian says getting her poem published has been exciting, but she's not resting on her laurels. She continues to write. Recent work includes a poem about her collie, Harry, and another poem about a slug. Vivian often writes about animals, she said, "because they're cool to learn about... and they're really nice, usually."

Vivian's parents, Michael McGowan and Susan Wheatley, have encouraged their daughter's interest in writing. "She's been writing since she could hold a pen," said Wheatley. Michael McGowan started reading chapter books to Vivian when she was a toddler. Wheatley, who has a graduate degree in English education, thinks reading advanced books instills in children a sense of sentence structure and vocabulary. It was her idea to send Vivian's poem to *Highlights*. "We really loved that poem so we showed it to other people and they loved it, too," she said. Susan sent it in to *Highlights* two years ago when Vivian was in the first grade. "We didn't hear anything from them for months, and we thought maybe they didn't like it as much as we did," she says. Eventually the family did hear from the editors at *Highlights*, several times in fact, indicating that possibly Vivian's poem would run in the January 2008 issue. "But we didn't know for sure until we actually received the issue and opened it up," Wheatley said.

I Can Fly had started as a writing



SALLY HOGARTY
Vivian McGowan's poem "I Can Fly" appeared in *Highlights Magazine*.

assignment for Mrs. Hilty's first grade class at Sleepy Hollow Elementary School. "It was a homework assignment that went along with our study of transportation," Hilty said. "At the time we were also in the middle of a unit of study on poetry, and Vivian really just took off with it." Hilty says the writing process comes naturally to Vivian.

[SEE MCGOWAN page 18]



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SCHOOLS/STUDENTS

iPOD Nano Winner of Christmas Tree Lot Drawing



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

John Somerville and his family were the winners of the iPod Nano drawing at the Orinda Christmas Tree Lot. "Thank you to everyone who purchased a tree this year and to all who entered the drawing," says tree lot operator Mike Kang. Proceeds from the tree lot went to the Educational Foundation of Orinda. "We would also like to give a special thank you to the East Bay Tree Service for assisting with the disposal of the extra trees. They were wonderful," Kang adds.

◆ MCGOWAN from page 17

Vivian says that what she likes about writing is that she can express her feelings. She first writes out her poems and stories

and then types them up herself on a computer. In addition to writing, Vivian loves to read. Her two favorite books are *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* and *Harry the Dirty Dog*. She also enjoys sports and she collects rocks, animal bones, and feathers. When she grows up, Vivian plans to become a teacher.

I Can Fly

*Swish, flap,
I soar through the sky
like a hawk drifting along.
A soft breeze
goes through the air.
The sun is setting
in a soft pink and orange.
I can see the ocean.
Beyond that I see
a green forest and meadows.
The stars start to shine.
It is night.
The owl begins to hoot.
The bats begin to squeal.
Suddenly I swish around.
I fly home.
It's been a good flight.*

VIVIAN MCGOWAN, AGE 6

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2008 Student Visual Arts Competition

By PETRA MICHEL
Staff Writer

If you have an empty wall waiting for the perfect fit, look no further than the Orinda Library Gallery. The Orinda Arts Council's 2008 Student Visual Arts Competition will be the featured show in the Orinda Library Gallery from March 21 through April 18, and for the first time, the art will be for sale.

The annual exhibit, sponsored by the Arts Council, recognizes and celebrates the artistic talents of local high school students who live or attend school in Lamorinda. It includes more than 200 multi-dimensional works. Gwen Burnes, this year's chair of the competition, is excited about the

"amazing talent of the exhibiting students and their dedication to the visual arts."

The opening reception on March 24 will be the first chance to see and purchase the artwork. The Orinda Arts Council will host an opening reception from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the Library Gallery. Children attending the opening reception with parents may participate in art activities organized by the Orinda Arts Council.

The art exhibition will run through April 18, closing with a public awards celebration recognizing the high school artists. Winners of the arts competition will be announced at the awards celebration. Cash prizes of up to \$350 will be awarded for first, second, and third place finishes in each category.

Orinda Junior Women's Club Announces Youth Ink, a Middle School Writing Contest

■ Cash prizes of \$250, \$125, and \$75 will be awarded to top three winners

By LISA RODRIGUEZ
Contributing Writer

The Orinda Junior Women's Club (OJWC) is pleased to announce Youth Ink, an annual creative writing contest open to all sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students who live or attend school in Orinda.

This year's Youth Ink theme, *My Favorite Place*, was chosen based on feedback from the middle school student community. Sponsors believe it encourages highly personal and descriptive writing and lends itself well to an open style choice. *My Favorite Place* could exist for real or in fantasy; in the present or in the past. It could be a place within a place – like a room, or where certain things happen (such as a sports field) or a place next to a special person.

"We believe when adolescents have a healthy outlet, such as the arts, and receive

recognition and validation for their talents, they are more likely to build positive self esteem and make healthy and constructive choices in their lives," said Maureen Brown, president of OJWC.

Generous co-sponsors of Youth Ink, including the City of Orinda and several local businesses, have made it possible to provide impressive prizes, including: \$250 for 1st place; \$125 for 2nd place; \$75 for 3rd place; and 10 honorable mention gift certificates in the amount of \$25.

A panel of four local professional writers, including reporters and best-selling authors, will evaluate Youth Ink submissions and choose winners. The judges' names will be shared when the winners are announced at an awards ceremony at the Orinda Public Library in April.

Youth Ink submissions will be accepted on an ongoing basis but must be postmarked by March 1, 2008 in order to be considered for an award. Youth Ink submission forms are available through the administrative offices and English departments at Orinda Intermediate School, the Orinda Public Library, St. Perpetua School, Orinda Academy, and Bentley School.

◆ SISTERS from page 13

"This year, we are also lucky to have substantial financial support from two local organizations — Orinda Rotary and Moraga Kiwanis." Thanks to their support the summit can keep the girls happily occupied from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for only \$30. All the middle school girls in the district will receive information by mail as well as at school at mini summits, or ice cream socials. Interested students must register by March 7.

Parents of girls are invited to a free discussion group on the morning of the summit. Local parenting and counseling experts will help find answers to such

perpetual questions as: How much influence does the media exert on how young girls view their body image, and how can I counter that? What to do about the breaking up of old friendships between girls? How to help girls establish meaningful connections to new friends? How much academic or sports pressure is too much? Each year the hour passes too quickly in a friendly atmosphere of sharing and humor, the essential ingredient in parental success and survival.

Additional brochures can be obtained from the AAUW website: www.aauwoml.org. For more information on the summit, call the co-chairs of the summit: Valarie Burgess (376-2517) or Edy Schwartz (376-3779).

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY/ WHITE ELEPHANT

An Antiques Road Show Moment at White Elephant Sale

■ Nearly 1,000 volunteers, including many Orindans, prepare for sale on March 1-2

BY DOROTHY BOWEN
Staff Writer

An African sculpture of a hornbill, seven-feet-tall, is the most spectacular donation, so far, to the art department of the White Elephant Sale (WES), according to Margaret Holland-Luce, Orinda, co-chair with Maxine Ruby of Berkeley.

The carved wooden statue is stippled in bright colors. "It would look imposing in someone's entryway," she says. "We think it is relatively new, from the West Coast of Africa, but not a piece made for the tourist trade. Scott McCue, Orinda photographer and ethnic art collector, is helping the volunteers authenticate the ethnic pieces they receive. This year, the finds include a crocodile bench from New Guinea. It seats

two people and has the jaws at one end and the tail at the other.

"We all hope for an Antiques Road Show moment when some anonymous donation comes across the desk," says Holland-Luce.

She began volunteering for the Oakland Museum, first as a docent in the art department, after retiring from the Cancer Society in 2000. This is her fourth year with the White Elephant Sale that benefits the Oakland Museum. Sponsored by the Women's Board of the Oakland Museum, the sale has netted more than \$1 million annually since 2002.

"This is the nicest group of people you could ever hope to work with," she says. "Something about volunteering brings out the best in people." She has been working at the WES warehouse, near the Oakland Estuary every day since the beginning of the year.

Other standouts in the art department this year are fine art prints by well-known artists whose works are in the museum's collection, such as Henry Evans' botanical

prints and Beth Van Hoesen's adorable animals. "Her owls are always popular," says Holland-Luce. A shop in Berkeley that is going out of business donated a large supply of frames.

Holland-Luce's husband is artist Stephen Luce, who donated some of his work to the sale.

Working in the art department can be tempting to buy as well as to sell it. "I'm always trying to decide what treasure to bring home, but then I have to bring something back so I have room for more," laughs Holland-Luce.

The art department seems to attract Orindans. Former chairman, Marianne Aude, brought members of the Orinda Woman's Club with her. Others include Anne Chan, Pam and Alan Hall, Ina Pavey, Judy Shallat, and Lindy Tipton.

The sale weekend is Saturday, March 1 and Sunday, March 2, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 333 Lancaster St., near the Oakland Estuary, not far from the Fruitvale BART station. For information, call 510-536-6800.



DOROTHY BOWEN

Anne Chan, Orinda volunteer at the White Elephant Sale Preview, made the biggest sale in the art department during the preview sale in January. She sold a small gold nude sculpture to Brent Perrou of Alameda, who recognized the artist as T. Curtis. He used the pseudonym Karl Kauda for his erotic subjects. Perrou paid \$1,200 for the piece, which is about one third of its value, according to the volunteers. Perrou, who grew up east of the Tunnel, was also taken with a Grant Wood lithograph with a \$4,800 price tag and returned in the last minutes of the Preview Sale to buy it. He sealed his credentials as a canny shopper by snagging an original copy of Peter Pan with Arthur Rackham illustrations for a mere \$400.

Serendipity Strikes for Landscape Display at Historical Society Archives

BY DOROTHY BOWEN
Staff Writer

Scenes of old Orinda have long been displayed at the Bank of America in Orinda Village. They were painted by the late Lonie Bee, the artist who also created the BART mural. Now, while the bank is undergoing remodeling, the five watercolor paintings will be on display in the Historical Society Archives located on the ground floor of the Orinda Library. The same images have been reproduced on gift cards for sale at the archives store.

Bee was a nationally renowned cartoonist, illustrator, and advertising artist.

He left the University of California, Berkeley, in his sophomore year when he got a job as a cartoonist for the *San Francisco Daily News*. At Cal, he had been drawing cartoons for the *Daily Cal* and the *Pelican*, a humor magazine. He also edited the *Blue and Gold*.

One day he saw a notice on the bulletin board that the *Daily News* needed a cartoonist. He swiped the ad, grabbed his string book, and landed the job.

At first, Bee attended college classes in the morning, ate lunch on the Key Route ferry and worked at the newspaper in the afternoon. When his classwork suffered, he decided to quit school.

"I thought I had the world by the tail," Bee recalls. "Why should I stay in college?"

After his job as cartoonist, Bee worked for Foster and Kleiser, the billboard company, and then in a commercial art studio. He later turned to freelancing.

High points in his career included many covers for the *Saturday Evening Post* and national accounts for Pacific Intermountain Express, Chevron, and Lucky Lager Beer.

Bee later moved to New York to work as an illustrator for slick magazines until 1948, when magazine circulation began declining. He believed that commercial art and illustration was more in the tradition of the great masters than the fine artists painting today. "So much of what I know as fine art has been lambasted by the critics because it is commercial. The old masters were commercial. Leonardo da Vinci had a staff working for him."

"So much has been wasted for years in abstract expressionism. Its nature makes it impossible for anyone to judge it." Bee quotes a critic who once said, "If you could understand it, there wouldn't be anything to write about."

"The one sure master painting today is Salvador Dali," he said then. "His 'Crucifixion' in the Metropolitan Museum knocks me out. That painting has Christ hanging in the air away from the cross. The nails are floating too. Painting Him from that angle is almost an impossible job." He also admired the father and son artists, N.C. Wyeth and Andrew Wyeth. The

[SEE SERENDIPITY page 22]



DOROTHY BOWEN

One of Lonie Bee's paintings, displayed at the Bank of America in Orinda Village, can be seen at the Historical Society while the bank undergoes remodeling.

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California Shakespeare Literary Society Coming to Orinda in April

By DOROTHY BOWEN
Staff Writer

Did Shakespeare really write *Pericles*? Why is Oscar Wilde's *Ideal Husband*

far from perfect? What does the emancipation of Russian serfs have to do with Chekov's *Uncle Vanya*? Why does the punishment of Malvolio seem like overkill in *Twelfth Night*?

Questions like these will be tossed around next month at the Orinda Community Center when Cal Shakes launches its new Literary Society series. The Literary Society will meet on Thursday evenings, from April 3 to May 22, from 7 to 9 p.m. The cost is \$225 for eight weeks.

Two evenings will be devoted to each

play in the upcoming Cal Shakes season: *Pericles*, *The Ideal Husband*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *Twelfth Night*. The first two meetings delve into *Pericles*, one of Shakespeare's later plays. "It's not just a class," says Joanie O'Brien, Cal Shakes *dramaturg*, who often gives the Grove Talks before performances at Bruns Amphitheater. "It's a space to delve into each play from textual and production perspectives."

"The Literary Society will consider the plethora of interpretations that can be possible," O'Brien said. "Seeing the

productions will be even more illuminating when you can tell what's been cut or added by each director."

"What it won't be is a teacher talking steadily for two hours," she says. "It's going to be tremendous fun to look at the plays."

The Literary Society will lend itself to socializing, as well, with possible potlucks and discounts for play tickets for participants.

To register for the Literary Society series, call Samantha Fryer at 510-548-3422, ext. 105 or click www.calshakes.org/classes.

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It's Not Just a School Auction It's Much, Much More!

By BARBARA BOSTER
Staff Writer

Auctions are a force unto themselves. Elementary schools in Orinda know that auctions represent the bread and butter of the schools, adding important extras that enhance the educational experience.

Parent volunteers spend a tremendous amount of time and effort to put on these festive affairs. A myriad of committees and subcommittees spend a good part of the academic year planning, encouraging, and conjuring up every detail to make these

auctions a night to remember for parents, teachers, supporters, and donors.

While the events certainly take a lot of work and dedication, they also provide an opportunity to make new friends and strengthen relationships as volunteers share ideas and enthusiasm.

Of course, the hard-working parents also feel passionately about helping the Orinda Union School District become even better. Funds raised at the auctions are used to augment physical education and art programs as well as school libraries and computer centers. You don't have to be involved with a school to attend the auction, but reservations are required. Have fun, and remember to bid often!

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Call 925-253-1097

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Go "pher" the Gold
Claremont Hotel
Feb 23 at 5 p.m.
Call 925-386-0030

Sleepy Hollow Elementary
Three Weddings and an Auction
Claremont Hotel
March 1 at 5:30 p.m.
Call 925-254-5432 or 925-254-7017

Join Your Neighbor, Santa Maria Church

for Holy Week & Easter Services:

Thursday, March 20:
The Lord's Supper - 7:30 PM;
Friday, March 21:
The Passion of Christ - 2 PM;
Saturday, March 22:
Blessing of Easter Foods - Noon;
Great Easter Vigil - 8 PM;
Sunday, March 22:
Services 8:00, 9:30, and 11:15 AM



◆ PERSPECTIVES from page 17

boy. My personality would be much more acceptable if I were male. Right now, being a girl, I'm made out to be some sort of wild filly that needs to be tamed. I could go on about this; the fact that I took a class last year in the gender and women's studies department at Berkeley probably does not help my attitude as far as my parents' opinions are concerned.

Call me a fool, but I simply am not as pessimistic as they are. I don't believe that "no one will want me" just because I'm not the shining image of angelic docility. If a guy didn't like me just because I have my own opinions and love voicing them, I

probably wouldn't like him either. What am I losing by being myself? A lot of extra options I wouldn't have chosen anyway. I just don't see why every quality I have is something wrong, something that needs to be altered drastically for any hope of romance. I'll wear the dress coat. I'll try not to look grungy or speak in the volume I'd use to deliver a speech to hundreds. But no way am I changing my spunky, outspoken, strong-willed (fine, this can all be summarized by one word: stubborn) self. Take it or leave it. I am not desperate. I don't need hordes of guys to like me; I only need one quality guy, and when he comes along, he will appreciate me for being just that: me. I can wait.

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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

MARCH

- 1 **The Orinda Preschool Art & Music Festival**, 10 a.m. to noon, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda, Mother Goose, the Puppet Company and more, www.topsonline.org.
Orinda Rotary for "Kids 'n Kreeks," annual Crab Feed, 6 p.m., Masonic Hall, 254-3268.
Oakland Museum White Elephant Sale, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., also 3/2, 333 Lancaster St., Oakland. Info at www.whiteelephantsale.org.
- 3 **Youth Sports Registrations**, for girl's spring programs, through 3/28. Call 253-4204.
- 5 **Orinda Rotary** Speech, noon at Community Center, featuring Katie Harris, program manager for Central Contra Costa County Junior Achievement, 254-3268.
- 7 **First Friday Forum**, 1:30 p.m., Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. Speaker: Tom Vacar, consumer editor for KTVU Fox, 254-7743.
- 8 **Orinda Baseball Association** Opening Day, 8 a.m., Wagner Ranch Gym and Curtis Field. Photos, food, apparel sales, carnival, and player line-up, 11 a.m., www.orindabaseball.org.
- 12 **Orinda Rotary** lunch magic show and speech, noon at Community Center, featuring professional magician Peter Morrison, 254-3268.
Orinda Books Book Group, 3 p.m. for reading and discussion of *Ghost Writer*, by Philip Roth, 254-7606.
- 13 **Miramonte High School** *Les Miserables*, 7:30 p.m., various times through March 22, www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte.
Orinda Books Sisters in Crime author reading, 4 p.m., with Rhys Bowen and Cara Black 254-7606.
- 14 **Orinda Ovations Children's Theater**, presents *High School Musical* at 5 p.m. and 7:15 p.m. at Kids 'N Dance, 3360 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. *Mary Poppins* presented at 11:30 a.m. March 15. Call 510-531-4400.
- 15 **WomenSing**, 8 p.m., Holy Names University Chapel, Oakland, with "Sounds and Sweet Airs." Also 3/16 at 4 p.m. at St. Mary's College. Call 925-974-9169 or www.womensing.org.
- 18 **Orinda Books World Affairs Book Group**, 3 p.m., for discussion of *The Silk Road: Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia*, by Frances Wood, 254-7606.
Orinda Books Page by Page Book Group, 7 p.m., discussing *The Dissident* by Neil Freudenberger, 254-7606.
Orinda Books Orinda Owls, 7 p.m., discuss *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 254-7606.
- 19 **Miramonte High School** Career Night, 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
ALS Discussion, noon at Community Center, with Kathie Ketels Lichtig discussing Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.
- 20 **Orinda Rotary and OCCA** Spring Easter Egg Hunt, 11 a.m., Community Center Park. Rain cancels.
- 21 **Student Visual Arts Exhibition**, Orinda Library Gallery, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Opening reception March 24, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- 26 **Orinda Rotary** lunch Living at Home for Seniors, noon, Community Center, focusing on senior care needs and resources 254-3268.
- 28 **Orinda Chamber of Commerce** luncheon, noon to 1:30 p.m., Orinda Country Club, Wilder development and Pulte Homes speaking, 254-3909.

City/Fire/School District Meeting Schedule

Acalanes Union High School District

First and third Wednesdays, district office, 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 to 5 p.m., Library Garden Room, public is welcome, for information, please call 788-7323.

Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Third Wednesday, 7 p.m., Administration Building, 1280 Moraga Way.

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.

Club Meetings

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 Association

Orinda Library, May Room, second Monday, 7:30 p.m., 254-0800.

Orinda Historical Society

Third Wednesday of the month, OHS Museum, 3 to 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 Woman's Club

Second Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. to noon; call Jean Barnhart, 254-3881.

CALENDAR BY CHRIS LAVIN

Send calendar items to chrislavin@earthlink.netSounds and Sweet Airs —
WomenSing's Acoustic Adventure

LYNDA LEONARD

Members of WomenSing will present concerts at Holy Names College in Oakland and Saint Mary's College in Moraga on March 15 and 16.

By LYNDA LEONARD

Contributing Writer

Attending a WomenSing concert takes the listener on an acoustic adventure, and the March 15 and 16 concerts will transport the audience on a Sounds and Sweet Airs tour from the 17th century era of the baroque to the present day.

Accompanied by Jubilate Orchestra, the choir will sing Vivaldi's *Beatus Vir* and Hasse's *Miserere*, said artistic director Martín Benvenuto. Jubilate is composed of many of the best early-music instrumentalists in the Bay Area, performing at baroque pitch. "And in contrast to the baroque," adds Benvenuto, "we will perform a 21st century setting of the *Mass* by Hungarian composer György Orbán."

At the center of the program, WomenSing will perform a collection of settings by William Shakespeare, including a set of three songs on texts from *A Midsummer*

Night's Dream by California composer, Cary Ratcliff, now based in Rochester, N.Y. This will be a West Coast premiere. In addition, the chorus will perform "How Sweet the Moonlight Sleeps," by Texan composer Robert Young, based on texts from *The Merchant of Venice*.

WomenSing will top off the program with a celebratory St. Patrick's Day set, with favorites such as "Danny Boy" and "Cockles and Mussels." Irish coffee will be served after the performance at St. Mary's College.

Performances will be at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 15, at the Holy Names University Chapel in Oakland and at 4 p.m. Sunday, March 16, at the St. Mary's College Chapel in Moraga. Tickets are \$25 for premium seating, \$20 general, \$18 senior, and \$10 student/youth 18 and under. Tickets may be purchased online at www.womensing.org. They are also available at the door or by calling 925-974-9169.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless specified.

- 18 **Toddler Lapsit**, 10 a.m., stories, songs, and bounces for infants to 3-year-olds and their caregivers. Repeats at 10:30 and on March 19, 25, and 26. Please choose one session per week.
- 19 **Paws to Read**, 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., for children in grades 1 through 5 to read to a friendly dog. Repeats March 26.
- 22 **Saturday Morning Live!** 11 a.m., toddler alcove for family story time for ages 3 to 5. Repeats March 29.

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

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BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 24

was because of the company's emphasis on community involvement. I want to find opportunities to give back to the community, and, sometimes, I think the most valuable resource we can give is a gift of our time," says Forthe. Through its People Applauding Life and Service (PALS) program, Union Bank provides a platform for employees to give back to their communities.

The bank recognizes that people's priorities change throughout the different stages of life. "Our financial needs while in college are different from our retirement years. A new understanding in banking is that it is no longer about products, but instead is relationship-based. We offer a junior banker's account that begins at age 8. As an individual grows, it becomes a student account with ATM and basic checking services," adds Forthe.

Union Bank has been a forerunner in developing its home banking services, permitting clients to manage their bank accounts, pay bills, and direct investments utilizing retail software such as Quicken and Microsoft Money. In addition to Forthe, customer service manager Shawn-Michael Mathies, and tellers Jason Abad, Farideh Fakouri, and Mark Jepsen staff the Orinda branch. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Fridays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays and closed on Sundays. For more information, please call 253-8980 or visit the website at www.uboc.com.

All Fur Love Pet Care

Try giving Barb Pensky a call when faced with spending extended periods of time away from a beloved pet. Pensky excels in delivering loving care to any pet, be it the traditional dog or cat and even farm animals. She has her own menagerie: two goats, three chickens, one duck, two cockatiels, and two dogs, so she is quite capable. With 15 years of experience in the pet sitting business, she handles just about anything that arises.

She is pet CPR-certified and has undergone First Aid training for animals, as well.

"Pet sitting is giving owners some peace of mind while away from home. It is the preferred alternative to placing a pet in a kennel, because the pet is able to maintain the usual routine and it is not traumatized when its owner is away," explains Pensky.

Services range from walking dogs one to four times a day, depending on the individual dog's routine, to bringing in the mail and newspaper, and adjusting lights inside the home when the pet owner is out of town. "Every household has a different routine, and I learn a lot from every pet owner," adds Pensky. Her rates range from



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Barb Pensky of All Fur Love Pet Care with treasured pets Cody and Abby.

\$25 per visit for multiple pets within the same home, to \$22 per visit for one pet. A discount rate applies for bookings of an entire month. Pensky enforces basic training rules while walking on leash.

Pensky moved to Orinda in 1995. She is married to Norm Pensky, who is in software sales. Her son, Sean Curtis, is a sophomore at Miramonte High School, and she has two stepsons, Scott Pensky, a junior at Miramonte and John Pensky, a graduate of Miramonte attends Diablo Valley College. Prior to establishing All Fur Love Pet Care this past year, Pensky was a Cookie Lee Jewelry representative.

"This has always been my passion and, in fact, I have rescued animals all my life," says Pensky. "When in high school, I worked at the Humane Society, and I would bring home dogs in order to prevent them from being euthanized. My poor mother put up with a lot from me, and at one point, we had eight dogs in our home," she smiles. Pensky's business is licensed in Contra Costa County, and she is insured as well.

"I offer two-hour, off-leash dog adventures on Mulholland Ridge and Briones Regional Park at the rate of \$35 for an individual dog. "Group discount rates are available," she adds.

For more information about All Fur Love Pet Care, please call Barb Pensky at 925-212-7422 or send an email to barb@allfurlovepetcare.com. You may visit the website at www.allfurlovepetcare.com.

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BUSINESS BUZZ

Business Buzz Putting a Personal Face on the Face of Business

Valerie Hotz



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Inside Resource Group

Scott and Valerie Mollahan have brought their 13 years of printing and promotional display experience to our doorstep. The couple recently established their small business, Inside Resource Group, at 3 Altarinda Road, Suite 301.

This dynamic team offers creative concepts for business promotion. "We specialize in design, creation, and production of custom-branded materials. Our work includes printing and designing promotions that will catch a customer's eye. This includes printing logos on hats, shirts, and pens, as well as packaging displays,"

explains Scott Mollahan. Foster's Wine Estate, Bay Alarm, and Leap Frog are among their major clients.

"We have four children, ages 2, 4, 6 and 8. Having our business located in Orinda allows me to stay at home with them as much as possible, as well as manage the office. This is a system that works very well for everyone," says Valerie Mollahan. "We have four terrific employees, Mary Jacodine and Michel Houston who handle promotions, and Dana Roberts and Robin Bateman, both of whom have a printing background. All of our employees were stay-at-home mothers and are reentering the workforce in a job sharing capacity. We are thrilled because they are bright and motivated, and they are pleased to remain

local and have flexible hours," says Valerie.

"Our clients were very supportive of us starting our business. Every job is a custom job, so we use our creative juices every day. We do a lot of jobs for clients who are located overseas, as well as for local clients," says Scott. Inside Resource Group places a priority on using eco-friendly products. "We encourage clients to select recycled products and self-sustaining fabrics. There is new technology today enabling the production of pesticide-free cotton, which we highly encourage. Recycled paper is very attractive and is reasonably priced," he adds.



VALERIE HOTZ
Scott and Valerie Mollahan from Inside Resource Group.

The firm works with a designer in a collaborative brainstorming process that generates appealing, in-store promotions. Recently, they created a six-foot tall nutcracker statue whose torso was storage shelves used for housing wine. "One of the neatest projects we have worked on was a student practice book for Leap Frog, which our children adored," says Valerie.

The Mollahans moved to Orinda in 1998. Their eldest child, Ben, is a second-grader at Glorietta School and Charlie is in the first grade. Four-year old Nick attends preschool and baby Anna is age 2. "This is a wonderful community. I enjoy coaching baseball through OBA. Valerie and I have competed in two, half-marathons, and I get out to the golf course whenever I can," says

Scott.

For more information about Inside Resource Group, please call 254-4114.

Union Bank Invests In You

With a history dating back to the 19th century, Union Bank is one of the 25 largest banks in the United States. This past winter, Union Bank opened a branch in Orinda at 140 Brookwood Road, Suite 101, as well as a branch in Moraga. The Orinda branch office features large, expansive windows overlooking nearby green hills. Light beige tile floors and lots of light combine to create a bright and inviting atmosphere.

"Our existing clients are so pleased we are here. I am looking forward to becoming active in the Chamber of Commerce and meeting local individuals and business owners," says Nicole Forthe, financial services officer. "We are a full-range bank, serving individual accounts, small business needs, real estate finance, corporate banking, investment, and financial management, personal and business trust services, as well as commercial banking needs. A dedicated priority unit is in place for those customers with sophisticated financial needs," explains Forthe.

"Part of the reason I joined Union Bank after graduating from U.C. Santa Barbara



VALERIE HOTZ
Union Bank employees, Nicole Forthe, Farideh Fakouri, and Mark Jepsen, invite local residents to stop by and become familiar with the bank's many programs.

[SEE BUZZ page 23]

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