

THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis
Volume 25, Number 8

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

12 Issues Annually
August 2010

Moving Education Beyond the Classroom

By BILL O'BRIAN
Staff Writer

Elementary school has certainly changed since many adults attended. Of course, there are still such things as English, science, music, art, drama and sports to study, but Orinda students also have the opportunity to be exposed to a wide variety



BILL O'BRIAN

Students, parents, Eagle Scouts, and school personnel made the Butterfly Garden at Glorietta a reality.

of interesting and productive activities that provide important learning experiences as well.

Two years ago at Glorietta Elementary School, parents helped lead a beautification project that resulted in an entire transformation of the school's landscaping. Parents Wendy Bond, Amber Gates, and Shelly Brudzinski led the effort which included students, parents, administrators and Eagle Scouts. The project began with the Butterfly Garden – newly built, raised gardens that have various plants too attract butterflies. Soon the winged creatures arrived and did their part by frequenting the garden. Eventually, first grade teachers were taking their students into the garden to study the plants and butterflies. Wendy

Sparks, Glorietta principal, says the whole project and the resulting integration into science studies is "amazing." Once cleaned up, rebuilt and planted, the garden attracts a variety of wildlife.

Brudzinski led a further workforce to clear weeds from old planted areas around the school and replanted them with landscaping plants that looked entirely harmonious and professional. Parents, students and administrators worked two weekends to first remove all the old weeds, then the second weekend to complete the landscaping rehabilitation with new plants



BILL O'BRIAN

Del Rey's multi-purpose room boasts this beautiful mural – a project led by Hillery Patterson's 4th grade class.

and ground cover of chipped wood to fill in the areas. "What I loved about it was to see the community come together and work to make progress and have a great

[SEE EDUCATION page 16]

Orinda Celebrating 25 Years as a City



SALLY HOGARTY

Girl Scouts (L-R) Sarah Rockwood, Hannah Whitbeck, Emily Freiese, Veronica Lan and Mary Rockwood said the Pledge of Allegiance and sang "Happy Birthday" to the City of Orinda before handing out cupcakes from Republic of Cake to the crowd gathered for the celebration and concert. The 250 cupcakes were courtesy of Orinda Optometry. The celebration in the park is part of a host of events marking the city's 25th anniversary of incorporation. Other upcoming events include the NorCal Kids Triathlon on September 25 and a Silver Celebration on October 2

Public Workshops Scheduled for Downtown Plan

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

The City of Orinda has announced that public workshops on the proposed downtown revitalization plan will take place this fall. Although exact dates have not yet been set, Mayor Tom McCormick said that they will probably be held on either the second or fourth Tuesday of the month. "These workshops will be more like roundtable discussions rather than presentational," said McCormick. He and City Manager Janet Keeter acknowledged the public's frustration with the process as the Planning Commission considers the recommendations from the Planning Process Review Task Force committee. "If the item wasn't on the agenda, the public only had three minutes during the public forum to speak and the commissioners were not allowed to respond or they would be in violation of the Brown Act," said Keeter. "We're listening to the public and taking

a step back so that we can get more input from local residents," McCormick added.

The exact dates of the public workshops will be posted on the city's website. Go to www.cityoforinda.org for more information.

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So Many Cats, So Little Time



Two beautiful felines were selected to represent the month of August in the Year of the Tiger. Molly (L) loves to show off her jeweled necklace courtesy of owner Diane Dietrich while Margaret Beck's Sydney keeps watch over the backyard from his cushioned pedestal. To submit your cat for consideration, email a photo and bio to news@orindaassociation.org.

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4th of July 2010 Parade Awards

Best Car - 1st place - Buster Family Car (General George Patton's command car from World War II)

2nd Place - Orinda Motors Classic Car Show

3rd Place - 1924 Hudson carrying the Orinda City Council

Best Group - St. Gabriel's Celestial Brass Band

Best Children's Entry - 1st place - Boy Scouts

2nd Place - TOPS (The Orinda Pre School)

3rd Place - Moraga Valley Pool

Best Non-Profit - Joaquin Moraga Adobe

Most Spirited - Miramonte football team and Miramonte cheerleaders

Outstanding Overall - 1st Place - Orinda All-Volunteer Marching Band

2nd Place - Orinda Park Pool

3rd Place - Orinda Idol

A Grand Day to Celebrate Our City

The Orinda Association would like to thank everyone for coming out to enjoy the parade and park festivities on the 4th of July. See you next year!



SALLY HOGARTY

Members of Orinda's first City Council in 1985, Dick Heggie, Aldo Guidotti, Joe Harb, and Bobbie Landers, were grand marshals for the 2010 parade.



SALLY HOGARTY

Local Boy Scouts made a very colorful and patriotic entry for this year's parade.



RYAN HOFF

Eden Hoff enjoyed her first 4th of July parade.



SALLY HOGARTY

Harrison Feusier (R) points out a favorite parade entry to his grandmother Ruth Fortune.

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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
Following the Fourth



Mark Roberts

Well, we did it again! As a community, Orinda showed that it knows how to celebrate the Fourth of July in fun and festive fashion. This year, we also observed our city's silver anniversary and looked forward to the next 25 years. Judging from the number of people who participated in the parade, enjoyed the activities in the park, and visited the tables in front of the Community Center staffed by non-profit and community service groups, many Orindans know that it's as important to be informed and get involved as it is to have fun.

My sincere thanks go to all the folks who composed the 60 entries in the parade, the vendors and exhibitors in the park, musical performers, parade judges, City of Orinda Police Officers, Public Works and Parks and Recreation staff members, and our nearly 30 banner sponsors. Special thanks go to our lead sponsors – Farmhouse Foods, the family of Norman and Janet Pease, and Orinda Motors – for their generous support of this event. My greatest gratitude goes to the terrific team of volunteers who planned this year's celebration, most especially event committee chair Chris Laszcz-Davis. As with so many other beneficial events and programs in Orinda, the Fourth of July celebration wouldn't happen without committed volunteers.

Now I need to offer my apology to members of the Orinda Community Church and residents of Orinda Senior Village who were inconvenienced by a misunderstanding

among the law enforcement personnel providing traffic control. While the event committee had discussed our request that church members and Senior Village residents be granted access to Irwin Way in both directions with members of the Orinda Police, the sheriff's deputies and reserve officers on duty along Orinda Way between Irwin Way and Camino Sobrante were unaware of this request. As a result, vehicles were allowed to exit from Irwin Way but not return back up the hill. It will be 11 or 12 years before the Fourth of July again falls on a Sunday, but we'll do our best to resolve this problem before next year's parade.

While we're talking about the intersection of Orinda Way and Camino Sobrante, I heard some disturbing reports about rather uncivil behavior on the part of a few drivers. These folks wanted to cross Orinda Way on Camino Sobrante but didn't want to wait while runners and walkers participating in the Roadrunners' Fun Run or Haley's Run for a Reason were heading out or coming back along Orinda Way. Law enforcement personnel were stopping vehicles for several minutes at a time to let the runners – who are pedestrians and have the right of way – pass safely. That was apparently too much time for a few drivers who resorted to giving the officers verbal abuse. I ask these drivers to look at the big picture, be a bit less self-centered and show a little more patience in the future.

While we're looking ahead, I have another request being made for the safety of Orinda's children. Probably since Orinda's first parade in 1984, many parade entrants have made a habit of throwing candy (or other "swag") to children in the crowd. While this practice seems generous and harmless on the surface, there's really great risk involved. If children in parade vehicles throw candy, they often toss it only a few feet from their moving vehicles. Kids along the parade route will sometimes dart into the street to pick up the sweet treats. That's to be expected since impulse control and risk assessment are not their strong suits. Those are skills that parents have to exercise and most do. But we have to minimize the risk of a tragedy by asking that the practice of throwing candy into the crowd be stopped next year. Entrants will be encouraged to have walkers who can hand out candy to children instead. We'll promote this new tradition as we plan next year's celebration, but I wanted to ask for your support and agreement now.

Enjoy your summer, stay safe, shop Orinda (support our sponsors!) and think about how YOU will make our community even better over the next 25 years.



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The Orinda Association

The Orinda Association is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to:

- Maintaining and improving the quality of life in Orinda;
- Promoting awareness and discussion of issues that are important to the community;
- Encouraging and recognizing volunteer efforts to enhance the beauty, character, and security of Orinda.

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Become a member of the OA and support programs and activities that make Orinda an even better place in which to live, learn, work and play for residents of all ages, including:

- The Fourth of July parade and celebration**
- Seniors Around Town ride share program**
- Volunteer Center to connect people with organizations and programs**
- Annual Volunteer of the Year and William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Awards**
- Community Forums**

And, of course, *The Orinda News*, Orinda's own monthly community newspaper, distributed free of charge to all Orinda addresses thanks to the support of OA members and advertisers.

Over 1,000 Orinda households are already members of the OA. JOIN THEM and enjoy the satisfaction of participating in making Orinda even better for all of its residents during the next 25 years! Visit our office on the plaza level of the library or join on-line at www.orindaassociation.org TODAY!

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City Listens to Residents

The democratic process is alive and well in Orinda. Due to a large number of citizens attending Planning Commission meetings to complain about the Planning Process Review Task Force's recommendations for revitalizing the downtown area, the city has decided to hold a number of public workshops in the fall to gain more input from local residents. Many residents have voiced serious concern over the recommendation to increase downtown building height.

The exact dates of the workshops were not known by press time. For further information on the workshops or to read the task force's recommendations, go to www.cityoforinda.org. To read about some of the objections to the report, go to www.SaveOrinda.com.

– Sally Hogarty, Editor

Letters to the Editor In Favor of Local Ban

I would like to take issue with recent letters defending the unregulated use of leaf blowers in Orinda. I am in favor of a local ordinance banning the use of leaf blowers, not only because of the noise pollution created by these machines, but even more importantly because of the health hazards they pose, particularly for children and seniors.

One recent letter in your paper acknowledged that leaf blowers are loud but equated such noise with that caused by airplanes, trucks, "and your neighbor learning an instrument." Airplane noise is distant and muffled; large trucks are restricted to commercial routes and pass quickly; and the grinding roar of a leaf blower is not equivalent to the sound of my neighbor's oboe or piano. More importantly, my children are not likely to contract asthma or respiratory problems from my neighbor practicing his scales.

Those who defend the use of leaf blowers fail to consider the health hazards posed by these machines. Pediatricians and medical researchers have documented the fact that leaf blowers increase the amount of exhaust and particulate matter in the air to dangerous levels. Allergens, dust even dry fecal matter are propelled into our air every time a leaf blower is turned on. They circulate throughout our neighborhoods, enter our homes through open doors and windows, and cling to the sensitive tissue in our lungs. The adverse effects of such pollution are particularly felt by children, who are experiencing higher levels of asthma and upper respiratory problems. Because of the noise and air pollution they generate, leaf blowers have been banned by communities such as Carmel, Mill Valley, Berkeley, Santa Barbara, and the City of Los Angeles.

Orindans are fortunate to enjoy a high

Sudden Loss of Long Time Resident and Busy Volunteer – Gail Cwalina

Past Orinda Association board member and president Gail Cwalina passed away unexpectedly on June 28. A long time resident and volunteer in Orinda, Gail played a key role in organizing the 4th of July celebrations for over 10 years, typically planning and overseeing the activities in the park after the parade. She also served on the board of the Sleepy Hollow Swim and Tennis Club. As an active member of the Santa Maria Catholic Church community, Gail scheduled all of the readers for the weekend Masses for many years.

In all of her activities, Gail was a delight to work with on any project because she would always step forward to say "I'll do it"

and then always worked very hard behind the scenes, not seeking the limelight.

Gail was also an educator and spent the last few years as a special education teacher at Ochoa Middle School in Hayward.

She loved the outdoors and was an avid camper, often exploring different Bay Area trails with her children and her dog Oliver. Gail also loved reading, cooking and traveling.

Gail is survived by her husband of 38 years John, her daughters Rachel and Angie, her granddaughter Julia Jane, her siblings Holly and Brian, and her mother Georgia. She will be much missed by her family, friends and fellow volunteers.

–Claire Roberts



Gail Cwalina

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

quality of life; ridding our community of leaf blowers would surely preserve and enhance it.

– Jeffrey Segall

Get to Know Local Ordinances

I sympathized with John Windle's letter regarding the gas-powered leaf blowers starting up at 7:30 a.m. every day in his neighborhood (incidentally, these blowers have been out-lawed in Berkeley for a number of years), but Mr. Windle should be aware of the Orinda law addressing power equipment.

When I realized this was happening in our neighborhood, I checked with the City of Orinda and learned of the sound regulations and code requirements – power equipment can only be used between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekends. A sheet with this information can be obtained from City Hall, and they have been mailed to all residents. Mr. Windle may want to obtain copies to share with his neighbors.

It soon became apparent that these yard maintenance companies doing business in Orinda haven't bothered to research the local laws. I have found that approaching the workers and nicely informing them that the law says they cannot begin before 8 a.m. has been successful (I might add that I have done this to every single one of my neighbor's gardeners). I can understand them wanting to get an early start so they can get off early, but that is unacceptable in our neighborhoods. I think most homeowners are not aware of the law, aren't home when their gardeners are there, or don't care.

– Victoria Carter

Editor's Note

Send your letter to the editor, limit 400 words, by the 5th of the month to news@orindaassociation.org.

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Our local businesses support our schools and many other nonprofit groups in Orinda. As the economy slowly grows, they need our support to continue offering the services and products residents need. Shop Locally!

The Orinda News prints 9,000 copies and is published 12 times a year by The Orinda Association. The office is located at 26 Orinda Way (lower level of the Library). All rights reserved. The publication is sent out by direct mail (Permit #4, Orinda Post Office) and distributed to key locations throughout the city.

Editor..... Sally Hogarty
 Advertising Representatives..... Jill Gelster, Elana O'Loskey, Marie Waterman
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 GraphicsAspen Consulting: Jill Gelster & David Dierks
 Printing.....Folger Graphics

The Orinda News

A Publication of
 The Orinda Association
 Mailing Address
 P.O. Box 97
 Orinda, California 94563
 Telephone: 925 254-0800
 Fax: 925 254-8312
www.orindanews.org



Opinions of *The Orinda News* are expressed on the editorial page. Views of writers and letters to the editor are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Orinda Association or of *The Orinda News*. Advertisements appearing in *The Orinda News* are not to be construed as endorsements by The Orinda Association or *The Orinda News*.

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 Sept issue are due August 5, 2009.

For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 or email to jill@aspenconsult.net. The deadline for the October issue is August 16, 2010.

CLASSIC CAR SHOW

Car Show Brings Dancing in the Streets to Orinda

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

If you've always wanted to dance in the streets, now is your chance to dance up a storm and help Orinda schools at the same time. The Orinda Motors Annual Classic Car Show begins this year's festivities on Friday, September 24, at 7 p.m. with a street party on Avenida de Orinda and inside Orinda Motors. Proceeds from the event, which includes cocktails, dinner, dancing and a live auction, benefit the Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO).

"We're very grateful to our presenting sponsor, Mechanics Bank, for making this event possible," says organizer Chip Herman. "We started the live auction last year and just had tons of fun. This year we're adding something really special." The something special is a unique car auction with all proceeds going to EFO. "We're asking the community to donate a car to us for



SALLY HOGARTY

Attendees at last year's car show have lots of opportunity to get "up close and personal" with their favorite models.

the auction. They will have to meet certain criteria, and we will only take three," Herman explains. The three chosen cars will then be inspected by Orinda Motors and

certified before being sent to Dave Watson's Professional Automotive in Lafayette for detailing. The cars will then be ready for the auctioneer's gavel. "These cars could be

a great third car for a family or a teens first car and being certified by Orinda Motors really means something," adds Herman.

On Saturday, September 25, the annual classic car show takes place from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Presented by Orinda Motors, the popular event's proceeds benefit the Orinda Association's Seniors Around Town program. The program provides transportation for Orinda seniors through well-qualified volunteer drivers who pick up seniors at their homes and drive them to doctor's appointments, shopping trips, and other destinations.

Last year's classic car show featured more than 135 cars and raised \$27,000 for the senior ride program. Organizers will expand on last year's popular "Orinda Thru the Years" show, which was coordinated by the Orinda Historical Society and Orinda Motors. The show combined vintage and

[SEE CARS page 18]

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POLICE BLOTTER

June 2010

False Residential Alarms: Officers responded to 174 false alarm calls throughout the city.

Armed Robbery: 1 incident was reported on Orinda Way.

Burglary (Residential): 4 incidents reported: 2 on Charles Hill Rd., 1 on Dolores Rd. and 1 on Overhill.

Burglary (Commercial): 7 incidents were reported, 3 on Moraga Way, 2 on La Espiral, Davis Rd. and Brookwood Rd.

Grand Theft - From Vehicle (theft of more than \$400 value): 1 incident reported on El Toyonal.

Grand Theft - All Other (theft of more than \$400 value): 4 incidents reported on Valley Ct., Singingwood Ln., Tara Rd., and Tarry Ln.

Petty Theft - From Vehicle (theft of less than \$400 value): 2 incidents were reported on Irving Ln. and Glorietta Blvd.

Petty Theft - All Other (theft of less than \$400 value): 1 incident reported on Sycamore Rd.

Strongarm Robbery: 1 incident was reported on Camino Pablo and Santa Maria.

Vandalism: 4 incidents reported on Moraga Way, Dos Posos, Camino Del Diablo, and Via Hermosa.

Vandalism Misdemeanor: 1 incident reported on Bryant Way.

Arrests

Alcohol - Drunk in Public: 2 arrests were made on Moraga Way at Southwaite Ct. and Orinda Way.

Battery - Domestic: 1 arrest was made on La Encinal.

Burglary - Commercial: 1 arrest was made on Camino Sobrante.

Burglary - Residential: 4 arrests were made on Charles Hill Rd.

Driving Under the Influence - MISD < .08: 3 arrests were made on Canon Dr./El Toyonal, Camino Pablo, and Hwy. 24 W.B. off-ramp at St. Stephens Dr.

Driving Under the Influence - MISD > .08: 2 arrests were made on Hwy. 24 W.B. at St. Stephens Dr. and El Toyonal.

Drugs - Under Influence: 1 arrest was made on Hwy. 24 W.B. off-ramp at St. Stephens Dr.

Interfering with Public Officer: 1 arrest was made on Moraga Way.

Warrant Arrest: 1 arrest was made on Camino Pablo and Santa Maria Way.

- Compiled by Jeanette Irving, Orinda Police Department

MOFD Responds to Criticism in Electrical Accident

■ Fund set up to help workers' families

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

On June 5, window washers Jose Herrera (51) and Eduardo Guerra (30) were severely burned when their cherry picker hit a high voltage transmission line. Herrera subsequently died from his injuries while Guerra sustained major injuries requiring a long hospital stay. Both worked for Delta Window Washers, a small, struggling family-run business in the South Bay. The incident was witnessed by a number of people who were attending the farmer's market.

While many members of the community have praised the work of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) firefighters who responded to that event, a few have criticized the delay in rescuing the workers. Frank Sperling, MOFD board president, says that part of the delay resulted because the initial 911 call was placed by a cell phone, which routes calls through operators in Vallejo who then relay the calls to MOFD. He says that MOFD personnel were on the scene "six minutes and five seconds" after receiving the dispatch call.

In addition, the line that the window

washers' equipment struck, which then fell to the ground, carried 115,000 volts of electricity. To ensure that the downed line did not endanger anyone else, firefighters could not attempt a rescue until PG&E de-energized the fallen line. The first PG&E troubleshooter arrived on-scene approximately 20 minutes after notification.

"When PG&E was unable to shut down the other high voltage wires that were immediately adjacent to the cherry picker containing the victims, an MOFD fire captain and the PG&E troubleshooter made the decision to attempt to rescue the victims amidst those still-active electric power lines," explains Sperling. "MOFD personnel carefully repositioned the district's aerial ladder truck to place it in the best possible position to affect a rescue while avoiding the power lines. Then, at great personal risk to themselves, the MOFD fire captain, accompanied by the PG&E troubleshooter, maneuvered the aerial ladder's basket next to the power lines and adjacent to the cherry picker, transferred the victims to the aerial ladder's basket, and then lowered the basket to the ground."

Two MOFD ambulances then immediately transferred the victims to a nearby landing zone where two helicopter ambulances were waiting. "Both men were en-route to

[SEE MOFD page 14]

Deadline Approaches for Candidates to File for November Election

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Three local agencies will have several openings each on the November ballot. The candidate nomination period has been open since July 12 and closes at 5 p.m. on August 6. Any local residents interested in running for one of the open seats must submit a nomination form by the deadline.

The City of Orinda will have three City Council positions available as the four-year terms of Mayor Tom McCormick, Sue Severson, and Amy Worth come to a close. Nomination petitions for City Council are available from the City Clerk at 22 Orinda Way. If one or more incumbents do not file nomination papers by August 6, the filing period for qualified individuals who are not incumbents will be extended to 5 p.m. on August 11.

The Orinda Union School District will

also have three positions on the November ballot with the completion of board members Jack Bontemps, Riki Sorenson, and Pam West's terms. Nomination papers for these positions can be found at www.cocovote.us.

Three is the magic number for The Moraga Orinda Fire District as it seeks nominees for District 1 (currently held by Frank Sperling), District 3 (currently held by Dick Olsen), and District 4 (currently held by John Wyro). While District 1 and 4 include only homes in Orinda, District 3 is 50 percent Moraga and 50 percent Orinda homes. Nomination papers for MOFD can be found at www.cocovote.us.

The election for these positions takes place on November 2. Election pamphlets and vote by mail ballots will be sent in late September or early October. Polls will be open Election Day from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

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Buying On-Line - Good or Bad Idea

by JEFF JOYCE



Technology today has opened up numerous opportunities that just a few years ago were only a vision. Thanks to the electronic age of computers, people are able to pay bills, bank, socially network, and research a wealth of information. And most of all SHOP! You can surf eBay, Amazon, and almost any other retailer for nearly anything you can imagine – even automobile and light truck tires. In many of the cases, you may save money, time and traveling to and from crowded stores. This is especially handy during the holidays.

But what about buying tires online? Tires are a very important need that involves safety, vehicle specific applications, and can be somewhat frustrating for the average motorist when choosing the appropriate tire. If all that matters is price, then online may be the way to go. If it's service during and after the sale, then buying tires online may take you in the wrong direction. If you choose the wrong tire size (not an uncommon problem), wrong speed safety rating, load rating, traction rating, end up with noisy tires, or are unhappy with your selection, your decision is now going to cost you all the money you may have saved and usually much more since shipping costs are the buyer's responsibility. You'll pay to ship out the correct tire and pay all costs involved in returning the first set of tires.

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There's also the time and inconvenience of starting all over or the issue of getting a tire that is incorrect for your vehicle and may cause a safety issue.

Many local service centers actually have competitive pricing (close to if not the same as the online seller) and will offer services after the sale such as free tire rotations and tire pressure maintenance. To say nothing of the fact that they can look at your tires, talk to you about what type of driving you do, how long you intend to keep your vehicle, and recommend the correct tire for all those factors.

Whether shopping for tires online, via telephone, or in person, do your homework first. Talk with your local service provider for advice, quotes and the best direction to choose. They may know of a great tire option at a substantial savings, since they know which tire is performing best and has the best value. And, they can certainly advise you about tire options even if you are still going to buy them online. You may be surprised that by the time you factor in shipping costs, higher labor fees to install customer supplied parts, and most importantly, the lack of real customer service, the value of online shopping may not be all that you expected or deserve. Buying online can make sense with the proper information and expertise.

Orinda's Seniors Honored at Festive Annual Luncheon

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

The Vureks held the spotlight at Orinda's Three-Quarter Century Luncheon as Helen was honored as the group's first centenarian and crowned queen as the oldest attendee while her son, Jerry, received the birthday hat as the youngest to attend, having turned 75 in May, 2010.

Some one hundred guests enjoyed the tasty chicken dinner prepared by members of the sponsoring groups, the Lamorinda Sunshine Rotary and Prudential California Realty of Orinda. Hosting the group in their Fellowship Hall was another sponsor, the Orinda Community Church.

Celebrating 11 years as MC of the event, John Fazel, looked dapper wearing the tux with teal blue tie and cummerbund which once belonged to his father. Fazel got the idea of honoring citizens 75 years and older from the club his mother belonged to in Perry, Iowa, which began in 1936. Making it a family affair, Fazel's wife, Mary Lou, and daughter, Andrea cooked and served the guests.

Tom Deahl was again, the oldest gentle-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
John Fazel (L) presents Helen Vurek with a birthday cake celebrating her 100th birthday.

man present at age 95, while he and wife, Aileen, were the longest married at 69 years. There were a dozen couples present who have been married over 60 years.

Alice and Lawrence Seiver said they [SEE SENIORS page 14]

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It's Just a Computer

--- Advertisement ---

By EVAN CORSTORPHINE
Portable CIO

I'm grateful to hear from readers when something I wrote touched them in a way that was helpful or otherwise thought provoking. Sometimes folks disagree with me, and that's just as rewarding because I know a) I'm being read, and b) someone cares enough to write. Sometimes though, folks get it quite wrong, and I need to set it straight. In regard to last month's article, I had such a case with a letter written regarding my article about the cost of ownership between PC's and Mac's.

One of the writer's chief complaints was that I dared insinuate that Mac computers get viruses. He was quite offended, and even cc'd Steve Jobs at Apple. I was dared to check Google to prove that Mac's don't get viruses, because he was positive I'd find evidence of my folly. I'm sorry to disappoint, but I did Google it and found plenty of folks with Mac's who'd been infected.

Coincidentally, last week one of our customers brought in their Macbook for service. It was running slowly, and they were pretty sure it had picked up a virus. They were right; it had six viruses. We loaded some tools, cleaned it off, and sent them on their way with some new antivirus software loaded on their system.

When I write things, I'm aware that thousands of people may read my words and challenge the veracity of my claims. Therefore, I'm loathe to exaggerate and usually quite certain of my facts. While some may cling to their computers with almost a religious, cult-like fascination, to us, they're simply tools. After 25 years of experience and after servicing thousands of different computers, we've developed

a pretty good sense of what works, what doesn't, and where marketing-hype runs straight into reality.

When I was young and would wax poetic about something I wanted to do or buy, my father used to tell me, "Don't fall in love with an idea." The simple message was, keep my perspective, and don't be blinded by my biases.

Mac's are great computers, and we own three. They're elegant, well designed, run well, have a good operating system based on Unix, and are generally conceived in a very thoughtful, holistic way that envelops the user in a cozy and productive environment. They're popular because they're effective. They're also a very proprietary system, they and their accessories and software are 30-40 percent over-priced.

We need to remember that computers are just tools. We use them to perform tasks faster or more effectively. Different computers perform different tasks, and what works for you may not work for me, and vice versa. It's important to recognize them for what they are and not to anthropomorphize them.

Our adherence to this agnostic attitude is what keeps us busy. We always remember what is practical and what will return value back to the family or the corporation. You can be confident we aren't going to fall in love with an idea and waste your money on a toy we simply want to play with!

If you or your company are considering a major upgrade of systems or software, consider a Portable CIO consultation before you sign on the dotted line. Let's make sure you're getting the right tool for the job. Reach us at info@theportablecio.com or 925-552-7953.

Sprucing Up Your Home for Colder Months Ahead

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

As the last month of summer begins, it's finally time to take care of all those little repairs around the house that will make the coming winter more comfortable and affordable.

"This is a great time of the year to put in those new double-pane windows or upgrade your insulation," says Tony Maramonte of Mara Construction. "It will bring value to your home as well as added comfort."

The long-time Orinda resident has been in business for over 20 years working throughout the Bay Area and is always looking for ways to save his clients money while providing quality work. "We are always looking for a better product at a cheaper cost for our clients and one that is also environmentally friendly," says Maramonte. "Although the economy is beginning to get better, many people are still watching their spending."

Maramonte recommends adding things like crown molding and wainscoting to freshen up a home without going to great expense. "Adding something like an occupancy sensor switch instead of regular light switches can save you energy, and fan timer switches for the bathroom are very important. Even with a window in the bathroom, you really need a fan to draw out the moisture and prevent mold or mildew, and a timer switch on the fan will make sure you don't forget and leave it on all day," he explains.

Although structural work can't be seen and enjoyed like a new hardwood floor or a freshly painted room, it can prevent costly repair work giving homeowners the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tony Maramonte with his "helpers" Samson and Sonny.

money needed for the more fun, cosmetic additions. "Proper drainage is one of the most important things you can do for your home," says Maramonte. "Without it, you can have all kinds of costly damage to your foundation." Summer is one of the best times to have drainage systems examined and repaired or to upgrade old wiring that may be a fire hazard. "Prevention is definitely key," Maramonte adds.

Tony lives in Orinda with his wife Ramona (an independent filmmaker) and their three children, Tonii (a junior at Miramonte) and Tyler (a senior at Miramonte) and son Robert, a musician and student at Diablo Valley College. The extended family includes three dogs and one cat.

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AROUND THE TOWN

53rd Annual Swim Championship Meet

By HEIDI VASCONI
Contributing Writer

Nine recreational swim teams from Orinda and Moraga will send more than 1,800 swimmers to compete at the annual Orinda/Moraga Pools Association Championship Meet (OMPA) August 6-8



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

at the Soda Aquatic Center on the campus of Campolindo High School in Moraga. More than 5,000 swimmers will take place over the weekend making this one of the largest recreational swim meets in the country.

Swimmers, ages 3-18, practice and compete all summer long training for the pinnacle of the season, the OMPA meet. The spirit and camaraderie of the OMPA league is legendary. Sportsmanship, integrity and high ethical standards are hallmarks of the program whose goal is to use the sports experience to help swimmers develop positive character traits and values that will help them succeed in life. The OMPA Championship Swim Meet provides opportunities for posting a qualifying County Swim Meet time or achieving a personal best time, both impressive accomplishments.

Not So Tiny Bubbles in Orinda Library Fountain Delight Kids



SALLY HOGARTY

A prankster put soap into the fountain at the Orinda Library to the delight of these children. Unfortunately, the soap bubbles can cause damage to the filter and pump system. Luckily that was not the case this time, but city custodians did have their hands full draining and cleaning with the fountain out-of-operation for almost a week.

Festival of Trees Moves Back to the Marriott



SALLY HOGARTY

After two years at the Blackhawk Car Museum, the **Festival of Trees** moves back to the San Ramon Marriott Hotel for this year's popular luncheon and fashion show. Shown above are models with designer **Helen Lyall** (center). Sponsored by the **Orinda Woman's Club**, this year's event takes place on November 18. As always, a beautiful assortment of table top trees and gift packages will be raffled off. Tickets are \$85. For further information about the event, contact Betty Brotherton at 253-1441.

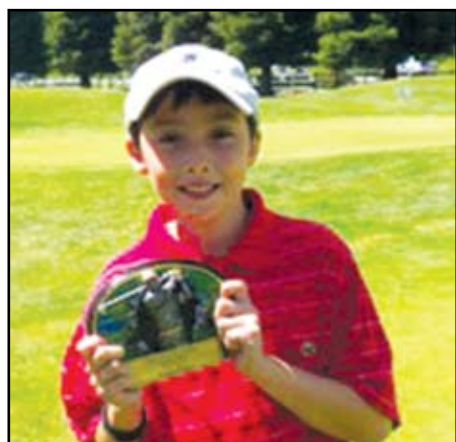
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Edward Anaya recently won first place at the Spring Golf Tournament Series in Pleasanton. The Del Rey Elementary School student is ranked among the 32 best Bay Area junior golfers.

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LIVING LEAN

Nutrition Plus Exercise Equals Success with Living Lean

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

What began as a small business in the living room of her Orinda home has blossomed into a multi-faceted program with two locations for Living Lean owner Sheena Lakhota, who will soon open a Living Lean studio in Theatre Square.

"We should be there in August," said Lakhota, who also has a space in Montclair. The busy mother of two (Shaili 8 and Sachin 6 1/2), holds advanced degrees from U.C. Davis and Cornell University in immunology and genetics and is certified as a personal trainer and sports nutritionist. Lakhota has used her knowledge of nutrition and exercise to develop the very successful program.

"Living Lean offers a program that deals comprehensively with exercise, eating, physical and mental aspects so people can create change in themselves and maintain it for life," she said. "Most of us know how to exercise, but we don't necessarily know how to change our bodies." Lakhota is

currently rolling out plans for her new "Living Lean Meals To Go" program.

"The purpose of the program is to demonstrate that a spectacular meal can actually facilitate fitness. Living Lean is about eating for fat loss and fitness in contrast to not eating for weight loss," she said. The Theatre Square location will have meals available for take-out Monday through Friday and Living Lean sandwiches delivered from cafe partners, Cafe Teatro, Entourage Cafe, Gepettos, Rising Loafer, and Diablo Foods.

At her partner restaurants, customers can request special Living Lean menu items. Living Lean partners also include Baan Thai and Shelby's in Orinda, Bocanova in Jack London Square, and Yankee Pier in Lafayette. "The restaurant program gives people who want to eat healthy and enjoy eating out a convenient way to do that. I work with restaurants to educate them on how they can modify current dishes to fit in with Living Lean guidelines," said Lakhota.

Jim Phoonpiron of Baan Thai Restaurant in Orinda is pleased that both Living Lean clients and regular clientele enjoy menu items from the program. "The customers like what we did with the menu; it is very healthy and tastes good. We have more customers coming in lately asking for the Living Lean menu," Phoonpiron said.

Lakhota is offering an additional new program with her partners in which clients receive a discount for meals. "They simply show their Living Lean membership card to get the special portions and pricing," she said, adding that the company is continuing to look for more restaurant partners.

According to Lakhota, a client's achievement is based on not only motivation but the combination of Living Lean style eating with proper exercise. "A connection is made between the trainer and client. They have a common goal and a belief in each other," said Lakhota who works with eight trainers that she clearly believes in. "My trainers are fabulous, and I pride myself on picking winners."



SALLY HOGARTY
Sheena Lakhota of Living Lean a business for personal training and nutrition for elite fitness.

According to Lakhota, the company's success is due to providing an eating plan specific for one's body, and an exercise regime which helps those who exercise actually figure out how to get results. "My goal," Lakhota said, "is to continually perfect the recipe for fitness success, define it and help as many people as I can to reach their fitness goals."

For more information on The Living Lean Program, call Lakhota at 925-360-7051 or visit the website at www.thelivingleanprogram.com.



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Courtesy of Living Lean - Personal Training and Nutrition for Elite Fitness 925-360-7051

LIBRARY GALLERY

Fabric Transformed Into Art and Fanciful Ceramics

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

The Orinda Library Gallery has a triple treat this August – the creative works of the Valley Stitchers, the stunning photography of local landscapes from Wenda Pyman and Bill Stout, and the inventive ceramics of Michele Ostrie. An artist's reception will be held on Saturday, August 7, from 3 to 5 p.m. – drop by to meet this group of intrepid locals dedicated to bringing beauty to the fore front.

Valley Stitchers has been around for 40 years and is still growing with 200 members. This is the first time the group will exhibit formally. What these women can do with fabric boggles the mind. President Marilyn Tribble says that they meet once a month from September through May at Faith Lutheran Church in Pleasant Hill. Programs include lectures with workshops and "Show and Tell" to see what everyone's been working on. At the Orinda exhibit, there will be wall hangings, purses, small baby quilts, jewelry, baskets, stitchery and a special exhibit to honor the late Althea Bieler's signature dolls. Ulla Kaprielian quilts mainly in cottons, as they are the easiest to work with, and prefers landscapes. She specializes in lap quilts for friends battling cancer so that "When they sit and rest, they can enjoy the beauty of the quilt and keep their minds off the chemotherapy they are undergoing." Valley Stitcher Rudi Thomas, 86, started the Orinda Community Church Sewing Circle 25 years ago. The group has created over 5,000 small baby quilts for children born at risk, foster kids, CEID kids, Children's Hospital, and other charities. When disaster strikes somewhere in our world, these steadfast women pack up the quilts and off they go. If you are interested in sewing with these women, call Thomas at 254-5585.

Stitchers exhibiting work in the show include Barbara Beck, Mary Bieler, Marie



Wenda Pyman's beautiful photographs of Mt. Diablo will be included in the next Library Gallery show.

Canane, Shirley Crooks, Carol deBoer, Vilija Deutschman, Jean DiGregory, Linda Dow, Karen Eppler, Ellen Heathcote, Shirley Holland, Lois Holt, Jane Jacobs, Katie Jones, Erylene Kammerer, Ulla Kaprielian, Anne Lagoche, Gayle Langdon, Carole Leopold, Leslee Montgomery, Sandy Mowrer, Jan Muto, Karen Nakkerud, May Neeland, Gay Parker, Ellie Raia, Sheila Rogstad, Patty Smayda, Ruth Stack, Rudi Thomas, Marilyn Tribble, Marlane Turner, Claire Wait, and Dawn Marie Yates.

The August exhibit also features the vivid works of landscape photographers Wenda Payman and Bill Stout. Pyman's "Moon Over Mt. Diablo" (30 x 36), "Mt. Diablo Hanging Valley" (26 x 36), and "Lone Oak Diablo View" (40 x 12) were shot with a Canon 20D digital camera, although some earlier works she is showing were shot on film. Pyman doesn't do much with Photoshop, preferring the "old school" method of shooting "in-camera" rather than doing a lot of manipulation. Pyman's father was a photographer, so it's in her genes; early on, she studied with Ansel Adams in Yosemite. With a keen perception for the enigma, she hopes her works inspire people to preserve what beauty we have (see wendapyman.com).

Bill Stout of Moraga began shooting with a box camera in New York City where he grew up. Staying fresh with his work is never a problem, as he believes "You see what you're ready to see, both internally and externally." This changing point-of-view spurs him to uncover different locales, light and times of day. Stout uses a pair of Nikon D-00's with 17-35 and 80-200 lenses. In medium format, he uses a Hasselblad 500cm with both a 50 distagon and

150 sonnar lens. He shoots Fuji Provia film, which is like a slide film – not a negative film, a positive film. Medium format film is a larger negative size, 6 x 6cm (as opposed to 35mm) called 2-1/4 inches square; he scans the film, so the back end is all digital. Among the 20+ images he will show, "Tenaya Late Spring," "Briones Summer," and "Point Cabrillo Light" are all recent works, 22 x 28 framed. Stout uses a pigment print process (said to last 200 years) on acid-free mats and mount boards. He hopes his work will remind viewers that, "We are connected to a larger continuum of life that moves forward with an implacable serenity" (see wtstout.com).

And finally, Michele Ostrie's fanciful ceramic sculptures round out the exhibit with some imaginative license. A member of the Clay Arts Guild (CAG) for 22 years, she never works on the wheel. The Alamo resident places most of her artwork outdoors, gracing her garden. Ostrie enjoys sculpting fantasy images, animals and the human figure, and loves Renoir and Impressionism. She won first place in the CAG Spring competition, Clay For the Wall, with her two sculptural stoneware reliefs, described as "fun narratives, well-done compositions."

Visit the gallery during normal library hours – Monday - Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m. at 23 Orinda Way, Orinda. Call 254-2814 for more information.



Fallen Leaves by Ulla Kaprielian of the Valley Stitchers.

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Steve & Cathy Lambert

Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) a hardy perennial known for its soothing fragrance, vibrant purple-blue blooms and bitter-sweet flavor, provides pleasure for all of your senses. Lavender is a great choice for Orinda gardens as our moderate climate is quite similar to that of the Western Mediterranean where most varieties of lavender originated.

Lavenders like lots of sun, good air circulation, and well drained soil. When adding lavender to your garden, choose a high sun exposure area with plenty of space around your plant, based on its mature size, to allow for good air flow. Humidity and excess moisture from over-watering or poor drainage are extremely harmful for lavender and will result in rot and ultimately the death of your plant. For this reason, never plant your lavenders close to a lawn or other

landscape plants that require significantly more water. Since most of our Orinda soils are clay, which tends to hold water longer, it's best to choose varieties of lavender that can handle heavier soil, (see recommendations below) or amend your soil with coarse sand or ground lava rock (Scoria).

Lavender plants don't require much fertilization. A bit of compost used as a mulch around the base of the plant is usually enough to produce healthy growth. Water your lavenders only when the soil is dry.

Lavenders respond best to harsh pruning which helps promote healthier plant growth. Lavenders will bloom more often (two to three times a year) if their blooms are cut back after each flowering. Cut the stem back about one inch past the green leafy growth. Then in the fall, prune back the top third of your plant.



Blue River Lavender adds color and fragrance to any garden.

STEVE LAMBERT

The ideal time to harvest your lavender flowers is when the blooms have just burst out of their protective covers (calyx). The long, tall stalks of your lavender blooms should be hand snipped at their base again about one inch below the first leaves. Our preferred tool for this job is sheep shearing clippers which helps speed up the process. Harvest the flowers during cool, dry weather to preserve their fragrance. Strip leaves from the end of the stems then tie small clusters of clippings together, and hang upside down to dry in a cool, dry space. For fresh, floral arrangements, lavenders should be added immediately after cutting.

There are many ways to enjoy lavender flowers not only for their renowned, calming smell but also in cooking where a few small blooms will add a bitter-sweet flavor and fragrance to roasted meats, such as lamb and fish, as well as in tea, lemonade and even ice cream! It's easy to create great scented gifts using your dried lavender blooms after pruning. Even your kids can have fun making potpourri, drawer or closet sachets (not only for the wonderful smell, but also to help repel moths) and relaxing, perfumed bath blends using lavender, oatmeal and rosemary.

Honey bees love lavender too. In fact, you can purchase "lavender honey" made from hives where the bees collected nectar primarily from lavender plants. On the down side, because honey bees are so attracted to it, lavender would be a poor choice of plants if anyone in your family is allergic to bee stings. We have a client who had a beautiful, lavender lined pathway leading to her front door. She also has two small granddaughters who, like most kids, were afraid of bees. They hated walking the path to grandma's front

door and called it the "tunnel of bees." As much as she loves lavender, she loves her granddaughters more and had us remove most of these lovely plants.

Over years of planting many varieties of English, Spanish, and intermedia lavenders, we have determined the following list to be proven to thrive in our Orinda climate and heavier clay soil.

English or *Angustifolia* lavenders – Some popular choices such as Hidcote and Munsted don't do well in our adobe soil so go with the following varieties instead: Blue cushion, Blue River, or Royal Velvet. Another good choice for a taller (18-36") English lavender is Twickle purple.

Spanish or *Stoechas* lavenders have a plant structure very similar to English lavenders but the foliage is grey rather than green. Their flowers are distinctly different with "rabbit ear" petals on the top of their bloom. In the Spanish varieties, we've had great success with Madrid Blue with steel grey foliage, blue flowers and white rabbit ears. It grows to 22" high. Otto Quast has dark blooms and light purple rabbit ears. A newer variety we've discovered is Blue Star. It has greenish, grey leaves and flowers that are a deep burgundy shade of purple.

Intermedia lavenders are similar to English lavenders in shape and size. Provence is a very large (3-4') lavender with bluish, purple blooms. Super is another great lavender that has earned a place in our own garden. It is similar to Provence but with pinker flowers. Dutch is probably our favorite lavender. It's a very strong plant with bold purple flowers.

If you have any questions on this "Way to Grow" article please email us at office@gardenlightslandscape.com.



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SCHOOLS / STUDENTS

Orinda Academy Graduates 23 and Wins Environmental Award



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Orinda Academy proudly awarded diplomas to 23 students in June. The graduates will be attending universities across the nation, including Carnegie Mellon, UCLA, UC Davis, University of Oregon, Wooster, Whitman, St. Mary's College, and more.

Providing a challenging and fun environment, Orinda Academy prides itself on the overall success of its diverse study body. The 7th - 12th grade school recently graduated 23 students who will go on to attend universities across the country. The school strives to create communication among students, parents and teachers to help students reach their full potential.

The school also received an award from the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (CCCSD) in recognition of its success in

reducing mercury pollution. For the past several years, the CCCSD has been collaborating with public and private schools in Central Contra Costa County to control the amount of mercury released into the environment. Mercury can be found in school science labs as well as thermostats, fluorescent bulbs, and batteries. According to the CCCSD, several tons of mercury-containing items are inappropriately thrown away every year in the United States.

— Sally Hogarty

Two Orinda Girl Scouts Direct and Produce *Annie, Jr.*

By PETRA MICHEL
Staff Writer

Every year, Orinda is blessed with high quality plays and musical performances by students in our schools. Neris Newton, an incoming Senior at Miramonte High

School participated in each and every one of the school plays that were offered at her schools, from a role as Mrs. Pearce in *My Fair Lady* in 5th grade at Wagner Ranch to the Witch in this year's Miramonte Musical *Into the Woods*. When it was time to think about a Girl Scout Gold Project, she wanted to bring this experience to students whose school could not afford to offer it to their students. She asked her friend Margaux Attard to join the project as a producer, and together they searched for a school that was in need of help with after school drama. They found the perfect school in Berkeley. Longfellow Arts and Technology Middle School had lost their after-school enrichment program for drama due to a variety of budget cuts. Administration, parents and students welcomed the two girl scouts.

With only 13 rehearsals, *Annie Jr.* was brought to the stage. Newton choreographed, directed and worked as a musical director, while Attard handled student tech crew, fundraising and the communications with school administration. The result was

[SEE GIRLS page 14]



PETRA MICHEL

Orinda students Neris Newton (L) and Margaux Attard directed and produced *Annie, Jr.* at Longfellow Middle School in Berkeley.

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CONTINUATIONS

◆ SENIORS from page 7

have been attending since they turned 75 and loved the hospitality and good speakers. Rose Marie and John Weil appreciated being served so graciously by the sponsors and the opportunity to see long-time friends, as well as the excellent speakers.



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This year's speakers continued that tradition of excellence as Elizabeth Tucker, from the Rosie the Riveter WWII/Home Front National Historical Park, showed her slides of the Henry Kaiser Richmond shipyards, where the SS Red Oak Victory ship is anchored. The shipyards are famous for the 747 ships built there in record time, the fastest one built in just five days. Tucker told of the importance of women in the WWII war effort. Known as "Rosies," Rosie the Riveter became a famous slogan. A Rosie the Riveter Memorial is part of the park.

Keynote speaker, Betty Reid Soskin, related her life story growing up as a Cajun/Creole African American, first in the very segregated South, and then moving to Oakland in 1927 where life was less impacted by Southern hostility. Still, there was segregation. She worked in a segregated union hall during World War II as a filing clerk. However, the recruitment for both white and black workers changed the social climate of the area forever. Richmond grew from a city of 24,000 to over 100,000 in four years. Henry Kaiser's policy of open hiring opened the door for blacks as never before. Soskin is proud that she was named "Woman of the Year" by the California State Legislature, especially since her grandmother was a slave. Today, at age 88, she serves as a Cultural Resource Assistant for the National Park Service.

It turns out that in the audience there were many WWII veterans and war effort workers. Betty Karplus was an electrician while Pat Byrne worked at Mare Island. Jim Pepper's first job was as an electrician on ships, and then in the yard where he serviced

cranes and lighting, recalling they kept everything lit up while the populace lived under blackout regulations. Jo Haskens worked as a tack welder on manifolds for aircraft in Emeryville.

The Historical Park continues to look for Homefront stories and asks anyone with a story to tell contact them. The public is invited to the annual celebration of Richmond's special role in the history of modern America on October 2 with music, exhibits and visits to the SS Red Oak Victory Ship and Craneways Shipyard #3. Admission is free. Check out their website (www.nps.gov/rori) for further festival details and information about submitting stories and visiting the park sites.

◆ MOFD from page 6

the hospital within about 45 minutes of the initial dispatch," Sperling adds.

Sperling also points out that spraying water on the victims, as some critics have suggested, would have exposed them to even greater injury since water conducts electricity.

Responding to criticism that it took 45 minutes for the ladder truck to arrive, Sperling says that it only took 12 minutes for the aerial ladder truck to arrive from Moraga but that it couldn't be used until the PG&E troubleshooter arrived on scene and de-energized the high voltage line.

"We believe it is important for the public to have all of the facts in order to come to rational conclusions about the handling of this horrific event. The facts are that MOFD's firefighters acted in an expeditious, disciplined and even heroic manner," says Sperling. "It is most disconcerting when people say that our MOFD firefighters were not sufficiently trained. Nothing could be further from the truth. They have extensive training for this type of emergency and acted in a totally disciplined manner."

Valley Medical Center has established a fund for the two workers and their families. No administrative costs will be taken out of the fund with 100 percent going directly to the families. Herrera, who had no life insurance, leaves behind a wife and several children. Guerra, whose wife is expecting, is eligible for a minimal amount of Worker's Compensation. To make a tax-deductible contribution, send a check to Valley Medical Center Foundation, 2400 Morepark Ave., Ste. 207, San Jose, CA 95128. For more information on the fund, call 408-885-5299.

For additional information on the accident and MOFD's response, go to MOFD.org.

◆ GIRLS from page 13

both thoroughly enjoyable and astonishingly professional. It also gave many kids at Longfellow their first exposure to musical theater, both as actors and as audience.

"Neris and Margaux are not only talented but also great working with kids. My daughter had a terrific time, and we're still hearing positive comments about the show," praised Gary Forbes, whose daughter Elisa played Annie. Newton and Attard also learned some life lessons themselves. "Through this project, I realized how much I enjoy working with kids and helping them discover an art I've grown up loving," says Newton. "I am now also considering a career in teaching or directing. I really grew to love each of the students, watching them in their effort to make their performance the best they possibly could. No matter what was going on at home or in their social lives, when the students came to rehearsals they were able to put that all aside and commit to their character choices. These students taught me that no matter what other chaos is going on in our lives, theater gives us the option to put it all aside and take our minds off it."

While Margaux adds, "I feel lucky to have had such an unforgettable experience working with the cast and crew of *Annie Jr.* This has been my first immersion into the performing arts, and I have loved and cherished every moment of it."

Due to their tight budget, the Girl Scouts reached out to their own community for support for their endeavor. "We are so grateful to live in this community. Whenever we got stuck and needed help, it was offered to us," explains Newton. "OIS and Del Rey provided us with costumes and sound equipment, Diablo Theatre Company helped with costumes, Town Hall Theatre with props, and many adults that I knew from the shows I have been in myself supported us, mainly Jay Wasserman with sound, and our wonderful Gold Award project advisor, Kathy Simon, who helped us all the way and was even working back stage during dress rehearsals and both shows."

"As a result of the artistry and hard work of director Neris Newton and producer Margaux Attard, the actors and tech crew from Longfellow Middle School had a wonderful, unforgettable experience putting on *Annie Jr.*," says Kathy Simon. "Thanks to Neris and Margaux, these middle school children had a unique opportunity to perform in a musical, and it looked like they enjoyed every minute of it. The show drew crowds of about 300 to each of two fantastic performances."

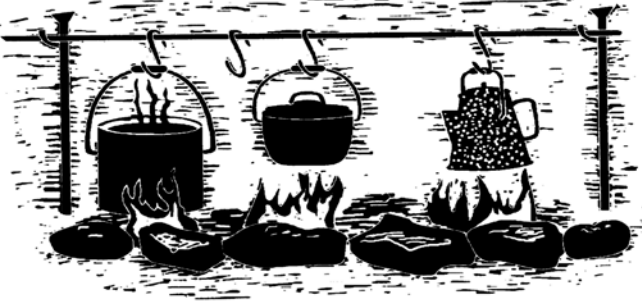



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TRIPLETS / EFO

Three Times the Fun for Orinda Family

By FRAN MILLER
Staff Writer

Scared, overwhelmed, yet happy. That is how Orindans Katia and Tim Burke initially felt when told they were having triplets. “My husband and I had IVF, and just two weeks later, the ultrasound revealed a big surprise. All three embryos took,” says Katia.

Colin, Rachel and Sean Burke were born April 29, 2010 at 35 weeks – just five weeks shy of full-term. Big brother Liam, 3 ½,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Big brother Liam holds his new siblings: **Colin, Rachel and Sean.**

welcomed his new brothers and sister home and is adjusting well. “He is excited to be the older brother and even more excited to have a baby sister,” says Katia.

“Going from a family of three, to a family of six is a huge life change and is sometimes a little bewildering,” admits Katia, who had a relatively easy and healthy pregnancy. “I was on doctor’s orders not to drive, work or exercise. I was very healthy my whole pregnancy, until 35 weeks when my doctor decided it was best to deliver. There were

13 doctors and nurses in the deliver room! It was very organized and an incredible experience.”

The Burkes are fortunate to have help and assistance from Tim’s mother, also an Orindan, and from their many friends who love to stop in and offer a hand. They also have a nanny who is available 25 hours per week. Their newly bustling household has made teamwork a necessity, and Tim and Katia have assumed particular roles with the kids’ care. Tim takes care of Liam in the morning so Katia can sleep-in with the babies. “He takes Liam to and from school and is a great help around the house,” says Katia.

After just two months, the babies are already exhibiting distinct personality traits. Colin is the easy-going one; Rachel is Mommy’s girl, and Sean is the active boy. The hardest part for Katia has been the lack of time for herself. The most surprisingly easy part? “Feeding three babies at the same time,” laughs Katia. “It’s not as bad as it sounds!”

“This is an amazing journey that has just begun,” says Katia. “For anyone out there who may be pregnant with triplets or twins and is feeling overwhelmed, I’d like to tell them that everything is going to be okay. We are all given the strength that we need when it is the right time.”

The Burkes have lived in Orinda for five years, though Tim (who is in law enforcement and was an Orinda police officer) grew up here. Liam and his siblings will attend Wagner Ranch Elementary School.

If you are an Orinda resident and have triplets or are a triplet, please send us a photo along with a brief paragraph about your family. Send to orindanews@orindaassociation.org.



LES HATA
The EFO board sincerely thanks the quilt-makers and designers for their generosity. Seated in front of their panel (L-R): **Leasa Raya, Liz Piatt, Margaret Zucker, Ginny Ross, Jocelyn Marzan, Sandy Chan, Cheryl Hata, Terry Lowenthal, and Helen Calvert-Snook.**

Orinda Quilt Masterpiece Created for EFO

By KATARINE KATES
Contributing Writer

What will friends do who wish to be artistic, have fun, and support our schools? A group of nine women created a marvelous quilt that beautifully depicts well-known Orinda landmarks, and they

have chosen to donate this beautifully hand-crafted quilt to the Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO).

These artists spent six months – some expert quilt-makers, others mere novices – to imagine and actualize the 36 x 90 inch quilt. Photographer and designer Terry

[SEE EFO page 16]

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CONTINUATIONS

◆ EFO from page 15

Lowenthal created a striking photo montage of Orinda images, which was divided into eight parts. Each quilter was responsible for using fabric and thread to recreate her section; later, individual quilts were mounted on a background fabric to create a unified

whole. The quilt captures the essence of Orinda, both its pastoral landscape and its charming downtown. Further, it represents the Orinda community's tradition of support for its schools and children, as evidenced by the work and care that was invested in this collector's item.

This artistic endeavor is in keeping with

one of EFO's fundamental goals – to fund arts in the Orinda schools. Established in 1979, EFO has become a leader among educational non-profits, setting the standard for fundraising and accountability.

EFO plans to showcase the quilt over the next 10 months throughout local Orinda businesses. EFO is interested in identifying

a local entity that is interested in this priceless quilt. At the end of the 2010-11 school year, EFO will identify the purchaser who will be granted the privilege of owning this original artwork with proceeds benefiting EFO. Please contact EFO for more information via email: info@orindaefo.org or 925-253-0885.

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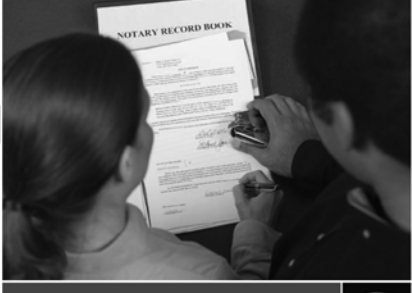
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◆ EDUCATION from page 1

day," says Sparks.

Another new feature of Glorietta is the "Children Helping Children" program that Sparks brought with her from her previous school. The school is connected with another elementary school in Oakland, and the students are pen pals, using computers to write and send pictures to each other. Additionally, the students collect gently used sports equipment and send it to their pals. Glorietta also sends over snacks for the annual STAR testing. "We are trying to help our students understand students in another community and to build ambassadorship," says the principal. Parents Wendy Bond and Diane Sharp are leading this project, which is in its formative stages.

The most recent addition to Glorietta is the Safety Patrol. It started last year under the supervision of Nancy English, a Kindergarten teacher. Fourth and Fifth graders have learned to greet parents and welcome students to school, resulting in a much smoother morning traffic flow. Wearing neon reflective vests, students help fellow students out of cars, and greet the parents each morning. Additionally, all participating traffic safety students write a reflective essay on their experiences. This whole process has "significantly improved the traffic flow" according to Sparks and has made the entire early morning school arrival orderly, positive and a good learning experience for the students.

Eagle Scouts have also been busy at Glorietta. They have finished several projects that have greatly enhanced the living experience at the school. They recently built backpack boxes along the edge of outdoor hallways to store the student backpacks while playing on the grounds; they built the raised flower beds of the Butterfly Garden and built a custom-made wooden sign announcing "Gophers Welcome" (the school mascot for the teams being a gopher). The scouts refinished half a dozen picnic tables that are now smooth enough for everyone to enjoy outside on good weather days. The last of the scout projects is a memorial to Toni Russel, a former instructional assistant for many years at school, who often did yard duty at recesses and noon. To honor

Russel's memory, the school community contributed to the Eagle Scout project, which includes a bench and overhead trellis providing a nice place to sit and ponder all the positive changes recently at Glorietta.

Down the road toward Moraga is Del Rey Elementary School, that has been creating its own changes to improve the lives and learning of students. This year, Del Rey received the California Distinguished School designation for providing additional activities that enrich and enhance the lives of the students.

In the application for the school award, Principal Kirsten Theurer included the recently created vision statement for Del Rey. A portion of it says, "Students benefit from opportunities to be creative and to build confidence while participating in a challenging program of study in a safe and caring environment." Turning these statements to action, art teacher Mrs. Hillery Paterson, teacher Ms. Terri Brasch, and the principal attended a class sponsored by the Orinda Rotary Club to learn about community mural painting. Paterson then led a 4th grade class through the process of creating a beautiful new mural outside the school's multi-purpose room.

Back in the classroom, Del Rey staff implemented a new technology plan that cycles out the older computers and replaces them with more current models. The school has over 160 computers on campus. The fully equipped laboratory has 30 workstations, a document camera, and a smart board. The most current additions to the technology are classroom document cameras, projectors and laptops. Principal Theurer says, "This has opened up a new world of educational opportunities for our students." Additionally, the educators now have access to pertinent data that they use to drive instruction.

Parent volunteers help out at Del Rey in numerous ways. They have completely organized an enrichment program that includes Spanish, music, dance, drama, chess, art, yoga, poetry and other activities. The parents also help run the lunch kitchen. Thanks to dedicated staff and an involved and caring community, Orinda school children benefit from increased opportunities for growth.



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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

AUGUST

- 1 **Orinda Starlight Village Players** presents Alan Ayckbourn's comedy *Time and Time Again*, Orinda Community Center Park, 4 p.m. Also August 5, 6, and 7 at 8 p.m. Call 925-528-9225 or visit www.orsvp.org for information and tickets.
- Orinda Library Gallery** presents Valley Stitchers, landscape photography, and creative ceramics through August. Exhibit open during regular library hours.
- 3 **California Shakespeare Theater** - The Simpsons do Macbeth! Rick Miller in his one-man show *MacHomer*, through August 7 at Bruns Amphitheater, 100 California Shakespeare Way, Orinda. Tuesday through Thursday at 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday at 8 and 10:30 p.m. The 10:30 p.m. shows include pizza and beer, 510-548-9666 or order at www.calshakes.org.
- 6 **Summer Concert Series** at Orinda Theatre Square presents 747 Express, 4 to 7 p.m. Enjoy dinner and music at the square.
- 11 **The Second Wednesday Book Group** will read and discuss *The Widow Clicquot* by Tilar Mazzeo at Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. Call 254-7606.
- 18 **California Shakespeare Theater** presents *Macbeth* through September 12, Bruns Amphitheater, Orinda. Call 510-548-9666 or order at www.calshakes.org.
- 20 **Summer Concert Series** at Orinda Theatre Square presents Surefire, 4 to 7 p.m. Enjoy dinner and music at the square.
- 27 **Orinda Starlight Village Players** presents Charlotte E. Meyer's adaptation of Kenneth Graham's *The Wind in the Willows* through Sept. 25. Shows are Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 p.m., Sundays, Sept. 12 and 19 at 4 p.m., and Thursday, Sept. 23 at 8 p.m. Call 925-528-9225 or visit www.orsvp.org for information and tickets.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified.

- 3 **Toddler Lapsit**, stories, songs and fingerplays for 1- to 3-year-olds and their caregivers, Gallery Room, 10 and 10:30 a.m. No registration required, attendance limited to once per week. Also August 4, 10 and 11.
- 5 **Book Sale** hosted by Friends of the Library, Bookshop and Sorting Room, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 10 **Pirate and Scalawag Captain Jack Spareribs** performs juggling, tricks and creates general mayhem. Suitable for families, 4 p.m.
- 17 **Tell It! Tales for Young Children**, a storyteller weaves folktales and legends adapted for children, this month featuring dragons, Tutoring Room, 1 p.m.
- 25 **Summer Music Series** presents folk quartet Celtic Sands, Fireside Area, 7 to 8 p.m.
- 26 **Contra Costa Tale Spinners**, storytelling for adults. Tell your own story, or just come to listen, 7 to 9 p.m.

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

CLUB MEETINGS

- Diablo Star Chapter #214**, Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m., Orinda Masonic Center. Contact Karen Seaborn, 925-689-0995.
- Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe**. Third Monday, 7:30 p.m., Moraga-Orinda Fire District Conference Room, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga, www.moragaadobe.org.
- Friends of the Orinda Creeks**. Fourth Wednesday, 8:30 a.m., May Room, Orinda Library. Call 253-1997.
- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary**. Every Friday, 7 a.m., Postino's in Lafayette 254-0440, ext.463.
- Lamorinda Toastmasters**. Every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Temple Isaiah, 3800 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, www.lamorinda.freetoasthost.net.
- Montelindo Garden Club**. Third Friday, Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, 9 a.m., www.montelindogarden.com.
- Orinda Rotary**. Every Wednesday at noon, Community Center, 254-2222.
- Orinda Association**. Second Monday, 7:15 p.m., Orinda Library, May Room, 254-0800.
- Orinda Hiking Club**. Please visit our website at www.orindahiking.org or call 253-1465 for schedule of upcoming hikes.
- Orinda Historical Society**. Third Wednesday of the month, 3 to 5 p.m., OHS Museum, 254-1353.
- Orinda Job's Daughters**. First and third Monday, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 925-283-7176.
- Orinda Juniors** community service group. First Tuesday of the month, September to June, 7 p.m. Contact Diane Petek and Ann Sullivan at orinda.juniors@yahoo.com for location.
- 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 Teen Advisory Council**. Second Wednesday of the month, 4 p.m., Orinda Community Center, 28 Orinda Way. For information, email orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com.
- Orinda Woman's Club**. Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. to noon; call Jean Barnhart, 254-3881.
- World Affairs Book Group**. Fourth Thursday, 3 p.m. Orinda Books, 254-7606.

CITY/FIRE/SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

- Acalanes Union High School District**. First and third Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., district office, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette.
- City Council**. First and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.
- Historic Landmarks Committee**. Fourth Tuesday, 3 to 5 p.m., Library Garden Room. Call 925-788-7323.
- Moraga-Orinda Fire District**. Third Wednesday, 7 p.m., Administration Building, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga.
- Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees**. Second Monday, 4 p.m., OUSD Conference Room, 8 Altarinda Road. For the latest listing of dates, please check the website at www.orindaschools.org.
- Planning Commission**. Second and Fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.cityoforinda.org.

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



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Family Classic Brings Orinda Starlight Village Players Season to a Close

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

Orinda Starlight Village Players present Kenneth Graham's family classic *The Wind in the Willows*. Adapted by Charlotte E. Meyer, the fanciful show plays at the Orinda Community Park Amphitheater August 27 - September 25. Local director John Butterfield directs the beloved children's classic, which plays Friday and Saturdays at 8:30 p.m., Sundays, September 12 and 19 at 4 p.m., and Thursday, September 23 at 8 p.m.

Meyer, an Orinda resident, founded the theater nearly three decades ago. Well into her 90's, she has long been the driving force behind the group, which is now run by her son Geotty Chapple and his wife Susan.

The Wind in the Willows follows the adventures of Mole and his friend Ratty as the pair journey the riverbank, crossing paths with Badger of the Wild Wood and Mr. Toad of Toad Hall.

Director Butterfield, who acted in *The Tempest* in the Orinda space a few years ago, calls the intimate outdoor theater "a beautiful, hidden treasure." He is excited about directing in the space because of its



DAVID DIERKS

Orinda resident Charlotte Meyer has led ORSVP since 1982 providing family entertainment through community theater.

many possibilities. "So much can be done with it," he adds.

Butterfield who heads Concord's Butterfield 8 Theatre Company says he decided to direct with the Orinda Company because "we have to support each other or there will

[SEE STARLIGHT page 18]

Cal Shakes Re-envision Shakespeare's Macbeth

By KATHRYN G. MCCARTY
Staff Writer

California Shakespeare Theatre will feature an innovative adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* as its third production of the season. Adapted and directed by Joel Sass, the tale of ambition and greed will run August 21 - September 12 at the Bruns Amphitheater.

Sass, honored with the 2007 Alan Schneider Directing Award - a national award recognizing the work of freelance directors



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Stacy Ross portrays Lady Macbeth.

and administered by Theater Communications Group (TCG) - specializes in the creation of new work for the stage and devising imaginative reinterpretations of classic plays. He is based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he serves as the associate artistic director of Minneapolis' acclaimed Jungle Theatre, and he has also directed and designed at the Guthrie Theatre. He previously adapted and directed *Pericles* for Cal Shakes.

"My hope is that our production will be packed with surprises and feel fresh, new and immediate," said Sass. "One of

[SEE MACBETH page 18]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Joel Sass directs *Macbeth*.



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◆ PARTNERS from page 20

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coins and transferring the funds to EFO. A round of applause went to Gene Yee, MB webmaster who developed the Community Partners website, a first-of-its-kind site loaded with information and resources so that nonprofits can familiarize themselves with the program. Attendees were given a CD with contact information of all those who registered so that they could leverage their contacts and foster communication.

Support the Arts

◆ STARLIGHT from page 17

be no small theaters left."

Butterfield holds a BA from St. Mary's College and has studied theater directing at Toi Whakaari/Victoria University in New Zealand. He founded the New Urban Dance Company in 1989. The company has performed in the Bay Area and throughout Northern California. The acting branch of the company, Butterfield 8, has performed at the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts and Town Hall Theater. As a dancer, Butterfield has toured the U.S. with "Dance Through Time" and has performed with ODC, Left Coast Dance, and Company Chaddick. He has received two Shellie Awards; one for choreography and one for costuming.

According to ORSPV artistic director Geotty Chapple, no one in the production company is paid and the volunteers do the work as a labor of love. The company is celebrating its 28th season in the Orinda Community Park, 26 Orinda Way. For tickets, call 925-528-9225. For more info, go to www.orvsp.org.

◆ MACBETH from page 17

the reasons I enjoy working at Cal Shakes is because they are committed to doing "boldly imagined classics." According to Sass, Macbeth will be performed by only eight speaking actors, supported by a small four-person ensemble.

Sass said that he is "always challenged and invigorated by the task of doing an epic play with a small cast. The exercise invites — actually demands — that the director and the actors commit to making strong imaginative and theatrical choices."

◆ GOODMAN from page 19

laptops," she adds. "I help people upload, edit and print photos and can help clients create a website for their photos that friends and family can easily access."

Innovations take place in the computer industry quickly these days, and often Goodman finds that clients need assistance dealing with the constant changes in operating systems, hardware and software. "People get a lot of very important information through their e-mail these days. My experience has been some senior citizens need assistance navigating these changes, and I enjoy helping them do that," says Goodman.

Goodman has been in the computer business since 1983 when she and her father, James Callahan, formed Sinfonia Software. They designed and developed SOLI, an orchestra repertoire database management application, which they sold to major orchestras around the world. "I come from a very musical family. My father played the French horn with the San Francisco Symphony, and I play the viola. We were really ahead of our time in designing SOLI,"

smiles Goodman.

After selling Sinfonia Software, Goodman was a senior database software engineer for large companies in Silicon Valley, as well as for financial district banks and utilities for 25 years. She has additional experience as a technical writer, which enables her to write clear instructions for clients. "I stopped working full time to be more available to our daughter, Rebekah, and it was during that time that I started helping people with their personal and small business computer needs," says Goodman. She often helps her own parents, who live at Piedmont Gardens, with their many computer issues.

Goodman is married to Bob Goodman, a family law attorney with offices in Oakland and Walnut Creek. In addition to playing chamber music, Goodman enjoys spending time traveling with her family. On a recent excursion, she and her daughter visited Albuquerque, New Mexico.

For more information about Friendly Computer Help, visit the website at www.clairegoodman.com, email to goodman156@comcast.net, or call at 510-918-9299.

◆ CARS from page 5

classic cars with historical materials in a museum-like setting, which included fascinating photographs of Orinda from days long past. Expanding on the historical aspect, this year's show will also include a special exhibit designed by Orinda resident and antique car expert Whitney Haiste. Haiste will highlight vehicles from the turn-of-the-century up to World War II, dividing them into brass, nickel or art deco eras. "I

didn't realize that cars were first made using brass before going to a less expensive nickel metal," says Herman.

Anyone interested in having a car considered for the Friday night auction or a car or motorcycle entered in the classic car show, contact Herman at chipherman@earthlink.net. The entry fees (\$50/car and \$35/motorcycle) are a tax-deductible donation. For additional information on the dinner/dance/auction and the car show, go to www.orindacarshow.com.

Sass considers Macbeth to be "one of Shakespeare's most intense, harrowing journeys" and said that the production team wants "to create a surprising, psychological thriller/horror show, and not a history pageant/morality play."

Audience members have the ability to attend a variety of special events in concurrence with the show. Here are just a few offered:

• August 7, audience members can meet directors, actors and designers at the Orinda Library at 7 p.m. Admission is free.

• Grove Talks, 20-minute informal conversations, will occur 45 minutes before each performance.

• Enjoy wine, beer, coffee, sweets and savories at 6 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday for free!

• On Thursday, August 26, audience members with special tickets will enjoy a backstage tour, hors d'oeuvres, wine and a catered dinner beginning at 5:30 p.m. Cost: \$45 (not including theater ticket).

For more information, go to www.calshakes.org or call 510-548-9666.

2010 Publication Schedule

Table with Issue and Deadline columns: Issue Sept 2010, October 2010; Deadline August 5, September 5

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BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 20

attractive placemats designed for your pet's feeding area in your home. The automatic water dish is very helpful for owners who travel a lot and don't want their pet to go thirsty.

You may think you have seen everything, but the Orinda Pet Shop offers training pants for puppies (for use during the house training phase) and hair clips for dogs. Gentle Earthbath shampoos and Frontline and Advantage once-a-month flea treatments may be purchased here as well. While taking pooch on a long hike, you may want to bring along a special doggie water bottle that is slim, easy to carry and features a small plastic bowl.

"We appreciate the loyalty of our Orinda customers who continue to shop locally. Customer service is our top priority, and we are happy to special order an item if it is not in stock," says Roobina Arakel, who serves as the buyer for the Orinda Pet Shop. "We give our customers our best effort every time and will match prices so Orindans don't have to travel for their pet supplies," she adds.

Once a month Canine Care, Inc. visits the Orinda Pet Shop and conducts anesthesia-free dental cleaning on dogs and cats for a fee. The Orinda Pet Shop is open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 925-254-8282.



VALERIE HOTZ

Ofra Weiss is passionate about design.

O. Weiss Designs

Orinda resident Ofra Weiss enjoyed a career as a stockbroker before shifting her

focus to what she is really passionate about in life and that is interior design. She is an Allied Member of the American Society of Interior Designers (A.S.I.D) and specializes in home and small business designs. Weiss operates her business out of her Orinda home, where she and her family have lived for the past 12 years.

"I was very fortunate as a young bride to work with interior designer Dale Neice when I did my first apartment in Chicago. I shopped with him and developed a designing eye through him. Nothing escapes my eye now, not even a blade of grass," says Weiss with clear enthusiasm. In addition to designing for friends and family over the years, Weiss has added an additional 1,800 square feet of design space to her home and has experience working with architects, builders and artisans.

"My philosophy is to create a comfortable and elegant living space that fits my clients' needs and lifestyle. I achieve this by sifting through my clients' dreams and hopes. We work as a team collaborating with the architect and builder to create that ultimate vision," says Weiss. Discovering a client's favorite color, his or her lifestyle and desires, along with other details enables Weiss to develop an elegant and comfortable interior living space.

"I really get to know my client well and enjoy building that relationship. Sometimes it is very hard to move on after a project has been completed because we have such a good relationship," laughs Weiss. "I inquire about their favorite play, book or vacation destination. I interview clients about how they want to function and feel in a space that I am designing for them. I like to integrate their personal items within the design so it reflects their personality," she adds.

Weiss studied interior design at Las Positas Community College while her children Lawrence, Evan and Richard were in school. All three sons are graduates of Miramonte High School. Weiss' husband Robert is a portfolio manager in Orinda. You might spot Weiss riding her Vespa around town. "I love riding my Vespa. It is so much fun," she says with a laugh. In her spare time, she enjoys visiting art museums, window shopping, and taking

walks at the beach.

In addition to designing interiors locally and in Truckee, Weiss does vacation home turn-key, which means basically everything is in place for the new homeowner, right down to sheets and towels. So passionate is Weiss about interior design, she is constantly educating herself on the subject and attending continuing education courses, which is required by the A.S.I.D.

For more information about O. Weiss Designs, call Ofra Weiss at 925-258-9722 or send her an e-mail at oweissdesigns@yahoo.com.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Claire Callahan Goodman solves your computer problems.

Friendly Computer Help

Claire Callahan Goodman established her business, Friendly Computer Help,

seven years ago after having already worked in the computer industry for 20 years, primarily as a senior database software engineer. Goodman works out of her Orinda home and is available to travel to clients' homes or small businesses. She is especially adept at helping solve computer issues for senior citizens.

"My specialty is listening to what a client needs and slowly going through their list and writing down instructions to enable them to use their PC or Apple computer or laptop. I am available by phone, and once our relationship is established, I can log on to their computer remotely using a password which is entirely in their control," explains Goodman. After meeting with every client at their home, Goodman will return as many times as necessary and will get on the phone with a vendor such as Dell, Intuit or Microsoft and resolve issues for clients. While she does not specialize in Apple, she is happy to troubleshoot problems for Apple owners.

Instructing clients on how to use applications, such as Quicken or Quickbooks, and for those who have not ventured into e-mail, introducing clients to using e-mail are additional services offered by Goodman. "I can help with any computer or printer problem and install or troubleshoot a wireless network. I can also instruct clients on their

[SEE GOODMAN page 18]

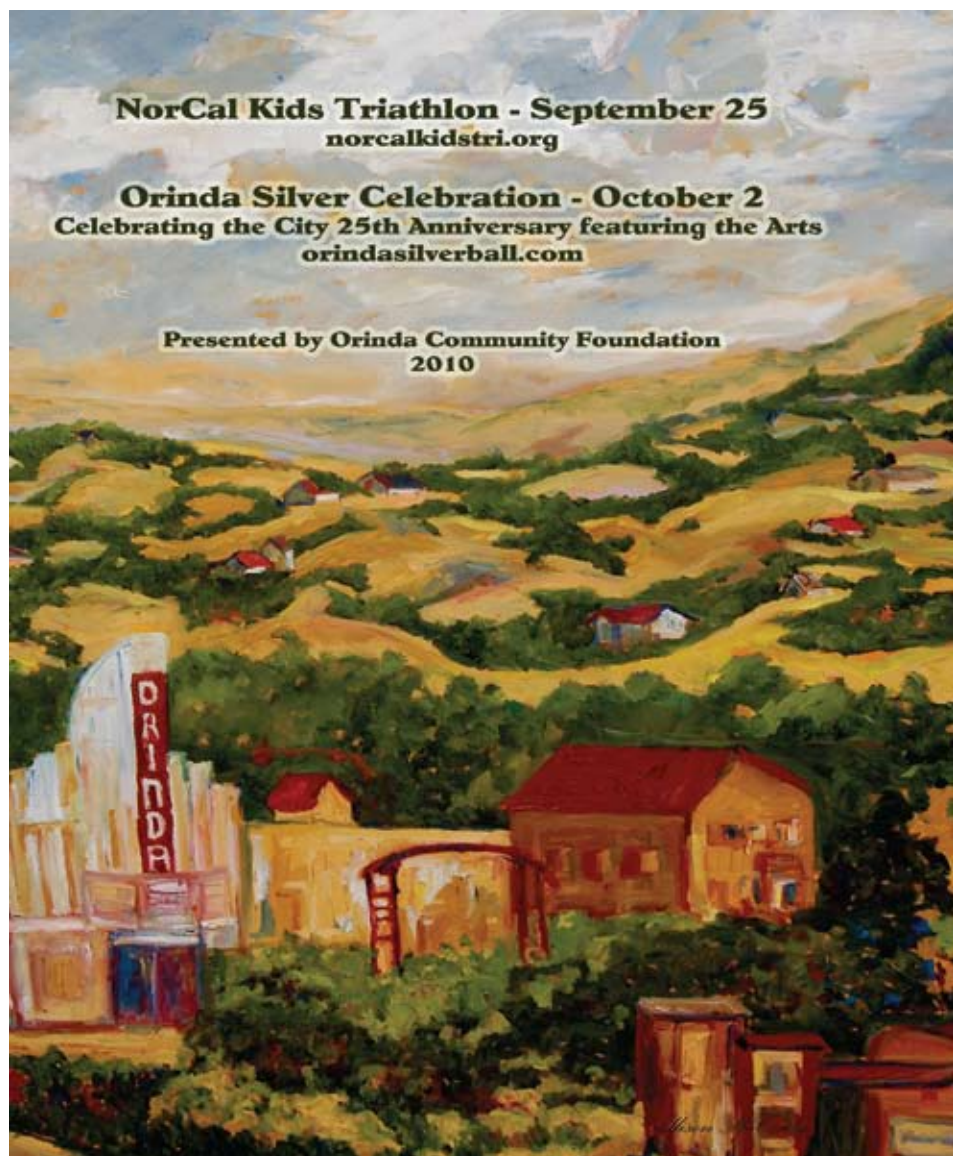


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IPL-Photo Genesis Rejuvenation Treatment for Rosacea, Sun Damage, Fine Lines
Laser Hair Removal
Microdermabrasion
Waxing

COSMETIC PROCEDURES AVAILABLE:
Botox Cosmetic Restylane Sclerotherapy
Collagen Peels

AVAILABLE SKIN RESTORATION SYSTEMS:
Procyte Jan Marini
MD Forte Glyquin

Business Buzz Putting a Personal Face on Local Business

Valerie Hotz



To send items for consideration, email Hotz at v.hotz@att.net.

Orinda Pet Shop Offers Warm Hearts for Cold Noses

This small business has been located on the backside (think Camino Pablo) and lower level of Village Square for over 21 years and continues to offer special order services for customers, in addition to the well-stocked variety of provisions for your pet's needs. Primarily focusing on supplies for dogs and cats, the Orinda Pet Shop also caters to turtles, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, rats, mice, reptiles and fish. Owners Razmik and Roobina Arakel bought the business in 2006, bringing a background of 31 years in the pet supply business. Razmik is quick to point out that having and caring for a dog or cat has been proven to be good for a human's health.

"We sell a lot of very good quality natural - meaning no additives or preservatives - organic and holistic dog and cat food, such



Roobina Arakel and her husband Razmik own Orinda Pet Shop.

as Holistic Select, Acana, Taste of the Wild, Wellness, First Mate, and California Natural. The can food options are Merrick and Evanger's," says Razmik. "What you see in the supermarket are typically by-product dog and cat foods," he adds.

There is a vast array of goods available here for your pet. Everything from soft, cushioned beds and kennels and crates to soft toys for small dogs and cats, back packs and life jackets for dogs, and everything in between. You will easily find a selection of collars and leashes, including the ever-popular retractable leashes and even a car seat for your dog to keep your best friend safe while motoring.

The selection of water and food dishes includes colorful ceramic as well as the standard shiny silver dishes. There are even

[SEE BUZZ page 19]

Mechanics Bank Community Partners Forum a Hit!



Mechanics Bank reaches out to local nonprofits. (clockwise from bottom left) Rauly Butler, Jessica Smith, D.D. Felton, Scott Peterson and Tony Kallingal.

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

According to Jessica Smith, Office Manager at the Orinda Mechanics Bank (MB), over 100 people representing 40 local nonprofits attended. The event took place on Tuesday, June 22, in the parking lot of the Orinda branch, 77 Moraga Way. A variety of flavorful hors d'oeuvres were provided by Orinda vendors including: Lava Pit Hawaiian Grill; La Piazza Pizzeria Trattoria; Petra Cafe; LaCocina Mexicana; Baan Thai Restaurant; and Geppetto's Caffe. The Wine Thieves of Lafayette offered tasty wines, and Wild Thyme of Walnut Creek also contributed.

On the dry-erase boards set up, event attendees wrote in their suggestions for how the Community Partners Program could better address their needs. Suggestions included: board training; website education; guidance training; database education; foster strategic partners, both for-profit and nonprofit to monetize the nonprofit mission in general; use social media networks effectively; foster networking

opportunities between nonprofits and local businesses; and have a MB manager guide nonprofits through the Community Partners Program including needs assessment and action steps to address those needs.

D.D. Felton, newly appointed chairman of Mechanics Bank and Orinda resident, represents the fourth generation of leadership in this family-owned bank. Felton applauded those attending, saying that they are "Quiet, dedicated individuals pulling the oars to make the nonprofit community in Orinda hum." Steve Buster, president and CEO of MB, reiterated the bank's mission statement, "We help people build prosperous communities as their trusted financial partner." Rauly Butler, senior VP of Retail Sales noted that MB reinvests resources in the community in micro ways such as the use of 10 wireless credit card machines, which nonprofits can borrow at no charge and the soft launch of an automated coin machine now in Orinda Hardware to benefit students. Locals can drop in their spare change, 100 percent of which goes to the Educational Foundation of Orinda

[SEE PARTNERS page 18]

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Committed to helping you achieve your mission. We have a history of doing what's right. Committed to helping people build prosperous communities as a trusted financial partner, we are proud to introduce **Community Partners**. A comprehensive program specifically designed for the benefit of local nonprofit organizations, **Community Partners** offers resources that can be customized to fit the specific needs of your organization.

With a unique understanding of nonprofits, we share a commitment to your vision and have developed dedicated resources for your organization. To learn more about the **Community Partners** program and the resources, tools and relevant insight into the challenges nonprofits face, visit www.MechanicsBankCares.com or your local Mechanics Bank office today.

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Jessica Smith
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