

THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis
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March 2011

The Frog Now Has Permanent Home in Library Fountain

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Thanks to park dedication fees, matching funds, and donations from the community, Orinda now owns *Outta Here*, Gale Wagner's frog sculpture in the library fountain and John Toki's *Springtime Whispers*, to the right of the stairs as you enter the Orinda Community Center.

The two sculptures are part of Orinda's Art in Public Places program, now in its fourth year. Since its inception, the outdoor art program has exhibited the work of 30 professional artists in the Orinda Library, Library Plaza, Community Center, and City Hall. All exhibited artwork is generously lent by regional artists and exhibited for a minimum period of one year. The program also presents public lectures by artists, curators and art historians, arranges tours to artists' studios and collectors' homes, and provides other educational opportunities.

In 2010, some artworks were retired and three new artists rotated in – James Moore's *Beholding*, a large female figure up against the wall of the library; Pat Syler's brightly colored 3 clay pipes, *The Unfolding Drama of the Blue Roofed House*, *The Amber House*, and *Solitaire*, and Peter Dreyfuss' *Big Red*, and *Samuri*. On March 10, the Art in Public Place Committee (APPC) is hosting a donor appreciation reception in the Library Gallery Room.

When it came time for the first pieces of art to be rotated out, an APPC survey made it clear that Orindans wanted the city to buy art and wanted it to be funded by restricted park funds along with a matching funds program through the City of Orinda.

[SEE FROG page 8]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

John Toki (far left) poses with his artwork *Springtime Whispers*. The piece, which is to the right of the Community Center entrance, was recently purchased thanks, in part, to a donation from the **Orinda Community Foundation**. Foundation members and this year's recipients are shown above at the group's first anniversary celebration. The foundation raised \$23,650, which went to a variety of organizations including Art in Public Places, Orinda Idol, the Orinda Starlight Village Players, Contra Costa Food Bank, and several school arts programs.



SALLY HOGARTY

Car Theft Created Havoc Along Orinda Streets

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

On January 25, an otherwise quiet afternoon turned to tragedy as a 27-year-old Hayward woman died behind the wheel of a stolen car as she fled from police. The incident occurred shortly before 2:30 p.m. at Camino Pablo and Miner Rd. when the woman, Christina Ramos, lost control of the Ford F-250 and hit a tree as well as a high-voltage power pole.

The resulting accident left live wires across the road causing road closures, power outages, and long lines of snarled traffic. One-way traffic on Camino Pablo

was not restored until 1:30 a.m. forcing motorists to circumnavigate windy, residential streets in order to reach destinations along Miner Rd. and Camino Pablo. The roads were open by noon on January 26.

The long delays and unfamiliar alternate routes frustrated many local residents, especially Wagner Ranch parents trying to pick up children. One local resident, Inez Hollander Lake, trying to reach her home via bicycle, had an accident as she pedaled down Camino Don Miguel (the designated detour), attempting to avoid frustrated motorists and potholes on the dark street. She ended up at the hospital needing 11 stitches. "I was practically pushed off the road by motorists in a hurry to get home or to Wagner Ranch, and as the roadway grew progressively rougher and darker, I hit a pothole and flew off my bike," recalls Lake.

"I know it was upsetting to local residents when they couldn't take their usual route home," says Orinda Police Chief Jeffrey Jennings. "But, we were under orders from PG&E not to let anyone on Camino Pablo until they could be sure the high-voltage wires were off."

The detour route followed Camino Sobrante/Camino Don Miguel/Los Altos and was recommended by Orinda's Public Works department. "There were several other possible routes that might have been easier to follow but because of various obstacles, or in the case of El Toyonal, a temporary bridge that Public Works didn't feel could handle the additional traffic, we went with the El Sobrante/Camino Don Miguel route," Jennings explains.

[SEE TRAGEDY page 18]

Tri-Teen Council Meets in Orinda



SALLY HOGARTY

The Orinda Teen Advisory Council joined with similar councils from Lafayette and Moraga to plan a variety of events and volunteer programs including a Community Blood Drive (March 5 from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.) at the Orinda Community Center, a dance in April (date not yet decided), and a Teen Movie Night (May 14) at the Orinda Library Auditorium. For more information, email orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com.

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(ABOVE ANN TAYLOR LOFT)

Chamber Presents Second Annual Comedy Night

By SALLY HOGARTY
Editor

Just in time to chase away the winter blahs, the Orinda Chamber of Commerce presents "Live at the Orinda." The second annual comedy night and fundraiser takes place March 11 at the Orinda Theatre. Doors open at 7 p.m., with Geyser Peak champagne available for purchase as well as the usual theater concessions. The show begins at 8 p.m. This year's event benefits the Educational Foundation of Orinda and The Orinda Arts Council.

The March 11 comedy extravaganza features six professional comedians, including two from last year. "Ed Tracey returns as our MC along with comedian Dan St.

Paul," says Chamber member and comedy night organizer Rick Kattenburg. "People just loved Ed and Dan last year so we had to have them back." Tracey, a master of many trades, was also the entertainment and marketing director for Tommy T's comedy clubs for many years. "Tommy puts together the comedians for our shows," Kattenburg explains. "I met him through my son, who was friend's with Tommy's son, and we really hit it off. I've always loved comedy and had wanted to find a way to bring more people into Orinda at night. Working with Tommy on a comedy night just seemed like a natural."

Kattenburg hopes locals, and especially young people, will turn out again this year for another night of laughs. "It's really a great date night, and we have a wonderful team of Chamber members working hard to make sure everything goes smoothly," he adds.

In addition to Tracey and St. Paul, this year's line-up includes Vic Dunlap, John Fox, G. King, and Denny Johnston. Known

as a class act, St. Paul has appeared on several episodes of "An Evening at the Improv" and "Comedy Central." He has also opened for such superstars as Jerry Seinfeld, Natalie Cole and Smokey Robinson, and even the San Francisco Symphony. "Those guys are great. I knew them back when they were just a garage band," quips St. Paul.

Dunlap, who says he honed his comedic skills in the army, has a long list of impressive performances including being a regular on "The Richard Pryor Show" and appearances in a number of movies. When not touring the country with his comedy show, he is a screenwriter and producer.

Nicknamed the Nick Nolte of comedy many years ago, Fox has appeared on "Norm Crosby's Comedy Shop," "Star Search," and "Showtime's Comedy Network" to name a few. Now, years later and 20 pounds heavier, Fox thinks he looks more like "Captain Kangaroo after a rough weekend."

A rising star, Vallejo's G. King began as the class clown and now dedicates his life



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Dan St. Paul brings his class act back to the Chamber's comedy night.

to making people laugh.

The headliner for the evening is popular funny man Denny Johnston. The winner of many comedy competitions, Johnston has appeared on "Make Me Laugh," "The

[SEE COMEDY page 8]

March Library Gallery Exhibit: High School Visual Arts Competition

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

March "roars in like a lion" at the Orinda Library Gallery with over 200 entries in The Orinda Arts Council's (OAC) eighth annual Visual Arts Competition. The artists' reception and award ceremony will take place on Wednesday, March 9, from 4 to 6 p.m. Cash prizes totaling \$2,550 will be made for First (\$300), Second (\$200), Third Place (\$100), and Honorable Mention (\$25). There is also a Best in Show/Voter's Choice award in three categories: 2D (paintings, drawings, printmaking, mixed media, collage), 3D (sculptures, ceramics, jewelry, construction) and photography, black and white and color; manual and all digital arts. Winners also receive a ribbon commemorating their accomplishment. There will be refreshments and music provided at the reception.

Eligibility requires high school students either attend high school in Orinda or live in Lafayette, Moraga or Orinda. Local professional artists judge entries in early March. The event is publicized through teachers at the various schools and they report that the event really engages students in their art classes, spurring them to complete a creative goal.

Teachers who help make this exhibit possible include: Karen Carbone, Susan Lane, Deb Taylor, Bear Begelman and Robert Porter from Acalanes; Deborah Hovey-Lacour, Jill Langston and Justin Seligman from Campolindo; Rosemary Jensen, Gavin Kermode and Susan McCauley from Miramonte; Karen Sanford from the Athenian; Aram Muksain and Gillian Bailey from Bentley School; Gretchen Garlinghouse and Christina Williams from College Prep; Michelle Avery and Harry Muniz from Head Royce; Kristin Lamoureux from Holden and Noel Williams from the Orinda Academy.

What does it take to hang an exhibit with artwork from 200 teenagers? Teamwork! Susan Garell, President of the OAC and chair of the event would like to thank this year's team of intrepid volunteers. "Everyone on the OAC Arts Board pitched in to be part of the VAC committee including: Gwen McNeilus and Lisa Johannessen (planning the reception); Susan Mautner (recruiting judges); Natalie Wheeler and Petra Michel (graphics for printed materials); Jane Greenthal (media and school relations); Cathy Wong (artwork drop-off); Kim Purcell (registration administration); Aubyn Seversen (online registration plat-

[SEE GALLERY page 18]

ORINDA ASSOCIATION

Get to Know the Orinda Association Board

Current OA president **Mark Roberts** has lived in Orinda with his wife Claire since 1993. They joined the OA in 1996, and Mark began his first term as president in 1998. Claire has also served on the OA board and was president in 2002-03. When not volunteering for the OA or serving on the city's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, Mark is a fundraising consultant for non-profit organizations.



Steve Meagher

A native Orindan, Vice president **Steve Meagher** moved back to Orinda with his wife April in 2003. They have been members of the OA since 2005 and both served as board members beginning in 2006. While April resigned from the board this year to have more time for teaching and taking care of their two daughters, she remains an active volunteer and this year will once again organize the park activities for the 4th of July celebration. Steve, along with April, founded Site Solutions, an ergonomic consulting firm for businesses.



Jim and Linda Luini

Long-time Orinda resident **Jim Luini** moved with this wife Linda to Orinda in 1972. They joined the OA in 1995 and Jim has been the OA treasurer since 1996. For many years, he could be seen at the BART station on July 4th organizing the parade entrants. Jim is a retired control systems engineer. He and Linda have two grown children. Linda is also an active volunteer especially with the Friends of the Orinda Library and the garden clubs.



Cindy Powell

Secretary **Cindy Powell** moved back to Orinda in 1988 (she had lived here in the early 80's as well). She started the salsa and cake decorating contests that were once a part of the OA's 4th of July celebration and



Chris Laszcz-Davis

was asked to join the OA board in 2005. Her now adult children Dean, Greg and Paige still help out at the July 4th parade while her husband Jon reports on the best floats and critiques the music.

Fourth of July chairperson **Chris Laszcz-Davis** has lived in Orinda for 23 years and has been an OA member for that length of time as well. She joined the OA board in



Bill Waterman

2010. As president of The Environmental Quality Organization, LLC, Chris specializes in environmental affairs, occupational health, safety, product stewardship, and operational integrity. Her husband Steve Davis is the founder of LaCroix Davis LLC, a building and environmental forensics firm. They have two grown children, Lauren and Grant.

Board member **Bill Waterman** is a native Orindan. He and his wife Marie, who helps run the OA's Seniors Around Town program and Volunteer Center, live in the home Bill grew up in. Bill has been an OA member for 15 years and joined the board 10 years ago. He is an attorney by profession.



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A Message From the OA President
Orindans Making Things Happen



Mark Roberts

I recently heard some terrific news at the monthly Mayor's Community Liaison meeting. More than 45 Orindans answered the call to serve on the city's commissions and committees that deal with many important functions of our local government and services. Mayor Victoria Smith reported that this was by far the largest response to this call to service in memory.

Many thanks to all who participated in the interview process as well as to those who were appointed. As a member of the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, I hope you'll enjoy the experience and the satisfaction that comes from serving the community as much as I have. I also want to thank Mayor Smith, City Clerk Michele Olsen, and all others who served on the interview panels that lasted an entire Saturday.

Wait – you haven't heard about the Mayor's Community Liaison meeting? It's a monthly gathering of representatives from local volunteer organizations and other agencies, such as school districts, presided over by the mayor, which makes

it possible for all these groups to promote their activities and learn what each other is doing. It's a great way to coordinate efforts and minimize calendar conflicts. It generally happens on the first Monday of each month and starts at 9 a.m. in the Sarge Littlehale Community Room on the upper level of City Hall.

For more info, visit the city's web site, www.cityoforinda.org, click on City Meetings and scroll down to Mayor's Community Liaison Meetings. If you're not sure if your group is represented, check with your leadership and ask.

Speaking of people who are helping our community, kudos to Jo Alice Canterbury and Efi Lubliner for their very successful efforts to launch the International Film Showcase at the Orinda Theatre. I attended the premiere screening of the first film in the series, *Max Manus* from Norway and enjoyed one of the most satisfying movie-going experiences I can remember. I'm re-

[SEE PRES page 8]



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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!

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

Letters to the Editor

Editor's Note: *The following letter is above our normal 400 word limit. It is in response to an earlier letter on leaf blowers. The earlier letter was allowed additional wordage with the caveat that anyone with an opposing view would also be allowed additional space.*

Why Not Eco-Friendly Blowers?

Orinda's Peter Segall's, et al, disdain of eco-friendly power-blowers is reminiscent of 19th century Luddites. Sadly, one cannot effectively use Segall's proposed labor-intensive, ancient sweep/rake technology to clean all the small stuff from brick, aggregate-concrete, furniture, pavers, bushes, gutters, mulch, gravel, decks, etc. - too many nooks and fissures. Broom bristles and rake tines just move many tiny things aside for winds to redistribute them. Blowers flush out offending items for disposal.

Msrs. Segall/Kendall propose Orinda emulate that weird and wonderful land of Oz somewhere over the western hills (AKA Berkeley) as blower-ban model. Take a ride along Ashby Ave. to observe results in that leafy place - many people simply don't sweep, resulting in a messier Berkeley.

Kendall showed a photo of a power-blower with sound-meter indicating 85 decibels (db) (measure of loudness) at the blower (source) at the recent City Council meeting. He failed to mention distance to listener's ears from the sound-source is crucial. The 85db number without distance is meaningless. Loudness decreases drastically with distance.

A principle of sound physics called the Inverse Square Law states db (sound) level decreases approximately 6db with each doubling of distance. Obstructions like bushes, fences, windows, etc. further reduce db levels. Moving away from Kendall's 85db source by just eight feet - even with no obstacles - drops sound level to about 66db for the listener.

Normal conversation level is 60-70db. At approximately 50' away from Kendall's 85db example, even without obstructions, sound level is almost equal to a quiet library - 50db. With obstructions even that number is much reduced. Levels below 75db, even if continuous over a long period, are not measurably harmful.

Our ban-folk accuse blowers of moving all sorts of things into the sky - to stay for many days. Unexplained is how this stuff defies gravity and doesn't fall back down. Even if somehow such stays up for awhile, do Kendall/Segall really claim that rakes/brooms don't do similar things?

Average winds in Orinda are 8-9.5 mph from May-September (prime blower-time). Indeed for those months, we are windier than the nation's average. For perspective: average winds in Hilo, HI 5.1 mph;

Livermore 6.8 MPH where wind-farms (Altamont) reside; Orlando, FLA 8.5 MPH (hurricane country). Speed variation is also important. Orinda often sees winds 25-40+mph. According to the internationally accepted wind measurement standard (Beauford Wind Scale), 13 mph winds will raise dust.

If we do not blow all this stuff (microscopic pieces included) into a pile for the recycle container, it sits there awaiting Orinda's winds. My power blower at best moves dust located 6-10 feet away and cannot remotely rival broad-based wind-effects.

Personal umbrage, non-disclosure of uncomfortable facts, condescendingly "clever" letters-to-editor, and unproved apocalyptic health claims are not a basis for good public policy.

It is not for 18,000 citizens and the City Council to discover what was omitted from Segall/Kendall's proposal. Proof of efficacy and full disclosure is their burden.

- Joe Moran

Road Safety in Orinda?

In the late afternoon of January 25 following the tragic accident on Camino Pablo near Miner Road, I and many other road users were stopped at the intersection of Camino Pablo and El Toyonal. I was on my commuter bicycle and since I live on Rose Lane, near North Lane, i.e. one street removed from where the accident occurred, I asked if I could walk to my house. I was told by two gentlemen who were assisting the police officer redirecting traffic, that I'd better get myself a motel room, because the accident was now a crime scene and the road closure would be maintained until at least midnight. I checked my bag and had about \$5 in cash, a \$2.20 BART card and no credit card, so I was faced with climbing and walking the hills in the dark to get back to my house.

I followed the Camino Sobrante /Camino Don Miguel detour, together with many motorists who, equally impatient to get home, practically pushed me off the road into drainage ditches and garden fences. I finally made it to the top of Camino Don Miguel. It was already dark as I started going downhill. I began to get a head of the cars as the road grew progressively darker and rougher. Just as I decided to get off my bicycle because I could no longer see the road adequately, I hit a pothole and was launched off my bicycle. To my relief, I did not break any bones. My chin was bleeding, but I arrived home in one piece. In the light of the kitchen, I saw that my pant leg was covered in blood, but as I rolled up my pants, I saw a hole so deep that I could see the white of my kneecap. This required 11 stitches at Kaiser's ER in Walnut Creek.

I reported the accident to the mayor, city council, Orinda police and Orinda public works. I did not file a claim for damages, and I do not want to sue, but I did want to



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tell the city about the poor condition of the roads in Orinda, and the equally poor street lighting. To the city's credit everyone, except for the Orinda police, responded with well wishes and promises to follow up.

As I was thinking about the incident and admiring the many bruises on my body, I realized that the real story is whether Orinda (and its unsafe and badly lit roads) can handle a much bigger disaster like,

God forbid, a significant earthquake along the Hayward Fault or a fire that requires evacuation. Clearly the entire town was discombobulated over January 25's incident, and the mess of that afternoon and evening may well be a warning signal that we are not prepared for anything bigger.

- Inez Hollander Lake, Ph.D.

[SEE LETTERS page 6]

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Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis and should be no longer than 400 words. They must include the writer's first and last name, signature and telephone number.

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For display advertising rates, call Jill Gelster at 925-528-9225 or email to jill@aspenconsult.net. The deadline for the May issue is March 20, 2011.

POLICE BLOTTER



POLICE BLOTTER

January 2011

False Residential Alarms: Officers responded to 74 false alarm calls throughout the city.

Burglary - Auto: 1 incident was reported on Davis Rd.

Burglary - Residential: 7 incidents were reported on Vianne Ct., Muth Dr., Alta Vista, Overhill Rd., Tahos Rd., El Toyonal and Canon Dr.

Domestic Battery - Injury of Spouse: 1 report was made.

Grand Theft - From Vehicle: 1 incident was reported on El Castillo.

Petty Theft - From Vehicle: 3 incidents were reported on Meadow Park Ct., Owl Hill Ct. and Sleepy Hollow Ln.

Recovered Stolen Vehicle: 1 stolen vehicle was recovered on Broadview Terrace.

Stolen Vehicle: 1 incident was reported on Holly Ln.

Arrests

Court Order - Domestic Violence: 3 arrests were made.

Driving Under the Influence - MISD < .08: 1 arrest was made on Camino Pablo at Hwy 24 WB.

Domestic Battery - Injury of Spouse: 1 arrest was made.

Drunk in Public: 1 arrest was made on Camino Pablo at Hwy 24 EB.

Receiving Stolen Property: 1 arrest was made on Camino Pablo at Claremont Ave.

Terrorist Threats: 1 arrest was made on Moraga Way.

Warrant Arrest: 4 arrests were made on Moraga Way, Camino Encinas, Brookwood Rd./Moraga Way, Camino Pablo/Manzanita Dr.

- Compiled by Jeanette Irving, Orinda Police Department

No U-Turn Sign Not Always Heeded



DAVID DIERKS

A van is seen making an illegal U-turn on Moraga Way despite having just passed the sign prohibiting left and U-turns.

By DAVID DIERKS
Staff Writer

Cars are still making illegal U-turns on Moraga Way at Southwaite Court in the early morning hours despite the prominent placement of a "No U-Turn" sign. Installed on January 14, the sign was to help alleviate the number of vehicles attempting to bypass busy Moraga Way by taking Ivy Drive. A "No Left Turn" sign had been installed at Moraga Way and Ivy Drive in 2000 after Ivy Drive residents had complained about the large number of Miramonte students and parents using the residential neighborhood to bypass busy Moraga Way. The neighborhood is also home to Orinda Intermediate School with its own traffic patterns.

Over the years, drivers have circumvented the "No Left Turn" sign by making a U-turn at Southwaite Court or Leslie Lane, causing neighbors on those streets to worry about the safety of children walking

to school. According to neighbors, as many as 150 cars have been counted between 7:30 and 8 a.m. making the illegal turns. "The irony is that placement of the sign restriction at Ivy Drive was never a matter of safety; it was just to prevent flow of traffic going to Miramonte High School," says Maria Campos. "Adding the sign on Southwaite Court only compounds the problem. The real solution is to temporarily remove the restriction sign at Ivy Drive and see the results."

According to Charles Swanson, the City of Orinda's Director of Public Works and Engineering Services, there are plans to do a traffic study on Moraga Way. "The project will evaluate the current traffic patterns on Moraga Way and the intersecting cross streets with an emphasis on the impact that school-generated traffic has on safety and flow. This study will also evaluate and recommend options for improving traffic and pedestrian safety and traffic flow," Swanson says.

Recycling Program Offers Rewards

By LOIS COURCHAINE
Contributing Writer

The City of Orinda has partnered with the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA) and leading green rewards program, RecycleBank, to offer residents incentives to recycle. With this new one-year pilot program, you earn points based on your residential recycling

efforts. Your points accumulate in your RecycleBank account and when you are ready to use them, you can redeem your points for rewards with Lamorinda businesses like Terzetto, Loard's Ice Cream, and Curves and such national retailers as Coca-Cola Company, Kashi, Nature Made, and others. For more information, visit the CCCSWA website at www.wastediversion.org or call 1-888-727-2978.

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CONTINUATIONS

◆ LETTERS from page 4

Orinda Is Not Subsidizing Moraga's Fire Services

I must respond to Janet Maiorana's recent letter since she repeats Steve Cohn's erroneous calculations purporting to "prove" that Orinda has been subsidizing Moraga's fire service. She claims, yet again, that Orinda has been subsidizing Moraga since the formation of the district in 1997, which is absolutely not true. One faulty assumption, using city boundaries, has resulted in totally incorrect conclusions.

Our city boundaries are not the same as the Moraga and Orinda "service areas" used by MOFD. All multi-city fire districts, including MOFD, ignore city limits and operate according to "areas of service." In

the case of MOFD, there are 700 Orinda homes, all of which used to be part of the old Moraga Fire District, included in the service area of the two Moraga fire stations. Logically, any accurate analysis of revenue and expenses must use the area of service, not city boundaries, in determining whether one area is subsidizing another.

If you use service area, not city boundaries, in your calculations, then the tax revenues collected in those 700 South Orinda homes should be accrued to the Moraga side of the ledger. Those 700 homes, plus those in the Town of Moraga, are paying the costs of running the two fire stations in Moraga. It could be argued that a significant portion of the tax revenues collected from the additional 800 Orinda homes that are "first due" for medical emergencies out of Moraga should also be accrued to the

Moraga side of the ledger, especially since more than 70 percent of MOFD's calls are medical emergencies. Perhaps, we should be arguing that Moraga has been subsidizing Orinda all this time?

In any case, every homeowner in California is paying the same 1 percent property tax rate. The people of Orinda are not paying a higher tax rate for fire or anything else. We are extremely fortunate that the citizens of Orinda and Moraga voted to tax themselves for fire service long before Prop 13 passed, or we would be in the same dire financial straits as Contra Costa Fire, Pinole Fire, and East County Fire Districts now find themselves. We are lucky that 19 to 22.6 cents of our 1 percent tax dollar is allocated to fire instead of other county services!

The City Council does not need to form yet another citizens' task force to study non-existent issues – again. How many times do we have to study FAIR's proposals and calculations? Citizens should take their concerns directly to our elected representatives on the MOFD Board – local control at its best. It is unreasonable and unrealistic to suggest we take revenues from MOFD and give them to the city. It is time to move on and find practical ways of generating revenue to re-build our roads and infrastructure.

– Ellen Dale

part of our capacity to build affordable apartments."

If Eden Housing is substantially dependent on redevelopment money – money that may disappear – Orinda residents ought to be informed.

The question must be asked: What would happen if Eden, while constructing low-income, senior citizen housing in Orinda, went broke? What would Orinda do with a partially completed housing project?

To date, Orinda has not sufficiently examined Eden's financial situation. It's time for Orinda to do some in-depth financial investigation of Eden.

– Richard S. Colman

Moraga Adobe Plan Dangerous


There are two parts of the proposed Moraga Adobe plan which could do extreme damage to all of Orinda. The first of these is the hazard of golf balls falling on the Adobe development from the adjacent elevated Moraga Country Club Golf Course. The capacity of these golf balls to cause injury is shown by the fact that the Claxtons, the former owners of the Adobe property, had to move their horses to another location because of injuries from falling golf balls. The developers have suggested planting trees as a solution to the golf ball problem. This might work 30 years from now but is useless in the present.

To have adequate golf ball protection a 50-foot high net must be installed by the developers and maintained by them for the next 30 years. Keep in mind that one of these falling golf balls hitting the top of the head of a young child could paralyze him for life. Since the City of Orinda allowed this known hazard, the city would be responsible for the cost of caring for the child, and this cost could bankrupt Orinda.

A second major hazard from the proposed development is that there is only one entry and exit road in the development and the development is on slide-prone land. An earthquake would very likely close the road of the development which would keep the fire trucks out and the residents trapped inside. If, as is likely, a fire breaks out, not only would the development burn but the immediately adjacent brush-covered hillside would ignite. This could quickly become a fire storm such as the Great Oakland Fire and burn down all of Orinda since the brush has never been cut on the western hillsides of Orinda.

The solution to this problem is to require a second road into the development. This road could connect to existing adjacent Dolores Way, a public road. The developer should make this connection.

– Clyde Vaughn



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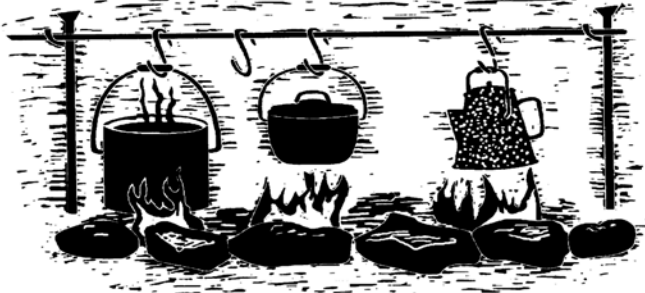
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CAR TIME / LOCAL AUTHOR

CAR TIME

Auto Warranties: Is Using the Dealer a Must?
by JOHN VANEK



Motorists who drive newer cars are often concerned about whether they are required to take their vehicles to the dealer for service while the vehicle is still under the factory warranty. The following is a press release from FTC (Federal Trade Commission) setting the record straight.

If you own a car, you know how important it is to keep up with routine maintenance and repairs. But can a dealer refuse to honor the warranty that came with your new car if someone else does the routine maintenance or repairs?

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency, says no. In fact, it's illegal for a dealer to deny your warranty coverage simply because you had routine maintenance or repairs performed by someone else. Routine maintenance often includes oil changes, tire rotations, belt replacement, fluid checks and flushes, new brake pads, and inspections. Maintenance schedules vary by vehicle make, model and year; the best source of information about routine scheduled maintenance is your owner's manual.

What is a warranty?

A warranty is a promise, often made by a manufacturer, to stand behind its product or to fix certain defects or malfunctions over a period of time. The warranty pays for any covered repairs or part replacements during the warranty period.

Do I have to use the dealer for repairs and maintenance to keep my warranty in effect?

No. An independent mechanic, a retail chain shop, or even you yourself can do routine maintenance and repairs on your vehicle. In fact, the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act, which is enforced by the FTC, makes it illegal for manufacturers or dealers to claim that your warranty is void or to deny coverage under your warranty simply because someone other than the dealer did the work. That said, there may be certain situations where a repair may not be covered. For example, if you or your mechanic replaced a belt improperly and your engine is damaged as a result, your manufacturer or dealer may deny responsibility for fixing the engine under the warranty. However, according to the FTC, the manufacturer or dealer must be able to demonstrate that it was the improper belt replacement — rather than some other defect — that caused the damage to your engine. The warranty would still be in effect for other parts of your car.

Will using "aftermarket" parts void my warranty?

No. An aftermarket part is a part made by a company other than the vehicle manufacturer or the original equipment manufacturer. Simply using an aftermarket part does not void your warranty.

The bottom line: be a good consumer. Read your owner's manual cover to cover. Understand exactly what your warranty is and what it covers. Use a licensed facility that you can trust and understand what routine maintenance is required to keep your warranty valid.

Orinda Native Celebrates Launch of Award-Winning Photography Book

By BECKY KRAEMER
Contributing Writer



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Orinda resident **Alexa Garbarino** has a new fine art photography book out and will do a signing at Orinda Books on March 26.

From Demi Moore's *Vanity Fair* cover to the recent controversy surrounding Miranda Kerr's nude pregnancy photo in *W Magazine*, there's been no shortage of celebrities who have "bared it all" while pregnant. But in her stunning new fine art photography book *RIPE: The Essence of the Pregnant Nude*, award-winning photographer Alexa Garbarino provides a fresh perspective on the power and beauty of the pregnant female form. Garbarino will be at Orinda Books on Saturday, March 26, at 3 p.m. to discuss and sign copies of *RIPE*.

An Orinda native, Garbarino's work has appeared on the covers of hundreds of books including Warner Books, HarperCollins, and Random House. She took her first official photography class many years ago at San Francisco State with fine art photographer Don Worth, who worked

with Ansel Adams.

The young photography student and some of her classmates decided to hold an [SEE AUTHOR page 8]



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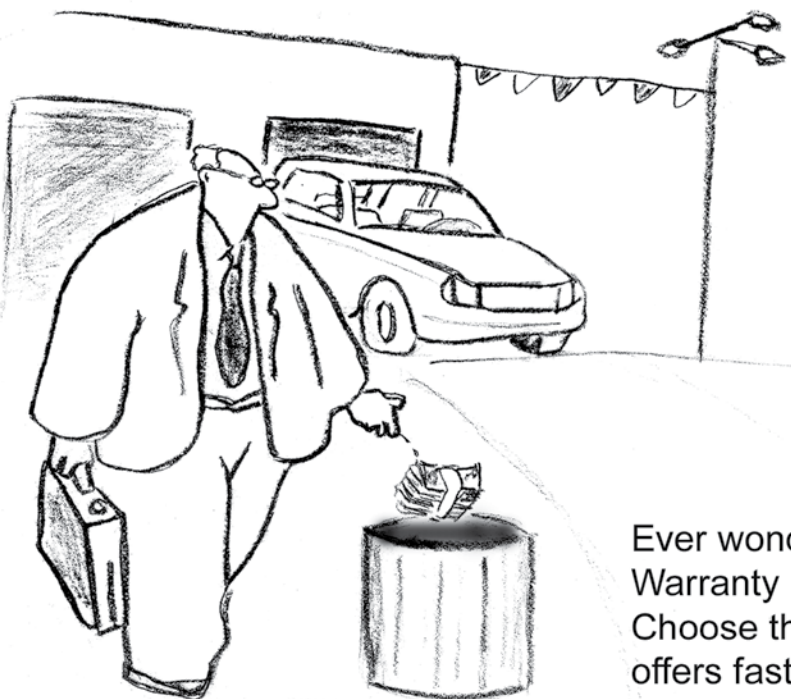
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CONTINUATIONS

◆ COMEDY from page 2

Tonight Show,” “David Letterman,” “Merv Griffin,” “Good Morning America,” and many more.

According to Kattenburg, every seat in the Orinda Theatre will be a great one. “We’ll have the comedians projected on the big screen as well as on stage so no matter where you’re sitting, you’ll be able to see everything,” says Kattenburg. “As the late *Lamorinda Sun* columnist Harriet Ainsworth said last year, ‘Orinda ain’t Borinda anymore.’”

Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door. Advance tickets can be purchased online at www.orindachamber.org or in person at First Republic Bank, 224 Brookwood Dr., Orinda. For more information, call 254-3909.

◆ FROG from page 1

Survey respondents listed the frog in the fountain and Toki’s piece as works they would like the city to purchase. The artists came down 25 and 50 percent of the initial pricing, which brought the total cost of these pieces to \$46,000; the City contributed \$20,000 in matching funds, and the APPC raised an additional \$26,000 from three major donors and various organizations including the Orinda Community Foundation, Friends of the Orinda Library, Parks and Recreation Foundation, and Orinda Rotary. “We are also grateful to the Orinda Arts Council for their support,” says APPC chair Ted Urban. “It’s worth noting that individuals who contributed between \$50 and \$2500 towards these purchases

and will be recognized at our event on March 10.”

The city also owns five donated pieces of art: Keith Bush’s steel artwork *Measure of Man*, Alison McCrady’s *Painting of Orinda* hanging in City Hall, Sharon Simpson’s donation of *The Sentinel* by Bruce Johnson, Ted Urban’s donation of Joseph Slusky’s piece *IO*, and Kevin Christison’s bronze, *Mother Reading to Child*.

According to Parks and Rec director Todd Skinner, the restricted park funds are generated by the Quimby Act (California Government Code §66477), which allows cities to exact fees to offset building on open space. The Park Department may only use those fees for improvements such as the purchase of parkland, artwork, and picnic tables. These regulated monies cannot be used for park maintenance, building or improvement of roads, or other capital improvements unrelated to parks and recreation.

Urban notes, “This is a true partnership between the city, the artists, and the people of Orinda. The city agreed to set aside approximately 10 percent of the fees collected by Parks and Rec as long as it’s matched by the community.”

For more information on the program or to become involved, go to www.art-spaceorinda.com or call Todd Skinner at 253-4202.

◆ PRES. from page 3

ally looking forward to the next film, *Illégal* from Belgium, which runs from February 25 through March 3 at the Orinda Theatre. Don’t miss it!

Let me extend my thanks to Jo Alice and Efi’s colleagues on the Lamorinda Film and Entertainment Foundation for recognizing an opportunity and giving movie lovers in Orinda and throughout the Bay Area the chance to see great foreign films, most of which are making their U.S. premieres right here! Visit www.lfef.org for more info.


Looking at a different aspect of the visual arts, be sure to visit the Library Gallery this month to view the entries in this year’s Student Visual Arts Competition. This program, being sponsored for the eighth year by The Orinda Arts Council, is open to all high school students who live or attend school in Lamorinda. The artist and awards reception is on March 9 from 4 till 6 p.m. in the Library Gallery while the exhibit will run from March 2 through 30. Come see the works of our talented local young artists so that you’ll be able to say “I knew them when.” For more info, contact vac@OrindaArtsCouncil.org.

Thanks to all these Orindans who are making things happen. Keep up the great work!

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◆ AUTHOR from page 7

impromptu exhibition in (the now defunct) Woolworths on Market Street because they had a huge frame department on the first floor. The only problem was that they neglected to ask permission before slipping their work into the frames. Ironically, it wasn’t a friend’s 11x14 portrait of a gun enthusiast holding a rifle that got them into trouble. It was Alexa’s hand-colored black and white photographs of naked Barbie dolls. The manager called the police demanding that the students be arrested. One of the officers, however, just shook his head and said to Barbarino “I guess he doesn’t appreciate art.”

Obviously, many others agree with the policeman as Barbarino’s work has won numerous awards. Most recently, she has been awarded First Place for Fine Art Book in the prestigious PX3: *Prix de la Photographie* Paris, France and, in the United States, the XTO Image Award for Fine Art Book and the Black & White Spider Award for Nudes – both for *RIPE*.

Her subjects in her latest work are normal women with normal bodies, posing nude in locations that are meaningful to them

– from Jen at the Golden Gate Bridge to partners Deirdre and Liz rowing on San Francisco Bay to Michelle and John at Lake Anza plus many others.


Adding to the striking portraits are the stories each woman tells in her own words, including the unique bond that develops between sisters who find themselves pregnant at the same time, the joy of pregnancy after struggling for years with infertility, and the simple desire to revel in the awe a woman feels for her body, whether she is carrying her first or her final child.

“Anyone who has ever been pregnant or plans to be will certainly be able to relate to many of the stories told in these pages,” says Pamela Redmond Satran, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Baby Name Bible*. “The images and stories in *RIPE* should be required viewing and reading for every woman and every man, too. You’ll never look at the pregnant body in the same way again.”

RIPE has already received many awards. “I wanted to create a book that people could appreciate artistically and also learn from in a personal way,” says Garbarino. “I am in awe of these brave women who chose to celebrate their pregnancies in the most personal and public ways.”

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ORINDA ASSOCIATION

Orinda Association Membership List

The following is a list of Orinda Association members as of February 8. The Board of Directors would like to thank all the members for your hours of volunteer help and for your financial support which helps us provide the following programs:

1. Orinda Volunteer Center - where students and adults can find meaningful volunteer opportunities.
2. Seniors Around Town - a wonderful program where local drivers volunteer to transport Orinda seniors to various appointments.
3. 4th of July Celebration - an old-fashioned parade with music and activities in the park.
4. *The Orinda News* - a monthly newspaper mailed free-of-charge to all residents and businesses.
5. Forums - public meetings/debates on issues of importance to local residents.

If you are not currently a member of the Orinda Association, you can join online at www.orindaassociation.org or by calling the office at 254-0800.

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SALLY HOGARTY

OA President Mark Roberts (R) presents Orinda Arts Council (OAC) President Susan Garell with a plaque recognizing the OAC as the 2010 Volunteer of the Year.

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| Richard Dudley | Leslie & Joan Enloe | |

[SEE MEMBERS page 10]

Member Profile

Mike and Cathy Reaves moved to Orinda in 1998 and joined the OA at the same time. Cathy joined the OA Board in 1999, served as president and also organized the 4th of July celebration. They have three children – one in Del Rey, one at OIS, and one at Miramonte. Both are extremely tech savvy with Mike a professional in software development for an Internet gaming company and Cathy a technical project manager for another Internet company.

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◆ MEMBERS from page 9

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SALLY HOGARTY

The 2010 William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award went to Orinda's four garden clubs: Montelindo Garden Club, The Junior Garden Club of Orinda, The Orinda Garden Club, and the Orinda Valley Garden Club. Representatives accepting the award are (L-R) **Lou Dunn** (Orinda Valley), **Katie Creighton** (Montelindo), **Linda Silver** (Junior Garden), and **Heather Dunne** (Orinda Garden).



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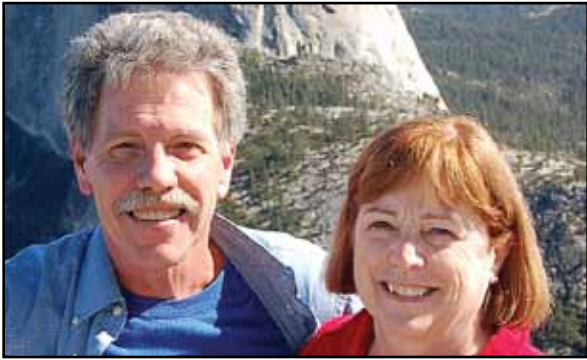
ORINDA ASSOCIATION

◆ MEMBERS 2 from page 10

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Member Profile



Bruce McGurk and Jan Cushman have lived in Orinda for almost 20 years and been OA members for over 10 years. Their daughter is in her second year at a PhD program at UC Santa Cruz and their son will graduating from UC Davis this spring. Bruce is a hydrologist for the City of San Francisco where he manages water from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, and Jan is a toxicologist and manager for Chevron. Jan also volunteered at last year's 4th of July celebration where she organized the booths in the park. Bruce has always been active in scouting and is currently Commissioner for Troop 233 and Pack 225.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
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DONATIONS/VISUAL ARTS/MOVE OF THE MONTH

Orinda Woman's Club Donations



SALLY HOGARTY

Thanks to proceeds from its annual **Festival of Trees**, the **Orinda Woman's Club** was able to donate over \$15,000 to both the **Monument Crisis Center** and to **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)**. (L-R) **Sandra Scherer** from the Monument Crisis Center, Orinda Woman's Club representative **Adeline McClatchie**, and **Charlie Mead** and **Gregg Chavarria** from CASA.

Move of the Month

Hop to Drop



This is a simple but effect circuit training move for strengthening your legs, glutes, abs and cardiovascular system. Holding a set of light weights begin by standing on top of a low step. Tap your right toe to the floor, immediately hop with both feet on top, and tap the left down and hop up again. Continue alternating toes, for 20, 30, 40 seconds and eventually 60 seconds. As you gain greater control try to increase the number of repetitions per unit time. Rest and repeat 2 more times.

Contact Sheena at Living Lean, 925-360-7051. Personal training and eating for fitness.

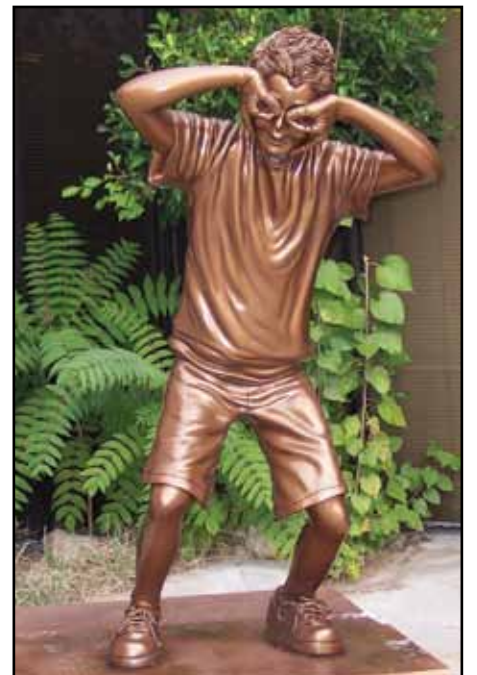
Moraga Gallery Features Orinda Artists

Orinda artists Beryl Glen-Reiland and Dorothy Gager currently have pieces of their art work at the Moraga Art Gallery in the Rheem Shopping Center (near CVS Drugstore).

Glen-Reiland's work, which includes a collection of landscapes, seascapes and flowers, along with several pencil sketches, will be shown through March 19. She will also show a set of portraits, some copied from old masters, others recently drawn from life. "I let pictures take form by letting my brushes move across the canvas, often without thought or predetermination," says Glen-Reiland. A native of Scotland, she studied art at the California College of

the Arts and the University of California at Berkeley, among other places.

Dorothy Gager's sculptures are also on display through March 19. A collection of her work in bronze, clay, and pastel paintings is part of the Moraga exhibit. "I love the feel of clay oozing through my fingers



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dorothy Gager's "Up in the Air," a life-sized bronze sculpture of Junior Birdman.

and I love pastel dust and the joy of putting layer upon layer of rich, pure color," says Gager.

For more information on the exhibit, call the Moraga Gallery at 925-376-5407.

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SCHOOLS / STUDENTS



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Girl Scout Troop 32300 recently made and donated blankets to Project Linus.

Holden High School – Celebrating Graduates and Serving Others



DAVID DIERKS

Holden High School students Jonathan Van Vliet, Albert Glancy, Farah Dinga and Shane Aldridge cooked and served dinner to Winter Nights shelter guests at the Orinda Community Church on February 17.

“As a parent of a non-traditional child who does not learn well in the standard classroom lecture environment, I saw my child blossom and achieve at Holden High thanks to the individualized attention,” said Jan Raymond. The high school graduate’s father beamed as several of the 80 people gathered for the January graduation reached for tissue boxes at the end of their row. Five students graduated in January – Simone Raymond, Zie Anderson-Colson, Tempest Spivey, Manav Ram, and David Johnson.

The tissues have come in handy at Holden graduations over the years, for friends, family and staff, even for strangers. One year, two members of the Orinda Community Church, which has graciously housed Holden since 1970, came to graduation just to find out about the school and were moved to tears by stories of challenges overcome, academic and practical skills learned, and the personal accomplishments and future plans of the graduating class.

Holden High School, formerly Contra Costa Alternative School, has been educating, inspiring and changing the lives of teens for over 40 years, said Kristin Lamoureux, one of the six co-directors. “We are the only truly alternative and progressive high school in the Bay Area.

The school also believes in giving back and every year students help load and unload supplies when the Orinda Community Church hosts Winter Nights, a rotating homeless shelter for families. This year, two student council members, Jon Van Vliet and Farah Dinga, asked if they could make dinner one night for the families. Both students have worked in the food service industry and love cooking. Joel Weber, Co-Director and student council advisor, asked the Winter Nights organizers, and on February 17, the shelter guests were served coq au vin, salad, and red velvet cupcakes, all prepared and served by Holden High School students.

– Kristin Lamoureux

Girl Scouts Make Blankets for Needy

The 22 juniors of Girl Scout Troop 32300 (at Del Rey School in Orinda) recently made and donated two dozen fleece blankets to Project Linus, a national organization that accepts new handmade blankets for children who are in need.

“The girls were very moved by the fact that there are children their own age who are in the hospital, or living in a foster home, and who would be comforted by something as simple as a blanket,” said Sarah Lee, the parent who organized the project for the troop. “This was an extremely positive community service project for our troop,” said troop leader Mary Friese. “The girls were able to do it all themselves – including budgeting, shop-

ping, and actually creating the blankets. It was very rewarding for them!”

The girls voted to use some of their earnings from cookie sales to buy the material for the blankets, collectively deciding to forego the usual sales incentives in favor of having more money to spend on the project. They then selected the material, and each girl made her own blanket that was given to a Project Linus volunteer to be distributed to a child in need.

“That was the hard part,” laughed Lee. “Many of the girls did not want to let go of ‘their’ blanket when it was done!” But let go they did... and now the blankets are on their way to children in need.

– Mary Friese

One Boy Scout’s Experience

By WILL KNOX
Boy Scout /Orinda News
Volunteer

Troop 237 has been an amazing experience for me, from the exciting troop meetings, to the amazing trips. One trip I really enjoyed was the Russian River canoe trip. I was only there one out of two days but one day was enough to reach my excitement level! Camping and canoeing mixed together made the perfect Boy Scout trip.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Will Knox worked on his Citizenship in the Community merit badge by volunteering at the Orinda Association’s *The Orinda News*.

I started Boy Scouts when I finished the 5th grade. I worked my way to Scout rank and later to Tenderfoot rank in my first six months. I have worked on several fun merit badges, including Fire Safety, Golf, First Aid, and Winter Sports. I am also working on a merit badge called Citizenship in the Community. This is a very challenging merit badge that is usually for older scouts. But with the help of Wick Smith and the Orinda Association, I took on the challenge. I worked a hard eight hours at the Orinda Association organizing files and documenting data from recent editions of *The Orinda*

News. For me, it was a great way to catch up on Orinda history and recent events.

As I continue with Boy Scouts, I look forward to volunteering more time with the Orinda Association. Troop 237 is a boy-run troop. This means the scoutmaster watches us as we do the work and run the meeting. There is still a long run for me until Star, Life and Eagle Scout, but I will never stop looking forward to the day I will be an Eagle Scout – the day I will get my badge, the day I will be known in the newspapers as a new Eagle Scout.

I think any boy who has completed 5th grade should consider joining Orinda Troop 237 or the other Orinda Boy Scout Troops. It’s an amazing experience for me and should be the same for you.

Will Knox is currently a 6th Grader at Orinda Intermediate School.



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Finding a College is a Manageable Process if you Start Early

By CHRISTINE TEMPLE-WOLFE
Contributing Writer

Students enjoying the nuances of high school will often be focused on trying out for sports teams, navigating the demanding course work, and preparing for driver's training. According to Josie Kelley, a local College Admissions Advisor, if you start your research about degrees, colleges and careers early, you can avoid a tremendous amount of stress, and help your child develop valuable life skills one can't learn in the classroom or in a textbook.

Kelley, who received her professional certification from UC Berkeley in 2010, recommends that parents begin the discussion with teens during their sophomore year in high school. "If you plan ahead and begin organizing your approach, you will be able to pace yourself through the

process," said Kelley.

According to Kelley, sophomores are more focused on the future; selecting coursework that meets requirements and thinking ahead to life beyond high school. In addition to coursework, this is the year to also decide which extracurricular activities they are going to focus on. Whether students are passionate about performing arts, sports, or volunteerism, combining extracurricular activities with a solid academic curriculum helps the student grow and develop as a person, something colleges like to see.

Miramonte High School senior Hannah Tennant started looking at schools last April. Tennant went through an informal assessment with Kelley that helped her to identify size, location, school characteristics, and nail down factors that were important to her. "I knew that I wanted to stay somewhat close; generally on the West Coast. I love the outdoors, and I didn't want to stay in California because of the state budget situation. So I set my sights on the Pacific Northwest," said Tennant.

Tennant and Kelley approached the task of fielding a list of good-fit schools in a systematic way that helped Tennant manage the work without putting the burden on her parents. The goal was to identify a few reach schools just outside of her academic profile, a few schools they refer to as "safety schools," which are schools that offer a good chance of admission, while being good back-ups. And finally, the "probable" schools, which are the schools that are most in alignment with all the student's selection criteria and academic profile.

While all four years are important, some schools look harder at your sophomore and junior years. So by getting students engaged in the search process early, they will be more invested and focused on academic performance versus all the other teenage distractions.

A lot of investigative research can be

done in advance of a decision. The following steps can better help guide parents and students in their search for colleges.

Internet assessment tools, such as collegeboard.com, CaliforniaColleges.edu, or a high school based online software or site such as Naviance, are a good place to start. Assessments ask a series of questions which help identify students' likes and dislikes and help map their personalities to their core strengths.

Purchase books that discuss the kinds of careers and income a student is interested in. There are also books that provide an overview on college environments and their surrounding communities (*Fiske Guide to Colleges* or *Princeton Review's "The Best Colleges"*).

Work with a list of 15-20 or so campuses that are the most approachable based on program reputation, degree offering, financial aid packages, weather, surrounding community, and distance from airports to home.

During the spring break of the sophomore year, plan a family vacation that includes visiting several campuses. Budget permitting, Kelley recommends planning several trips to allow your student the opportunity to see firsthand what the campuses have to offer.

The final school list should represent a range of admissions selectivity. Some schools select 20 percent of applicants and some select 80 percent. During the Junior year, plan the testing schedule. The PSAT, SAT, and the ACT, are critical to their ability to have choices. There are practice tests to help students improve in subject matter areas and help them acclimate to long testing periods. (It is important to know that most colleges accept both the SAT and the ACT and some kids do better on one than the other.)

Keep visiting campuses. Now is the time to start forming a short (top 10) list by inquiring for literature and researching school websites. The schools need to know

Friends New Website

The Friends of the Orinda Library are online! Learn about library events, volunteer opportunities, monthly book sales and more: www.friendsoftheorindalibrary.org.

The Friends also have a Facebook page! It's a great place for readers to be more interactive with the Friends, post a quick recommendation about a great book or ask other Friends for book suggestions -- a place where Moms of new readers can get advice from other FB moms about good reads for their kids.

who is interested so they can market to the right families. Calendar the student's top 10 college fairs, as well as scheduling visits to the schools.

If you aren't sure how much you can afford, there are financial advisors to walk you through your options. Parents can get a preliminary estimate of what they will be expected to pay for college, known as the Estimated Family Contribution (EFC), by using an online estimator tool such as Collegeboard.com or finaaid.org.

Prepare students to apply to eight to 10 colleges that have been identified as a good fit academically, socially and geographically.

Dedicate at least a couple of hours a week during fall of senior year to completing applications and writing essays.

Parents can easily fall into bad habits of conflicting with their teenager during this time. Try not to bump heads and allow stress to affect the relationship.

Kelley not only works with students one on one, but she also counsels parents by encouraging them to be in a support role -- to be encouraging, but not take the reins. "It has to be the student's decision. Parents have already had their chance to go to college, now it is their child's turn. Let them make the decision that is best given your budget and their opportunity" she said.

For more information on the college admission process, contact Josie Kelley at josiekel@yahoo.com.



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Miramonte Senior Wins Oratorical Contest

Miramonte's Anastasia Kaiser has won the American Legion Oratorical contest held by the Ninth District of the American Legion for her presentation on the U.S. Constitution. She is a student in Kristen Plant's public speaking class at Miramonte High School. A candidate from American Legion Post 517, Kaiser went on to compete in the area competition held in Pacifica on February 19.

— Sally Hogarty



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Anastasia Kaiser (R) with American Legion District Commander Gilbert Klingman.

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The Volunteer Spirit



Sara Duplancic

For a government class project in early December, I attended a meeting for Lafayette's Environmental Task Force. Our assignment was to make contact with a local governmental agency and follow an issue relevant to that agency over a period of time. The purpose was to learn more about the framework of our local government, but many students brought back something far more important: an idea on volunteerism.

It's true that it is difficult for the ordinary citizen to influence or impact decisions made at the national level. But even so, the power to change things in one's community is not solely dependent on the decisions made in Washington or even, in our case, Sacramento. In fact, with the countless numbers of local governments and the wide array of services they provide, their power holds much more gravity over the everyday lives of the people in their communities.

We should be thankful that we have legislation in place like the Sunshine laws, which allow for public access to government information and a more transparent government. WikiLeaks aside, transparency between the citizen and the government is good, and unarguably so in the sense that, since Lincoln's 1863 Gettysburg Address, our government has always been intended to be by the people, for the people, and of the people. But if we do not exercise our right to change the way things work in our community, then our community will change the way things work for us. In other words, we should not view involvement in local government with apathy because as Plato puts it, "one of the penalties of refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors."

The foundation for building active and positive citizen engagement begins with volunteerism. An expectation of reimbursement clashes with the expectation to change things. With time and evidence of positive action, funding will generously come. Many of our local committees, agencies, and commissions, the Environmental Task Force included, are voluntary entities established by people who care about the future well being of their cities and who understand that they can deliver changes that their friends and neighbors want to see. These same people are the one's with the can-do attitude and volunteer spirit. They know that progress does not happen without it. The best part is that it can be you or me. We are so lucky to have this effective system that allows everyone to hold power.

So if as many of us who claim to un-

derstand the importance of volunteering really do care, when was the last time you attended a BART meeting, an Orinda Council meeting, or even a Caltrans meeting for the Caldecott Tunnel's fourth bore? The point is that if we don't practice what we preach, we end up tossing our values into the bonfire.

Whether you want more bike trails or more sustainable lighting in schools, a local committee, organization, group or agency exists for you to voice your opinion. Volunteer work comes in all shapes and sizes. By becoming more engaged in all the facets of our community, we can form a more perfect and livable environment.

America's story has always been one of volunteers. Everyday citizens step forward for change, strengthening our nation one community at a time. Every one of us has a role to play in making our communities and our country stronger. To expand the impact of volunteers on our community's challenges, step up and be a part of the solution. And remember that ordinary citizens can do extraordinary things.

Presidential Scholar Candidate



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Senior Qi Ho.

Orinda resident Qi Ho has been selected as a candidate for the 2011 Presidential Scholars program, which recognizes our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. Ho, who attended Del Rey, Orinda Intermediate and Miramonte High School before transferring to The College Preparatory School in 11th grade, is the only candidate from Orinda. In April, the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars reviews the applications and selects up to 121 academic scholars and up to 20 arts scholars. The winners receive an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. to meet with government officials, educators, authors, and others.

Miramonte High School is Off to See the Wizard



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miramonte students are off to see the Wizard. (L-R) **Max Fleer** (Scarecrow), **Neris Newton** (Dorothy, who alternates with Jacqueline Garell in the role), **Sofie Woodlee** (Glinda), and **Connor McCormick** (Tinman). Kneeling is **Carter Soso** (Cowardly Lion).

By CATHERINE SOSO
Contributing Writer

Follow the yellow brick road for a great time as Miramonte students perform *The Wizard of Oz* March 17 - 26. Most stage productions are based on the film, but Miramonte adds new twists in its version based on the book.

Remember Dorothy, the girl from Kansas who finds herself in a new land following a tornado? Did you know that Dorothy's shoes were originally silver and not ruby red? Or that the yellow brick road was made of real gold? Baum's original story also featured *The Land of Oz* as a real place and not a dream location. In later books, Dorothy brought Auntie Em and Uncle Henry there to seek refuge from the delinquent mortgage on the new house they built (after the destructive tornado).

Producer Petra Michel has cast two talented actresses to play the part of Dorothy on alternate performances. "Dorothy is in

nearly every scene. Can you imagine if the actress got sick or injured? The musical would be a disaster," Michel says. The cast is comprised of students who are enrolled in either drama or choral studies. They auditioned in November and began rehearsals in December of last year. Apart from the 35 students on stage, another 25 students work equally hard handling all technical aspects of the show.

[SEE WIZARD page 18]

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Starting School in China a Daunting Experience

By JULIE MCCORMACK
Contributing Writer

This is the second in a series of articles written by Julie McCormack on life in China. The Orinda mom, her husband Michael, and two children (9-year-old Conor and 8-year-old Erin) have moved to Chengdu, China for the year.

After a few weeks in Chengdu, our kids started school. At the end of day one, we got an earful. Conor was teary-eyed, saying it was the worst day ever: he couldn't understand anything, the food was horrible, and it was raining so they did not have recess. Erin complained that the boy next to her kept poking and hitting her, the food was awful, and there was no English spoken. I told the kids they could have anything they wanted, and they both opted for big bowls of coffee ice cream (Michael knew it was bad when I told him they could have anything to eat!).

Each day since then has been marginally better, although the Mandarin immersion still proves very difficult. Erin's teacher called me three out of the first four nights



JULIE MCCORMACK

Erin Roemer demonstrates her noodle-cooling technique.

of class to check on Erin, see how she was doing, and explain what they did in class. Conor's teacher called me the first night and texted a couple other times. A few times I have received texts from the Room Parents, and it has taken me at least 1/2 hour to translate because they are in Chinese.

After a month, school did not seem to be improving. One morning Erin told me she was "Not going to school!" We cajoled her and she came around. Then when we

got to campus, Conor became dejected, ambling along with his head down. I asked him what was wrong and he said, "Nothing!" When we got to his classroom, he almost started crying so I asked his teacher if he could sit outside for a while and read *Harry Potter*.

Both Michael and I have found it heartbreaking to watch our kids struggle with this adjustment. It is very difficult to know that we are choosing this - unlike other people who may have been sent here for a company or job. I believe that we still have many painful weeks of transition left for the kids and that will not be easy. When they are under stress, they fight more, cry more, and act up more.

However, there are bright spots. One day this week when Erin was helping me cook dinner, she asked if we could pretend we were two Chinese girls walking down the street. We play-acted, and I asked her questions in Chinese such as "What is your name?" "What country are you from?" "How old are you?" "Where do you live?" "What are your favorite colors?" She could answer most of them. Erin is much more likely than Conor to come home from school and ask me what something means, like "gan ma?" (slang for what are you doing?) or "gei ni" (give you).

With both Michael and me home during the day, we have gone out to many lunches together. We always opt for cheap noodles and dumplings. One day we went to a Lanzhou Pulled Noodle restaurant nearby (Lanzhou is a city in northwest China). The restaurant was not easy to find as it is tucked down an alley with a tire repair shop next door. The noodle maker is very friendly and, like most of the pulled noodle makers, he is a Hui (Chinese Muslim). Michael and I were treated to a demonstration of making the noodle dough. We were fascinated and Michael later commented that he would like to become an apprentice noodle maker. I told him that in China he probably could.

Another interesting sight along the streets that Michael and I have both noticed around lunchtime is what I'll dub the "portable wok man." This is a man or woman who shows up around lunchtime at businesses with a few employees. He brings his wok, his heat source, and meat and vegetables. He sits on a little stool and cooks up a meal for the small business. In some cases, if it is a family-owned business, it is just the owner doing this job. In other cases, it is a business in itself, and the portable wok



JULIE MCCORMACK

Conor Roemer greets his teacher before entering his classroom in a Mandarin immersion program.

man makes his way down the street from business to business. I love the concept! I wish we had this at home.

Friday night we attended a potluck at "Marine House." Marine House houses the small contingent of Marines who guard the U.S. Consulate here. Their house is a three story single family home in China Gardens, one of the nicer housing developments. They have a bar, gym and game room and frequently host parties. The crowd was mostly U.S. Consulate employees and their families as well as a handful of other Americans. We met a couple who had also been in Chengdu just one month. They have three kids and had been living in Maryland the past several years. But before that, they'd been in Brazil and South Africa. Before we came to Chengdu, I told Michael he'd be amazed by the interesting people we would meet. We meet new people almost every day and all the expatriates have incredibly interesting stories of where they have lived and what they have done. One thing I'm constantly struck by in Chengdu is how long most of the Westerners have lived here. By definition, Westerners living in China are transient. Yet, almost everyone we know in Chengdu has been here several years on up to five or six. Many of them work for companies like Intel or NGOs and others have varied stories. Folks love Chengdu and want to stay here once they come.

After the kids had been in school for a month, we found a Chinese teacher for Michael, and he began formally studying Chinese. It is tough, but he is very motivated. Conor continues to be lukewarm about speaking Chinese, while Erin asked me one day last week to speak to her only in Chinese. It was amazing how much she could understand simply by knowing the context and understanding a couple words

in a sentence. My love for China and Chinese culture and the challenge of trying to puzzle it all out is starting to resurface. I was beginning to think I had lost it, but at a recent Kindergarten opening (reconstructed after the 2008 earthquake) I attempted to understand all the speeches that were made in Chinese before they were translated into English. I still have a long way to go, but it was gratifying to see that I could get the gist of it.

This week we had to pay a couple of bills. Paying bills does not entail writing a check and sending the payment in the mail, nor does it mean paying electronically online. Instead, one must take one's last bill or card and go to a pay station. I had already paid our Internet bill once. Then, this week I got a phone call with a recorded voice saying that our bill was now due. So Michael and I traipsed over to the closest China Telecom office - about a 15 minute walk from our apartment - gave them our last bill and paid in cash. No checks or credit cards accepted. China is still a predominantly cash society.

We became aware of this again when we planned a trip to Vietnam. We booked our air tickets from Chengdu to Hanoi through a local travel agent recommended by one of our new friends. When the time came to pay (again only cash accepted), she arranged for one of her employees to meet us near our local supermarket. We made contact and she handed us the e-tickets; we then handed her a large wad of cash. We were out in the open on a busy street, and she was a short, young Chinese girl. Both Michael and I cast furtive glances to each side as she began to count the wad of cash. In China, the largest denomination of money is 100 yuan or \$15. Our tickets came to over 10,000 yuan, so she was counting over 100 bills. We asked her if she was worried about doing this deal out in the street and she said no. Then, we needed change and she waved over her colleague. He looked about 16 and also wasn't a big guy. She laughed and told us that was why she wasn't scared. We looked at each other and were both thinking that he wouldn't be a lot of help if she got jumped. Everything went fine, and we assume she got back to the office with all the cash. She told us that Chengdu is pretty safe but that we should still be careful. Maybe most Chinese carry so much cash on themselves that our transaction didn't elicit any interest.

One night Conor's homework was to count the number of grains of rice in a small bowl. This seemed a daunting task, so we just roughly estimated. Before we started counting, Michael, Conor and I all guessed the number would be a few hundred. It ended up topping 2,500! When counting grains of rice, like acclimating to life here, I keep in mind a common Chinese phrase, "man, man lai" (slowly, slowly come).

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CALENDAR

ON THE CALENDAR

MARCH

- 1 **Moraga Art Gallery's** current show through March 19 features two Orinda residents, 570 Center Street, Rheem Shopping Center.
- Lamorinda International Film Showcase Series, *Illegal***, a film about an illegal Russian immigrant living in Belgium with her young son living in fear of deportation, through Mar. 3, Orinda Theatre. Go to www.lfef.org or purchase tickets at theater box office.
- 3 **Orinda Books** presents *Sisters in Crime*: Penny Warner, Diana Orgain, Cara Black and Shirley Allen, who will discuss and sign copies of their latest mysteries, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. Call 254-7606.
- 4 **First Friday Forum**, Prof. Charles Faulhaber, director of UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library, 1:30 p.m., LOPC, 49 Knox Dr., Lafayette. Call 925-283-8722.
- 5 **Community Blood Drive**, sponsored by the Orinda Teen Advisory Council, Orinda Community Center, Room 9A, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Walk-ins welcome but prior registration is encouraged. To register email orindateenadvisorycouncil@gmail.com.
- 7 **California Shakespeare Theatre** is accepting registrations for its 2011 Summer Shakespeare Conservatory for students 8 to 18 years old, open house at Bently Upper School, 1000 Upper Happy Valley Road, Lafayette, 6:30 p.m., 510-809-3293 or email learn@calshakes.org.
- 9 **Parents of Orinda Individuals in Special Education (POISE)** will meet from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. To RSVP or for more information, email tague6@comcast.net.
- 11 **Orinda Chamber of Commerce's** Comedy Night, 2nd Annual Live at the Orinda, featuring six top comedians, 7 p.m. reception, 8 p.m. show, Orinda Theatre. Advance tickets at www.orindachamber.org or First Republic Bank, 224 Brookwood, Orinda. Call 254-3909.
- 15 **World Affairs Book Group** will discuss *Inside the Kingdom: Kings, clerics, modernists, terrorists, and the struggle for Saudi Arabia* by Robert Lacey, Orinda Books, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. Call 254-7606. New members welcome.
- 17 **Miramonte High School, *The Wizard of Oz***, 7:30 p.m., also Mar. 18, 24, 25, 26 at 7:30 p.m. and Mar. 20 at 3 p.m., Miramonte High School Theatre, 750 Moraga Way. Tickets at www.showtix4U.com.
- 18 **Lamorinda Film and Entertainment Foundation (LFEF)** presents *Red Like the Sky* at the Orinda Theatre. For details go to www.lfef.org/showcasetickets.
- 19 **Re-Connecting Workshop**, based on the work of Joanna Macy, Orinda Community Church. Call 254-4219 or 254-4906.
- Hearst Art Gallery's** re-enactment of Civil War, St. Mary's College Intramural Sports Field, canon firing, fife and drums, horse-drawn wagons, noon to 4 p.m.
- 25 **Holden High School** annual fundraiser "Cabaret" 7-9:30, call 254-0199 or www.holdenhigh.org; tickets are \$10 for presale and \$15 at the door.
- 26 **Paper Shredding** event benefits Lamorinda Adult Respite Center (LARC), Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, 433 Moraga Way, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call Beth at 254-3465.
- Orinda Books** presents Alexa Garbarino discussing her new fine art photography book *RIPE: The Essence of the Pregnant Nude*, 276 Village Square, 3 p.m. Call 254-7606.

AT THE LIBRARY

All events are free unless otherwise specified. The library will be closed March 31 for furlough.

- 1 **Origami for Everyone**, learn how to fold boxes and animals in this Japanese paper art. Suitable for ages 7 and up, Tutoring Room, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Also March 8, 15, 22 and 29.
- Berkeley Repertory Theatre** docent will discuss the theatre's current production of Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Ruined*, Fireside Room, 7 to 7:55 p.m. Adults only.
- 5 **Book Sale** hosted by Friends of the Library, Bookshop and Sorting Room, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 8 **Toddler Lapsit**, stories, songs and fingerplays for 1- to 3-year-olds and their caregivers, 10 to 10:30 a.m. and 10:30 to 10:55 a.m. Also March 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29 and 30. Attendance limited to once per week.
- Peek-A-Boo Time** with songs, stories, rhymes and rhythm for newborns through 1-year-olds and their caregivers, 11:30 to 11:55 a.m. Also March 15, 22 and 29.
- 12 **Saturday Morning Live**, storytime for 3- to 5-year-olds and their caregivers, Picture Book Area, 11 to 11:30 a.m. Also March 19 and 26.
- 16 **Argentine Tango: Dance & Music**, all ages. Jurek Mazur of the Academia de Tango Argentino will give a lecture demonstration of the history of Argentine tango dance and music, Garden Room, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- 18 **Mystery Book Club** discussion group for adults, Tutoring Room, 3 to 4:30 p.m.
- 23 **Just Say What You Think**, a book club for middle school students, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. This month's book is *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells.
- 24 **Story Swap**, presented by Contra Costa Tale Spinners, features storytelling for adults, Gallery Room, 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, 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, 253-1997.
- Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition**, every third Wednesday, 10 a.m. at Orinda City Hall Sarge Littlehale Room, and 6:30 at Supervisor Uilkema's office, 3338 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Call 925-687-8844, ext. 227.
- Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary**. Every Friday, 7 a.m., Postino's, 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. March speaker is K. Ruby Blume, founder of The Institute of Urban Homesteading in Oakland, who will talk on Put a Bee in Your Bonnet, An Introduction to Backyard Beekeeping.
- Orinda Rotary**. Every Wednesday, noon, Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, 254-2222.
- Orinda Association**. Second Monday, 7:15 p.m., Orinda Library, May Room, 254-0800.
- Orinda Hiking Club**. Hike every Wednesday, 9 a.m., old library parking lot on Irwin Way. Call Steve at 253-0131 or visit www.orindahiking.org.
- Orinda Historical Society**. Third Wednesday, 7 to 9 p.m., Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin

International Film Showcase Features Two March Films



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alexandre Gontcharov and Anne Coesens star in the French film *Illégal*.

Following rave reviews and an extended showing of its first international film *Max Manus*, the Lamorinda Film and Entertainment Foundation (LFEF) presents two offerings during March. Each show plays for one week at the Orinda Theatre.

Illégal, the story of Tania, an illegal Russian immigrant living in Belgium with her 13-year-old son, runs February 25 – March 3. The film has won numerous awards including Best Foreign Film Cesar Award and Best Actress. It highlights the plight of illegals living in a constant state of fear and, as in Tania's case, arrested and separated from loved ones.

A nearly sightless boy discovers the rich possibilities of recorded sound in LFEF's second film of the month. Based on the true story of gifted sound engineer Mirco Menacchi, the Italian film *Red Like the Sky* will be shown March 18 – 23.

– David Dierks and Sally Hogarty

Bancroft Library Director Discusses Library at First Friday Forum

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

First Friday Forum will present Professor Charles Faulhaber, director of the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley, speaking on "The Bancroft Library at 150: The Past, The Present and the Future," on March 4 at 1:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Sanctuary of the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church (LOPC), 49 Knox Drive, and it promises to give a personal glimpse into this unique library situated so close to Lamorinda.

Faulhaber explains, "The Bancroft is a special collections library, which, by definition, means it contains materials that are too rare, valuable or fragile to circulate. In order to use them, one must visit the Library. The library has focused from the very beginning on the history of California and the American West. In a very real sense, it is the library of record for California."

In his illustrated talk, Faulhaber plans to present a broad overview of the library, which has been on the Berkeley campus

since two weeks after the 1906 earthquake. Over the years, it has broadened its collections to include the history of the university, and manuscripts and rare books ranging from ancient Egypt to the present, including the Mark Twain Papers. "Most recently, we have acquired the Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life. One of the highlights of our collection is the gold nugget that started the gold rush," he explains.

Along with serving as the James D. Hart director of the Bancroft Library, Faulhaber is a professor of medieval Spanish Literature. He received a B.A. in Latin American Studies from Yale after having studied in Spain, an M.A. in Spanish from the University of Wisconsin, and a Ph.D. from Yale in Romance Philology.

Faulhaber announced the library's new exhibition: Enlightenment, Emigration, Emancipation; German Jews circa 1849, which opens March 2 and focuses on Jews in Germany and California during the 19th Century.

For further information on the March 4 event, call 925-283-8722 or click on LOPC.org, - News and Information.

CLUB MEETINGS (continued)

- Way, 254-1353.
- Orinda Job's Daughters**. First and third Monday, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 283-7176.
- Orinda Juniors community service group**. First Tuesday, September to June, 7 p.m. Contact Diane Petek and Amy Campbell at orinda.juniors@yahoo.com for location.
- Orinda/Tábor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation**. Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m. social, 7:30 p.m. meeting, call 254-8260 for location.
- Orinda Teen Advisory Council**. Second Wednesday, 4 p.m., 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.

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

BUSINESS BUZZ

◆ BUZZ from page 20

she can remember. This local talented artist offers calligraphy services for invitations, place cards, greeting cards, envelopes, signs and posters.

"I learned calligraphy directly from studying books, so you can say I am self-taught. I know the names of a range of fonts and offer many styles to clients. I taught myself cursive handwriting in the first grade and soon after began copying fonts from books. A lot of my work involves creating place cards, and clients select the color of ink they prefer. I often choose the paper and design of the card, because it is important that the paper be of a certain quality to absorb the ink properly," explains Andersen.

After learning Chinese calligraphy in middle school, Andersen began using Chinese brushes and India ink in her work. One of her favorite pens is simply a slender piece of sliced bamboo with a slanted tip. The thin reed absorbs ink and provides a consistent ink flow for a substantial period of time, the envy of every calligrapher. While calligraphy rates vary depending on the complexity of a specific project and materials required, basic rates are 50 cents per line at H Calligraphy.

"When you receive a beautifully personally addressed envelope and letter, it shows a higher level of care from the sender. When I get a letter from someone, I can always discern personality in their handwriting. I believe even font choice reveals personality," says Andersen.

In addition to calligraphy services, Andersen also offers event planning services and assistance with selecting color schemes for interior design. A member of the Class of 2012 at Miramonte High School, she has plans to attend art school after graduation and is visiting the School of The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, among others, later this year.

An artist and an athlete, Andersen plays tennis on her high school team and teaches tennis at Sleepy Hollow Swim Club and Orinda Country Club. She is also an avid cyclist and competes on her high school mountain biking team. She is the daughter of Orinda native Erik Andersen and Heather Andersen, who coaches the Sleepy Hollow tennis team.

For more information about H Calligraphy, visit the website at www.hcalligraphy.com or give Hanne a call at 925-876-6277.

Ann Sharf Continues to be Top Producer

With 19 years in the Lamorinda real estate business, Ann Sharf has a wealth of experience to share with clients about the ins and outs of the real estate market, both here and in other East Bay communities. A realtor with Village Associates, Sharf originally joined Mason McDuffie in 1992 after a friend gave her a real estate course for a Christmas present. "Mason McDuffie provided superb training for new agents.

This is totally my passion. I love meeting clients and finding properties for people. I am very lucky to have found a career that does not feel like work to me," explains Sharf.

Sharf was among a group of local agents who combined to form Village Associates in 2000, the largest local and independently owned real estate firm. While her primary focus is Lamorinda, she is extremely knowledgeable about Danville, Berkeley, Oakland, Piedmont and Walnut Creek communities. Sharf is well suited to the business. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in marketing, with a finance minor at Marquette University.

"I believe we are starting to see a lot of life in the real estate market. Prices are down, but the good news is prices have stabilized, and we are seeing multiple offers, including sales at full asking price. There is a lot of pent-up demand over the past two



VALERIE HOTZ

Realtor **Ann Sharf**

years that is causing a lot more activity. These factors, combined with stable, low interest rates, make it a very good time to purchase a home," says Sharf.

An active volunteer in the Orinda public schools, Sharf continues to support the Educational Foundation of Orinda. She is married to Stu Sharf, and the couple has three adult children. A 2004 graduate of Miramonte High School, Michael is currently playing professional water polo in Spain. Jackson is a 2007 Miramonte graduate and is currently at U.C. Berkeley, as is Maxine, a 2010 Miramonte graduate who plays water polo at Cal.

"My other passion is water polo. I have a wonderful group of 30 women that I play water polo with in the U.S. Master's program at the Soda Center. Our coach is Andrew Morris. We have an incredible time



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11am. Sunday Worship at
Santa Maria Church Chapel, Orinda

competing. We are looking forward to the women's Master's Tournament hosted at the Soda Center on June 2," says Sharf.



For more information give her a call at 925-200-0222 or visit the website at www.annsharf.com.

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New Owners of Cheryl's Closet Host Champagne Reception March 10

The upscale designer women's wear consignment shop Cheryl's Closet has served the Orinda community since 1996 and last month, Cheryl Buscaglia passed the reins to Orinda residents Brenda Horne and Jackie Moreau. This boutique is situated at 21 Orinda Way, adjacent to the UPS Store. A wide selection of new and gently worn fashions and accessories from contemporary and designer labels are in stock.

Buscaglia points out her boutique is the women's version of the old fashioned men's barber shop. "My store is a community

exchange. People make connections here while they are browsing," she says. "Cheryl has done an amazing job providing excellent customer service. She set the bar very high in terms of customer service, and we are expanding on that by adding a computer system and software to support the back office. This will enable us to provide customer alerts by email and newsletters announcing current inventory," says Moreau. Personal shopping by appointment only when the store is closed is another service Moreau and Horne are adding to enhance customer service.

In addition to a fine selection of gently used contemporary women's fashions and designer labels, 50 percent of the clothing and jewelry inventory is new. Cheryl's



Brenda Horne (L) and Jackie Moreau are the new owners of Cheryl's Closet.

VALERIE HOTZ

Closet offers accessories, shoes, handbags, jewelry, gloves and belts. Within the first month, the consignment contract arrangement provides for 40 percent to the consignor and 60 percent of the proceeds to Cheryl's Closet. If the item does not sell within 30 days, the item is marked down 20 percent. "We are adding a Parents' Club account for consignors who wish the proceeds of their sale to be donated to the local public schools," adds Moreau, an active volunteer in the Orinda community for the past 10 years.

"We feel going green and recycling is a top priority, and we are embracing the consignment business as a way of reducing waste. Utilizing resources efficiently is what we are all about. I have always considered Cheryl's Closet a neighborhood boutique where women can gather to browse and share ideas. By their very nature, women are social and create a lot of energy when they are together, and we are excited about continuing the tradition here," explains Horne. A native of Orinda, Horne graduated from Miramonte High School and moved back 20 years ago to rear her family. She is the former proprietor of Infiknit Possibilities.

Be sure to wander to the back of the shop, where you will discover a delightful collection of aromatherapy products that includes candles, soaps and skin care products. The Bennedetta skin care line is a favorite, especially the "Dreamtime" warm embrace body wrap. This soft blanket is

filled with natural ingredients that include cinnamon, clove, eucalyptus and lavender. It is warmed in the microwave to treat sports injuries or a stiff neck by stimulating circulation in the area. Contact Marianna Sucher for personal skin care consultations and all occasion gift baskets at 254-1122.

Moreau and Horne look forward to hosting Trunk Shows featuring up and coming designers such as Margaret O'Leary of San Francisco. They encourage shoppers to ask to be placed on the Wish List. This new service will provide opportunities for customers to buy their preferred pieces before they ever hit the rack.

To kick off the spring season, a champagne reception will be hosted at Cheryl's Closet by the new owners on March 10. Mark your calendar now and be sure to stop by to see the new offerings. Cheryl's Closet is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday and Friday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, give Jackie Moreau and Brenda Horne a call at 254-4442.



VALERIE HOTZ

Miramonte junior Hanne Andersen has her own business.

H Calligraphy

Miramonte High School Junior Hanne Andersen has enjoyed handwriting her entire life and in her own words, has been obsessed with computer fonts for as long as

[SEE BUZZ page 19]

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