



THE ORINDA NEWS

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New Local Office Electees Prepare for Upcoming Terms

By ANDREA MADISON
Staff Writer

As 2022 came to a close, Orinda's newest electees for City Council, the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD), The Orinda Association, the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, Acalanes Union High School District and the Orinda Union School District settled into their seats to prepare for their terms of office.

Brandyn Iverson, Latika Malkani and Janet Riley are the newest Orinda City Councilmembers, emerging victorious in a race with 23,928 votes cast. Six candidates were in the running for the three vacant seats. The city's Downtown Precise Plan (DPP) remains a hot topic amongst the new council elects.

"My vision is we make the downtown more attractive to business that can serve



KATHY CORDOVA

The City of Orinda honored outgoing councilmembers and welcomed newly elected councilmembers at a reception on Dec. 13 in the Orinda Community Center Founders Auditorium. Pictured above are the current councilmembers (L-R) **Latika Malkani**, **Brandyn Iverson**, **Vice Mayor Darlene Gee**, **Mayor Inga Miller** and **Janet Riley**.

our families," said Riley, emphasizing the area could be made "more family friendly."

Riley, who noted the five members of

the City Council will be making final decisions regarding the DPP this month, said a transformation of the Orinda Theatre itself may be needed.

Looking forward, Riley said "the five [City Councilmembers] will be great together."

Iverson acknowledged there is pressure on the new group of City Councilmembers

to be "decision-makers." Iverson, who has over 20 years experience in commercial real estate and investments, said getting the city's housing element approved is "the number-one goal."

Iverson also emphasized the importance of parking in any of Orinda's future developments while discussing ideas regarding transportation shuttles within the city.

New Councilmember Latika Malkani weighed-in on the significance of the DPP, noting the challenge associated with bringing it to life and calling the impending finalization of the city's housing element the most immediate challenge.

Malkani said "[moving] forward with implementation with some of the planning that the outgoing council had done" is a goal, as is an environmental action plan. Ways in which the council can "be cognizant of equity" was also a topic highlighted by Malkani.

MOFD also has new elected board members, including Division 1 Director Greg Hasler, board vice president and incumbent Steven Danziger for Division 3, and Division

[SEE ELECTIONS page 4]

Facing Low State Funding, OUSD Considers New Parcel Tax

By ANDREA MADISON
Staff Writer

Facing record national economic inflation and the second lowest per-student funding in the state, the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) is recommending a resolution proposing a new parcel tax for residents.

The district, which encompasses four elementary schools and one middle school, is funded through the state funding model Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and receives a base grant. In addition, schools in state districts are also eligible under LCFF to receive supplemental and concentration grants, based on the percentage of students in need.

"Our main source of funding is the state and that LCFF formula," said OUSD Superintendent Aida Glimme, noting that it's about 75% of the district's funds. "And

when 75% of your revenue is the lowest, or one of the lowest in the state, that has long-term effects."

OUSD receives base funding for around 2,500 students, along with some additional funding for transitional kindergarten and the kindergarten through third grade levels.

The state-based LCFF grant formula's supplemental grants are supplied to California schools based on their "unduplicated student" population, which includes students who are low income, those who are English learners, foster youth and homeless. Concentration grants are given to districts which have a 55% or greater population of these students.

OUSD has a rate of approximately 3% of unduplicated students, which is one of the lowest rates in the state, according to the district's webpage on funding informa-

[SEE OUSD page 12]

Possible Two New Firefighter Hires for MOFD but More Data Needed

By CHARLEEN EARLEY
Editor-in-Chief

On Nov. 16, 2022, at a Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) board meeting, the Board voted 3-2 to restore staffing to the ambulance in Orinda.

Staff was cut in year's past; however, changes in increased staffing are not quite finalized.

"We are currently preparing to meet and confer on the topic because it requires making changes to the current contract [Memorandum of Understanding]," said Vince Wells, president of the United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County, IAFF Local 1230. "After that is done, we'll have to hire the additional positions. This can take anywhere from 6-24 months depending on the pool of candidates, academy

[SEE MOFD page 5]



JEFF HEYMAN

Captain-Paramedic II **Michael Lacy** (left) has worked with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District for 16 years, has been in the fire service for 25 years and has worked at Fire Station 45 for 14 years. Engineer-Paramedic **Andrew Kalenian** (right), has worked at Fire Station 45 for almost five years.

IN THIS ISSUE

News		Clubs	online
Crime/Police	online	Editorial	4
Students/Schools	1	Fire Safety	1
Around Town		Letters to the Editor	4
Art Scene	11	Obituaries	8
Events	7, 8, 9, 14	Performing Arts	9
Residents	6, 14	Pet of the Month	16
Calendar	5	Retirement	6
Car Time	15	Seasoned Shopper	10
City Council	1, 2	Sports	16
Community	5, 7, 8	The Orinda Association	2, 3
Classifieds	13	The Reel Less Traveled	12

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TRIBUTE / NEW OA BOARD MEMBER



JEFF HEYMAN

Orinda Mayor **Inga Miller** (far left), former Mayor **Dennis Fay** and City Councilmember **Darlene Gee** presented the City Council's proclamation to Councilmember **Amy Worth** (center) at the reception honoring her. Worth served 24 years on the Orinda City Council and will continue to serve her term on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

A Fitting Tribute to Orinda City Councilmember Amy Worth

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

A large crowd of Orinda residents, as well as local and regional politicians, assembled at the Orinda Library's Dick Heggie Plaza on Dec. 4 to honor long-time Orinda City Councilmember Amy Worth.

Worth served on the City Council for 24 years, including five terms as mayor. Although she will no longer be on the council, she will continue her work helping residents as a commissioner on the Metro-

politan Transportation Authority.

Nature accommodated Worth's reception with a respite from the rain and an abundance of sunshine as guests enjoyed a variety of refreshments in the outdoor setting.

The formal program included speeches and proclamations from Orinda City Councilmembers, Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, a representative from State Senator Steve Glazer, Contra Costa County Supervisor Candace Anderson and Orinda

[SEE TRIBUTE page 12]

The Orinda Association Welcomes Eloise Sotelo to the Board

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

With a graduate degree in psychology, a career in social services and a history of volunteer work, Eloise Sotelo is The Orinda Association's newest board member.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Sotelo volunteered for several years at the Woman's Opportunity Center at UC Irvine, where she was a graduate student. The center provides classes, career counseling and job search skill training to women reentering the workforce.

Following graduation, Sotelo moved to the Bay Area where she worked for Contra Costa County Social Services in Children and Family Services, Aging and Adult services.

A relatively new resident, Sotelo and her husband, Marke Estis, a retired county counsel for Contra Costa County, moved from Berkeley to Orinda in September 2021.

"We were seeking a beautiful, quiet, woodsy area to live," Sotelo said. "We found the perfect house high on a hill in the Orinda Oaks area. Orinda and our home



SALLY HOGARTY

Eloise Sotelo looks forward to participating in the many facets of The Orinda Association even if it means some time away from her dog Oliver.

have exceeded our expectations."

Sotelo said she joined The Orinda Association to give back to her community. In addition to being a new board member, she has taken on the office of secretary for The OA.

Now retired, Sotelo expanded her community endeavors and joined the Orinda Juniors Women's Club. She also enjoys master's swim at Walnut Creek's Bay Club, reformer Pilates, weight training and hiking.

Going to concerts, interior design and travel are among her many interests, but top on the list of priorities is caring for and playing with her four-year-old yorkie, Oliver.

Sally Hogarty can be reached at sallyhogarty@gmail.com.

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THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the President
Happy New Year and Thank You!

SALLY HOGARTY



As we enter 2023, The Orinda Association (OA) thanks those who supported our various activities in 2022, including the 4th of July parade, Classic Car Show, political forums and Seniors Around Town. So many gave of their time and financial support to make the events successful and to further our commitment to our seniors by volunteering as drivers.

A special thank you to those who donated old cars to Cars2ndChance, a program sponsored by Rotary Clubs, Clayton Valley/Concord, Sunrise and Lamorinda Sunrise; and The Orinda Association. Car donors receive tax write-offs while the Rotary Clubs take care of all the details, including car fix-ups and vehicle registration transfer. If you have an old car taking up space in your garage, call 925.326.5868. It's a no hassle way to lower your taxes while helping others!

We gratefully thank those who contributed generously to our Seniors Around Town matching gift campaign. Also, we thank those who contributed during Giving Tuesday, not only to the OA's programs, but to other non-profits in

our area which do so much to enhance our community.

As 2023 begins, the OA introduces a new slate of officers. I will return as president with Cindy Powell continuing her excellent job as treasurer. We welcome the newest OA Board Member Eloise Sotelo as secretary and State Farm Agent and basketball coach extraordinaire Kelly Sopak as vice president.

We also cannot thank Marianne Moser enough for her work last year as secretary, and while we're sorry to lose former Vice President Latika Malkani, we wish her success in her new role as an Orinda City Councilmember.

Although it's only January, we at The Orinda Association are already beginning plans for the 2023 4th of July celebration. If you are interested in volunteering your time and having fun while doing so, please call the office at 925.254.0800 or email me at the address below.

We wish you all a safe, happy and prosperous New Year!

Sally Hogarty can be reached at sallyhogarty@gmail.com.




The Orinda Association

The Orinda Association is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to:

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

OFFICERS	BOARD MEMBERS
President - Sally Hogarty	Carlos Baltodano
Vice President - Kelly Sopak	Barb Brawner
Secretary - Eloise Sotelo	Jacalyn Buettner
Treasurer - Cindy Powell	Joe Haughin
City Council Liaison - Inga Miller	Chris Laszcz-Davis
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	Kate Wiley



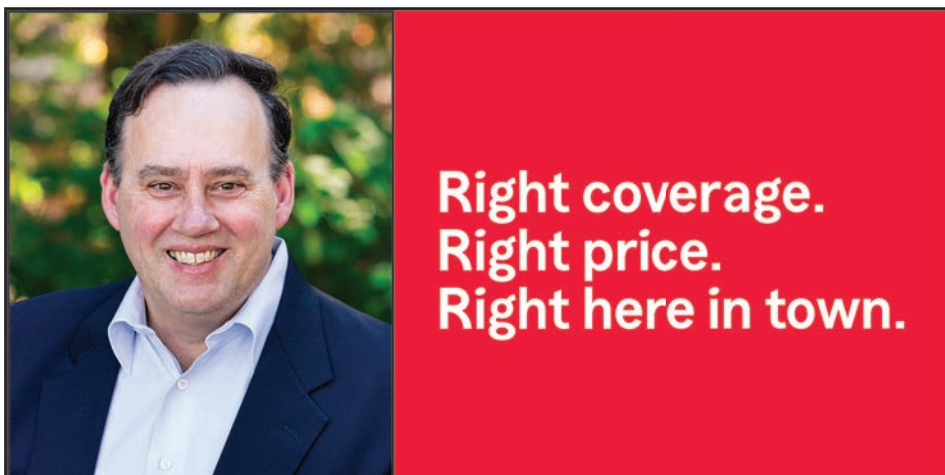
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Orinda, CA 94563
Phone: 925.254.0800
www.OrindaAssociation.org

All officers and board members volunteer their time.



COURTESY OF SALLY HOGARTY

While Sally Hogarty will remain the OA president, she is retiring as executive editor of *The Orinda News*. Hogarty (far right) is seen here in 2006 with former Orinda News editors Ann O'Connell-Nye (1985-1988), Lynda Leonard (1994-2000) and Hillary Hoppock (1988-1993). See more in the editorial on page 4.



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2023 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

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2. Volunteer to help with Orinda's July 4th parade and celebration
3. Volunteer at Orinda Classic Car Show
4. Support The Orinda News advertisers

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!



EDITORIAL

Editorial

Twenty-Nine Years Well Spent!

Sometimes it seems as if I began my career at *The Orinda News* just a few years ago. But it has been almost 30 years! While I hoped to make it to 30, retiring at the end of 2022 seemed like a cleaner fit with the January issue my last as editor.

When I started in 1993, we relied more on fax machines and in-person meetings than on emails and Google drive. I even did layout on an electric table (purchased by The Friends of the Orinda Library. Thank you!) which allowed me to adjust the height.

In 1993, the newspaper came out quarterly, with a special July 4 issue and a separate issue during election years. Now it is monthly, and I'm so thankful to our publisher, The Orinda Association (OA), for agreeing to take a chance on my crazy idea and to our wonderful advertisers, who made our transition to a monthly publication possible.

Jill Gelster, friend, typesetter, calendar editor and ad manager served as my partner in crime through those years. She has been with the paper almost as long as I have. Eventually her husband David Dierks joined our merry band as our graphic artist/typesetter. I've often thought of us as the Three Musketeers facing a variety of challenges over the years.

I have so many people to thank – starting with the amazing OA boards and talented writers I've been privileged to know. I especially enjoyed working with our young interns from Miramonte High School and watching their writing skills mature as they wrote various columns and features.

A special thank you to our advertisers who have consistently supported us all

these years and to Orinda's hard working city staff. I've bugged numerous city clerks and city managers during my tenure, and they've always graciously answered my questions. Public Works and everyone at the Community Center have also made my job so much easier with their willingness to help.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank the past editors of *The Orinda News* who guided me during my first few years as editor. They are Ann O'Connell-Nye, Hilly Hoppock and Lynda Leonard, who I can't thank enough for their patience and willingness to share expertise with me. I still recall standing around Lynda's dining room table pasting up a draft layout when her cat jumped up and scattered all our hard work!

I must admit, as a Canyon resident reporting on Orinda, I wasn't sure how I'd be welcomed. I needn't have worried. I've met many warm and gracious individuals over the years, as well as some fascinating eccentrics who enlivened my stories!

But now, I feel the newspaper deserves new leadership and new energy while I pursue my acting career full time. Fortunately, we have Editor-in-Chief Charleen Earley and Executive Editor Kathy Cordova taking the reins. I can't wait to see the changes and innovations they make.

While I'll no longer be executive editor, I will still be around as The Orinda Association president and as a contributing writer to the newspaper. I look forward to helping our new editors as I was helped so many years ago.

- Sally Hogarty,
Retiring Executive Editor

Letters to the Editor

Orinda Should Retain Current 35-Foot Height Limit

It was disingenuous at best for outgoing Mayor Dennis Fay to describe the 45-foot proposed new height limit for downtown, set by the City Council at its Nov. 1 meeting as "effectively, a four floor limit" and to rely on fourth floor setbacks to limit building mass. (*The Orinda News*, December 2022 issue.)

In fact, as he, staff, and the consultant all know, and as Lafayette and other cities have experienced, under the Density Bonus Law, a developer can easily obtain additional height, and have the setback requirement waived. A different consultant previously concluded that only projects utilizing a density bonus were "likely feasible." Thus, a belief that the new limits are truly "limits" is

illusory.

Orinda has had a 35-foot height limit for decades. It should be maintained, not increased, and the proposed increased densities, also approved, should be reduced to 20 units per acre, because whatever limits are set, become the beginning, not the endpoint, for a determination of what can actually be built. The higher and denser the starting point, the higher and denser the actual building becomes.

There is still time for the new City Council to correct these mistakes and help preserve the village character downtown, which can be done while still satisfying the City's legal obligation to zone for the required number of additional housing units.

- Nick Waranoff

List of *The Orinda News* Advertisers

	Page		Page
Automotive		State Farm, Bryan Silveira	3
Mash Gas and Food	1	State Farm, Kelly Sopak	7
No H2O	7	Real Estate	
Orinda Motors	13	Coldwell Banker	
Orinda Shell Auto Care	6	Laura Abrams	9
Community		Suzanne Toner Geoffrion	10
Orinda Parks & Rec	9	Shellie Kirby	14
Fitness		The Grubb Company	
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McDonnell Nursery	12	Linda Friedman Team	7
Tree Sculpture	5	Dexter Honens II	9
Wildland Corporation	16	Christina Linezo	15
Medical and Dental		Murphy Team - Karen & Hilary Murphy	14
Dr. Brian Clark, Psy. D.	11	Ann Sharf	11
Dr. Mary Smith DDS	6	Clark Thompson	12
Hospice East Bay	11	Restaurants/Catering	
Medicine Shoppe	12	Baan Thai	8
Non-profit		Casa Orinda	12
Orinda Association	3	Farmers' Market	10
Professional Service		Siam Orchid	6
5A Rent-A-Space	15	Zamboni's Pizza Company	15
Bayview Painting	8	Retail	
Green Sheds	15	McCaulou's	13
Jeff Heyman Photography	16	Morrison's Jewelers	2
Kirby Carpet Cleaning	14	Wanted	
Ray Robinson Attorney	6	Daniel David Sneakers	5

◆ ELECTIONS from page 1

4 Director Mike Roemer. It was a close finish for Division 1, with Hasler securing nearly 53% of the votes and opponent Christopher Young getting just over 47% of votes.

Even closer was the election for MOFD's new Division 4 Director, with incumbent Michael Donner receiving about 49% of votes and opponent Mike Roemer receiving almost 51%.

The Orinda Association welcomed new board members as well with Kelly Sopak filling the position of vice president and Eloise Sotelo as secretary. Sally Hogarty and Cindy Powell return as president and treasurer respectively, both serving a second year.

Michael (Mike) McGill, current Central Contra Costa Sanitary District board member, was elected to the Orinda Chamber of Commerce's board of directors.

Voters chose three candidates for the Acalanes Union High School District, with Jennifer Chen and incumbents Christopher Severson and Nancy Kendzierski all elected as board members. There were seven candidates running for the open positions.

The Contra Costa County Board of Education elected one new board member for Area 2 this election season, with incumbent Sarah G. Butler securing nearly half of the total votes. Three candidates were vying for the position. Area 2 includes the communities of Lafayette and Moraga, along with Orinda.

Local school boards have also seen changes, with Orinda Union School Dis-

trict's board filling its three seat vacancies with Edda Collins Coleman, Eve M. Phillips and Katie Shogan.

Moraga School District elected three new board members, with incumbent Larry Jacobs, Martha A. White and Kristin Kraetsch getting the combined majority of the 16,423 votes. Voters also chose three new elected board members for the Lafayette School District, including Katy Foreman and incumbents Rob Sturm and Dave Smith.

The Nov. 8 election also had California voters deciding on several statewide ballot measures, including Prop. 1, which concerns the constitutional right to reproductive freedom. Prop 1, put on the ballot by the legislature, passed with about three-quarters of the vote. Prop. 28, which provides additional funding for arts and music education in public schools, also passed, with nearly 70% of voters choosing "yes."

Most state voters were not in favor of petition signature-driven Prop. 29, which would have required an on-site medical professional at kidney dialysis clinics, among other state requirements. Just over 32% of votes supported the initiative statute.

Voters were narrowly divided on Prop. 30, which aimed to provide funding for programs to reduce air pollution and prevent wildfires with an increase in taxes on annual personal income above \$2 million. About 54% of California voters voted "no" on the statute, which was put on the ballot by petition signatures.

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Letters to the Editor are printed on a space-available basis and should be no longer than 250 words. They must include the writer's first and last name, signature and telephone number. Send letters to: Editor, *The Orinda News*, P.O. Box 97, Orinda, CA 94563, or email to editor@theorindanews.com. Letters to the Editor for the February issue are due Jan. 8.

For advertising rates, contact Kathy Enzerink at 252-626-2109 (kathy@theorindanews.com) or Jill Gelster at 925.528.9225 (jill@aspenconsult.net). The deadline for the February issue is January 8.

GRANTS / CALENDAR

Orinda Foundation Gifts in 2022 Benefit Many Orinda Organizations

By CARLOS BALTODANO
Contributing Writer

Happy New Year! In 2022, we returned to something more like “normal” as vaccine booster shots made living through COVID outbreaks more palatable.

The Orinda Community Foundation (OCF), whose mission is to enhance the quality of life in Orinda, is happy to announce it granted a total of \$68,500 in 2022 to a multi-faceted number of non-profit organizations.

This total is 50% greater than last year’s grants. OCF is an all-volunteer, non-profit group which provides financial assistance to organizations serving the Orinda community. The impact of these grants has had a transformative effect on strengthening and building community engagement and fostering community spirit.

The worthwhile events serve as a method of bringing the community together while also enriching the lives of residents. The donations bolster the bonds with other community partners, such as the City of Orinda, The Orinda Association, the Lamorinda

Arts Council, The Orinda Garden Club, Friends of Orinda Creeks, Orinda Rotary Club, Orinda Chamber of Commerce and many more.

The 2022 grant funds provided to 25 grantees support the following events and organizations: The 4th of July Celebration, Lamorinda Idol, Art in Public Places, Park and Rec Concerts and Movies in the Park, Seniors Around Town, The Joaquin Moraga Adobe, Orinda Starlight Village Players, Live At the Orinda! at the Orinda Theatre, Meals on Wheels, *The Orinda News*, The Lamorinda Village, Garden Club, Woman’s Club, Tree Lighting Ceremony, Historical Society, Mindful Littles, Park and Rec Teen Events, Lamorinda Film Festival, Miramonte Writing Contest, Park Rec Seniors, Tabor Sister City and Pacific Chamber Orchestra.

Since OCF’s inception in 2010, over \$500,000 has been donated to wonderful events and organizations. This has only been possible due to the generous donations provided by our community residents.

Grant applications are open from Sept. 15 – Oct. 30 with grants awarded annually

each November.

If you have an activity or event that uplifts the community in any manner, let us know at orindafoundation.org. You can donate by sending a tax-deductible check or sign onto the

website, www.orindafoundation.org.

One hundred percent of the funds donated are given directly to an event or organization to further its community purpose. OCF does not have a paid staff, nor covers any [SEE OCF page 12]

On the Calendar in January

- Orinda Library.** Storytimes are Wednesday at 10:30 a.m., Open Mon. through Thu., 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Fri. and Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 26 Orinda Way, Call 925.254.2184 or visit <http://ccclib.org>.
- Wilder Art and Garden Center** virtual exhibit runs through Jan. 6. See article p. 11.
- High School Visual Arts Competition** 2022 winners are on view online through Feb. Visit www.lamorindaarts.org/past-winners-archive-vac. Registration for the 2023 competition is open now until Friday, Feb. 17. See article p. 11.
- 3 **Art Gallery at the Orinda Library** display through Feb. 4. Artist reception Jan. 7, 3 - 5 p.m. See article p. 11.
- 5 **Orinda Books Pat’s Book Club** reads and discusses *A Woman’s Story* by Annie Ernaux, winner of the 2022 Nobel Prize for literature. 11 a.m. Email info@orindabooks.com for reservations.
- 6 **First Friday Forum** presents Unwrapping the Riddle: Understanding the Russian Enigma 10 a.m., via Zoom. Register at lopc.org/first-friday-forum. See article p. 8.
- 7 **Orinda Farmers’ Market**, 9 a.m. Orinda Way in front of Rite Aid and the Community Park. www.cccfm.org or market hotline at 925.431.8361. Also Jan. 14, 21 and 28. See article p. 10.
- 11 **Orinda Library** presents “Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs,” Library Auditorium 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. See article p. 7.
- 12 **Orinda Academy** Virtual information session on Zoom about the school from 5:30-6:30 p.m. go to bit.ly/3hvvzDF.
- 20 **International Film Showcase** presents *My Sailor, My Love*. www.orindamovies.com for show times. See article p. 12.
- 21 **Orinda Library** presents Lion Dance Performance in celebration of Lunar New Year. Library Auditorium, 2 p.m. See article p. 7.
- The Chiller Diller Theatre** presents *King Kong vs. Godzilla*. Orinda Theatre 9:30 p.m. See article p. 12.
- 23 **Orinda Library** presents Joy of Chinese Brush Painting workshops 10:30 a.m., weekly through Feb. 13. Register at <https://ccclib.bibliocommons.com/v2/events?q=brush>. See article p. 7.
- 29 **Live At the Orinda!** presents singer Sam Gravitte. Orinda Theatre 5 p.m. See article p. 9.

Send calendar items to Jill Gelster at calendar@aspenconsult.net.

◆ MOFD from page 1

availability and retirements.”

Wells said MOFD currently has 17 firefighters on duty per day. They staff four engines and one truck – staffed with three firefighters per engine/truck – and one fully staffed ambulance with two firefighters.

“With this change, we would go to 19 firefighters per day by adding an additional two firefighters for the second restored ambulance,” said Wells.

He said by adding the additional firefighters, the community will benefit with faster response times.

“Adding staffing for the second ambulance allows for two permanently staffed ambulances, one in Moraga and one in Orinda,” explained Wells. “In the current staffing model, the second ambulance, Medic 45, is cross staffed, which means the crew of three firefighters at station 45 in Orinda must use either their fire engine or the ambulance depending on the call. This leaves the other engine or ambulance unstaffed while the crew runs the call.”

Wells talked about one possible hypothetical situation.

“For example, if the crew responds to a vehicle fire in their fire engine, the ambulance sits back in the station unstaffed. Then, if a medical call comes in, the ambulance will have to come from Moraga to the call in Orinda. This adds additional re-

sponse time for the 911 caller,” said Wells.

Additional staffing is not in stone yet, and MOFD Board Member Craig Jorgens is certain more information will become available before decisions are made.

“I am confident that the new Board will continue to gather the necessary data and develop the Standards of Coverage Study that will be necessary to make an informed decision,” said Jorgens.

He does not necessarily agree increased staffing equates to faster response times.

“It was shown in the board packet there is no clear relationship between response times and dedicated ambulance staffing, according to the data presented,” said Jorgens. “There was no discussion of this at the meeting, except for me pointing out this data. We have exemplary response times already.”

Jorgens feels there are trade-offs the Board must make about the best use of its resources.

“It is a question of the best use of the money available; we would have less money for fire prevention, specifically for emergency training, other equipment or more updated fire stations,” said Jorgens.

The broader issue, Jorgens explained, is more data is needed, data missing from Board discussions and community workshops.

“At the Oct. 2022 meeting, the Board de-

[SEE MOFD page 10]



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Andy Amstutz Wins Award for Volunteer of the Year

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

It's no longer a secret. The crowd assembled at the Lafayette Community Center burst into applause as Andy Amstutz was announced winner of the Inaugural Don Jenkins/Lamorinda Village

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Service Award.

Executive Director of Lamorinda Village (LV) Kathryn Ishizu said it was fitting the first Village Service Award goes to Andy.

"Don and Andy were at the inception of the Village and became founding board members," said Ishizu. "They worked for years to develop the organization. I think Don would be very pleased to have Andy as his first honoree."

Amstutz was thrilled to receive the award.

"I feel very grateful for the recognition from our Village community, for the Lafayette Rotary Paul Harris Fellow award and the Lafayette City Proclamation" he said. "I was surprised, but as Kathryn was describing all the activities I have assisted with, I knew it must be me! A lot of growth has happened in eight years."

Amstutz remembered accepting Don's request to join the Village organizing task force. "It was just what I was looking for as my next personal growth chapter," said Amstutz. "Volunteering is best when you can work on things you care about and have

[SEE VOLUNTEER page 7]



JEFF HEYMAN

Orinda resident **Andy Amstutz** was honored as Volunteer of the Year, the Lamorinda Village's inaugural Don Jenkins/Lamorinda Village Service Award on Dec. 9, 2022, at the Lafayette Community Center.



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Executive Editor Hogarty Retires

By LYNDA LEONARD
Editor, Retired

In 1993 when Sally Hogarty accepted a part-time job as assistant editor of *The Orinda News*, she had no idea what she was getting herself into. It was a nice part-time job that fit into her freelance journalist portfolio.



JEFF HEYMAN

Sally Hogarty, Executive Editor of *The Orinda News*, retired at the end of December after nearly 30 years. Orinda resident Kathy Cordova assumed her duties in January.

The workload, however, soon increased, requiring more time. She assumed more duties, became editor and doubled the number of issues to 12 per year. The work continued and the years passed. Suddenly three decades have passed and Hogarty has decided to retire from *The Orinda News*.

There was no easy transition when she began in 1993.

"I had been writing feature articles for years, and then my first assignment for *The Orinda News* was to write a news story about Gateway Valley," said Hogarty.

The development of Gateway Valley was a bitterly fought battle that raged for years among the community, a series of four different developers, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the courts. Divisive behavior often spilled over into other community meetings.

There was a lot of pressure attached to the Gateway writing assignment, and Hogarty carefully studied all the material she could get her hands on.

"It was a major shock when I first started covering City Council meetings, which were very contentious at that time," she recalled. "Resident Ray Davis sometimes dressed in Nazi-like attire and would routinely be escorted out of the meeting by the Orinda police."

This writer remembers a fight between Davis and the police chief at the time, swinging at one another and rolling around on the floor of Founders Auditorium, where City Council meetings were then held.

[SEE HOGARTY page 10]



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LIBRARY NEWS

Three January Free Events at the Orinda Library for the Community



SANDRO VANNINI

Renée Dreyfus, the George and Judy Marcus Distinguished Curator in Charge of Ancient Art at Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, gives a talk on Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m. at the Orinda Library's Auditorium. She will talk about 'Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs' exhibition, revealing how it explores the life and accomplishments of Ramses the Great.

By CHARLEEN EARLEY
Editor-in-Chief

If you ask Librarian Michael Beller what's new at the Orinda Library, he will talk for days about how the library brings quality events to this community and how important doing so is to him.

"We have an ever-changing set of events and activities at the Orinda Library, but here are three highlights for January," said Beller, the senior community library manager.

First, is a talk about the exhibition "Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs," currently on display at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. The Orinda Library talk is at the Library Auditorium on Jan. 11, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Beller said the talk will be given by Renée Dreyfus, the George and Judy Marcus Distinguished Curator in Charge of Ancient Art at Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

"I'll discuss this exhibition, revealing how it explores the life and accomplish-

ments of Ramses the Great. He is regarded as the most celebrated and mightiest pharaoh of the New Kingdom — Egypt's Golden Age — when it was a wealthy and powerful empire," said Dreyfus. "I'll also describe the dazzling royal treasures on view, which are some of the most sumptuous items to ever come to America from Egypt. The talk will be about one hour."

On Jan. 21 at 2 p.m., the Orinda Library hosts a Lion Dance Performance, also held in the Library Auditorium, in celebration of Lunar New Year.

"The performers are members of Tomizaki's Champions Kung Fu Institute," said Beller.

Next, on Jan. 23, Pauline Tsui will begin a series of four workshops (that day and the three following Mondays) highlighting the "Joy of Chinese Brush Painting." The four workshops run 10:30 a.m. to noon through Feb. 13. Registration is required at <https://ccclub.bibliocommons.com/v2/events?q=brush>.

Beller has worked at the Orinda Library since 2019 and for the Contra Costa County Library system since 2017. He came to Contra Costa after garnering years of experience in other libraries.

He's happy the Orinda Library is equitable for all to attend when it comes to offering free events to the community.

"The library will never charge for anything," said Beller. "Anything the library organizes, will always be free."

Beller said, "the mission of the Contra Costa County Library System is to bring people and ideas together. Through our events and also books, magazines, print and digital resources, we aim to do exactly that. If you ever want to spark your imagination or take a deep dive into a subject, come visit us."

For more information, contact Beller at Michael.beller@library.cccounty.us.

Charleen Earley can be reached at editor@theorindanews.com.

◆ VOLUNTEER from page 6

some experience doing."

Amstutz said he was prepared by many years in leadership at IBM and Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church (LOPC).

"I wanted to do community development in a larger space, without any theological restrictions, just to love my neighbors in practical ways" he added. "Lamorinda Village was a natural idea whose time had come, and it continues to develop very well. I am fortunate to have found such a good place to serve and grow."

He joined the Task Force in the fall of 2014. He assumed chairmanship for Outreach and Recruitment, which included recruiting potential members, doing publicity and public relations, hosting Village 101 presentations, producing e-newsletters, coordinating outreach to media and other organizations and engaging faith communities and elected officials.

A snapshot of what he has done for LV also includes being a founding board member from 2015 to 2020. He also served as membership chair, started the Men's Coffee and Conversation Group and took responsibility for upgrading the organization's database while developing the website.

Over the years he acted as driver, handyman, grocery and meal delivery person,

computer helper, food prepper, gardener and friendly visitor. In retirement from the LV board, he is chair of the Ambassador Committee, member of the Program/Services Committee, host of multiple Weekly Zooms for LV (Meditation, Chair Yoga, Friday Presentations), all while making public presentations for LV.

Board President Sharon Iversen said, "When I first met Andy in those early planning meetings, I didn't know him, but I began to look forward to him being there because he brings joy with him when he walks into the room. He still does"

Founded by Ruth McCahan, LV opened to serve older adults in the community in April 2015. Since the pandemic, LV has more than doubled in size, now having 249 members.

Ishizu said, "Our Mission is to actively build a community that embraces connections, caring and choices in how we live and thrive. We believe Villages run on the power that comes from connecting people who possess abundant energy, creativity while having the knowledge and the determination to make the world a better place for each other. At Lamorinda Village, we make every effort to meet the needs of our members through programs, services and referrals."

Bobbie Dodson can be reached at bobbiedodson109@gmail.com.

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As Seen On



FIRST FRIDAY FORUM / OBITUARIES

“A View of Russia” Talk Presented by Col. Lamborn at First Friday Forum



COURTESY OF LARRY LAMBORN

Col. Larry Lamborn, a former CIA agent, will speak on Jan. 6 at 10 a.m. via Zoom for the First Friday Forum. His topic is called “Unwrapping the Riddle: Understanding the Russian Enigma.”

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

“Unwrapping the Riddle: Understanding the Russian Enigma” is the provocative title of Larry Lamborn’s First Friday Forum presentation on Jan. 6 at 10 a.m., via Zoom with registration required.

Lamborn said Russia is a paradox, even to many Russians.

“It is ‘in’ Europe, but not ‘of’ Europe,” Lamborn explained. “Russia has influenced Europe for centuries but was totally cut-off from Europe and subjected to Asiatic rule. Some Russians embrace European ideas and values, while others

with equal force, reject anything foreign as ‘un-Russian.’”

Visitors, such as the Marquis de Custine (1839) and Andre Gide (1936), have come away mystified by what they heard and were shown in the Russia of their day.

“We will search the historical roots of Russian political tradition, discovering the legacy of past centuries, which still exert influence over current Russian policy,” said Lamborn. “We will look into the distinctive

nationality of Ukraine, and we will try to comprehend Vladimir Putin’s vision for Russia.”

Lamborn, a retired U.S. Army Reserve Colonel, served as a CIA Senior Operations Officer with more than 40 years of service to the American people. Duty assignments included Vietnam, Korea, Iraq, Afghanistan, El Salvador and many other Third World “hot spots.”

[SEE FORUM page 14]

Erik Allan Johnson Helped Many

By THE JOHNSON FAMILY

Erik Allan Johnson (June 4, 1964 – Oct. 31, 2022) is a big loss to the world. He was a good person with a natural easy manner.

He earned a general contractor’s license. He was a talented and skillful carpenter and cabinetmaker, who left behind things of beauty. Some of his work appeared in *Sunset Magazine*.

Erik was an enthusiastic sports fan. While a student at Miramonte High School in Orinda, class of ‘82, he was a spirited baseball coach for several middle school teams at Orinda Intermediate School.

In recent years, Erik worked at Mendo Mill Lumber Co. in Fort Bragg, CA. People asked for him to help them because he was knowledgeable and responsive. He went out of his way to help people.

Erik, who had a bachelor’s degree from Chico State University, will also be remem-



JENNIFER KEMP

Erik Allan Johnson passed away on Oct. 31, 2022. He was Class of ‘82 at Miramonte High School and coached several middle school teams at Orinda Intermediate School.

bered for his wonderful heartfelt laugh.

He is survived by his parents Ken and Jane Johnson, his brother Mark Johnson, his son Ben Johnson, former wife Kyle Donaldson as well as aunts, uncles, cousins and many friends.

Craig Hayden Kronman Passed Away

By NAOMI REDDING
Contributing Writer



COURTESY OF NAOMI REDDING

Craig Hayden Kronman passed away at the age of 69 on Oct. 20, 2022. A slideshow in his honor was shared at his Celebration of Life and can be viewed at tinyurl.com/CraigKronman.

Craig Hayden Kronman, the only son of Albert and Jeanne Kronman, grew up exploring the woods and waters of Long Island, New York. He passed away at the age of 69 on Oct. 20.

Craig and his wife Anna Lisa moved to Orinda in 2005 and recently celebrated 20 joyful years of marriage with a tour of the Pacific Northwest, including favorite spots in Mendocino and Oregon. While adventuring, they were undeterred by frequent rain as they rode bikes together and savored delicious cuisines.

Craig had a robust practice as a noted probate and tax attorney. He delighted in knowing a bit about many varied topics. He kept tax-time interesting by asking

[SEE KRONMAN page 9]

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LIVE AT THE ORINDA!

Singer Sam Gravitte Kicks-Off the New Year Performing at Live At the Orinda! Concert Series

By CHARLEEN EARLEY
Editor-in-Chief

For his first appearance at the Orinda Theatre while also making his West Coast concert debut, singer Sam Gravitte is excited to perform his *Songs That Raised Me* on Jan. 29 at 5 p.m. for the Live At the Orinda! concert series.

Born in Los Angeles, raised in Ridgefield, CT, and now living in Harlem, New York City, the 27-year-old's show will include musical theater, jazz standards, guitar tunes "and even an original song cycle written by my friend and composer Jake Landau," he said.

He was raised by supportive parent actors, Debbie and Beau Gravitte.

"My mom did a show at the Orinda Theatre not long ago!" he said. "She's a Tony Award winner, and my father is the artistic director at the Actors Studio in Manhattan."

Gravitte, who has a twin sister Ellie and an older brother Charlie, talks about his love of entertaining.

"I love how performing drops me into my own body and experience," said Gravitte, who has a degree in anthropology. "No matter where and when you are as a performer, the act of performance plunges you into the present. I'm always grateful for that."

Among other notable credits, Gravitte's Broadway role as Fiyero in *Wicked* is most recognizable. He looks back on it with lasting gratitude.

"Playing Fiyero on Broadway was a beautiful culmination of a long relationship with *Wicked*. I toured with the show for a year – my first big contract – right after graduating from Princeton in 2017," he said. "When I got back to New York after tour, I was lucky enough to join the Broadway ensemble for seven weeks in the summer of 2019, before finally taking over

the role Feb. 25, 2020."

That's when the pandemic took center stage. "Of course, everyone knows what happened to Broadway two and a half weeks later ... so I took over the role, did a handful of performances and then waited 18 months before I was able to come back with *Wicked* and reopen the show September 2021."

By then, audience members were craving live theater.

"Reopening was absolutely magical," recalled Gravitte. "We were met with tidal waves of love. To be part of the Broadway community at that point in time – a community that was healing – was something I'll hold onto forever. Over the course of my run with the show, through reopening to Omicron and shows closing to the end of my run in May, I learned more than I ever could have predicted about performance and about myself. I'm incredibly grateful for the experience."

Gravitte hopes this audience will enjoy his 75-minute show in Orinda.

"I hope the audience gets a glimpse into my childhood – growing up with actor parents, with music as one of the rock-solid constants in my life – and that they enjoy an evening that explores a big old handful of genres," he said.

When he's not performing, Gravitte admits he's a bookworm.

"I'm a curious person by nature – I love to read, and I love to be out in nature," he said. "The weather is one of my favorite things about the Bay Area."

With concerts lined up to 2024, Gravitte said he's making his symphony concert debut in February, "and I'll be shopping some writing around."

Gravitte made his solo concert debut in early 2022 at New York's Birdland Jazz Club with a sold-out show and rave reviews. Jan. 29 cannot arrive soon enough for

Gravitte.

"The Bay is home to some of my favorite humans in the world, and I'm grateful to be able to share some of my music and story with them in person through my show," he said. "I'll have the incredible musicians Emily Whitaker and Ravi Campbell with me, and I couldn't be luckier to have them supporting me. Cannot wait to be out there."

Tickets for Gravitte's show can be purchased online at www.orindamovies.com.

Charleen Earley can be reached at editor@theorindanews.com.



JUSTIN PATTERSON

Sam Gravitte, who played the character Fiyero in the Broadway production *Wicked*, performs his 75-minute show *Songs That Raised Me* at the Orinda Theatre on Jan. 29 at 5 p.m. for the Live At the Orinda concert series.

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◆ **KRONMAN** from page 8

clients for their best jokes along with their receipts. His kind smile and wry sense of humor endeared him to all who knew him.

He began studying the viola during his college days at Bowdoin and Stanford. He relished playing with the Prometheus symphony and with others for over 30 years.

Along with photography and gardening, sailing was a lifetime passion for Craig. Taking friends out on the San Francisco Bay for picnics at Angel Island always made him smile, regardless of the weather.

French culture was a strong interest

as well; he sought out opportunities to practice and improve his skill, including taking advanced classes *en Français* and visiting France.

Craig read the Bible each morning. As a lifelong Christian Scientist and an active member of First Church of Christ Scientist, Orinda, he strove to incorporate these teachings in his daily living. His legacy continues with full bookshelves, blooming gardens, hearts full of memories and the example of a life well-lived.

A Celebration for Life was held Nov. 26, 2022. To view a slideshow honoring Craig, visit tinyurl.com/CraigKronman.

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SEASONED SHOPPER

◆ HOGARTY from page 6

Added to the demands of adequately covering the local news, attending meetings, working with writers and readying the paper for publication, Hogarty also contended with advances in technology, which initially didn't always make work easier.

In 1985, technology provided a computer, but no email. When Hogarty took over, she enjoyed a computer, email and a fax machine. Today, thanks to graphics and layout designers Jill Gelster and David Dierks, the paper takes advantage of the latest advances in computer science and maintains its own website, www.theorindanews.com.

"The three of us were challenged, keeping up with developing technology that continually required us to revamp our vari-

ous processes," said Hogarty.

Writing about the news requires knowing and understanding the people who are involved with the issues, Hogarty's favorite part of the job. She remembers working with Orinda Gateway LLC Project Manager Michael Olson in particular.

"Michael was great to work with," she said. "He knew how to listen to critics, to compromise and to work with people. Without him, I'm not sure Gateway would have been developed."

Some of the work was fun she recalled, "He and I spent lots of time walking the property and taking crazy jeep rides up and down the hills as they were being graded. It was amazing, after writing about all the years of controversy and lawsuits,

[SEE HOGARTY page 13]

Seasoned Shopper

'Turnip' the New Year

with Familial Roots BARBARA KOBSAR



Root vegetables are noteworthy and deserve a second look to complete the list of best winter vegetables I started in late 2022. The versatility of turnips and rutabagas is something to explore as we



BARBARA KOBSAR

Two types of turnips to 'turnip' in your kitchen this month from the Orinda Farmers' Market are the Purple-Top White Globe and the Scarlet Queen, two notable root vegetables which grow mainly underground.

start a new year.

Like other root vegetables, turnip and rutabagas grow mainly underground and show a bit of "shoulder" above ground as they mature. Turnips are globe-shaped and rutabagas are slightly elongated. Turnips are harvested at the tennis ball or smaller size before they become woody, while rutabagas hold their firmness and can be left to grow up to 5" in diameter.

Most turnips are white-fleshed with a covering of thin pale yellow or white skin and a purple tinged ring around the top. You may also find some delightful Scarlet Queen turnips to slice into salads or tender Baby Bunch turnips with a nice radish-like flavor. Both the skin and flesh of the rutabaga are yellowish in color and show varying amounts of a burgundy on the crown.

Turnips and rutabagas are related, although rutabagas are actually the result of a cross between turnips and cabbages. Turnips definitely deliver a little bit of peppery sharpness in their taste profile while rutabagas are slightly bitter but become

[SEE SHOPPER page 15]

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◆ MOFD from page 5

cided we needed to have more data to make an informed decision. Board members were asked to submit their questions so the staff could prepare the data," said Jorgens. "We also agreed to have a special community workshop to inform the community of our process and data results. Immediately prior to the Nov. 2022 meeting, we had a one-hour workshop to have this discussion. At the end of that workshop, we found that only half, or less, of the requested data was available. In particular, the data showing the trade-offs between paramedic-only and firefighter paramedics staffing the ambulance was 100% missing but would be available from some surrounding communities in Dec. 2022."

Wells sees the benefits of MOFD funds placed in hiring additional firefighters.

"Increasing our daily staffing by two firefighters improves service in other areas, including wildland fire response and response to structure fires and rescues," said Wells. "The additional firefighters bring

more resources to the emergency to assist in mitigating the situation. Even though the main function of firefighters on the second ambulance is for medical response, they are fully trained firefighters and can assist in providing additional manpower on major incidents when needed."

He said Orindans would not incur additional taxes with the new hires.

"The additional staffing – as stated – is restoration of staffing that was removed in 2013 during the economic downturn," said Wells. "MOFD wasn't impacted as much as was suspected and the fire district is very well-funded and would not have to increase any taxes."

Wells, in referring to possible emergency scenarios, feels additional staff benefits Orinda's community overall.

"Because we were forced to work within our means, citizens were forced to live with the consequences of the situations described earlier," said Wells. "Most of our citizens are not aware of the service levels or differences. Although rare, we've

[SEE MOFD page 13]



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ORINDA ART SCENE

Orinda Art Scene

JANUARY IN THE ART GALLERIES
ORINDA LIBRARY, WILDER AND
MORE



MELANIE LIGHT

Art Gallery at the Orinda Library:

The Lamorinda Arts Council presents a group exhibition, which features nature as its theme, Jan. 3 to Feb. 4. Linda Sutton, Teresa Onada, Lois Reynolds Mead and Doug Crooks will comprise the featured artists for the exhibition. The opening reception is Saturday, Jan. 7 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., at the Orinda Library, upper rotunda.

Linda Sutton (www.ldsutton.com), a born animal lover, will have 20 oil paintings on display, including three large oil paintings of various giraffes which she saw while on safari in Kenya in 2008. Sutton is deeply involved with Artists for Conservation (www.artistsforconservation.org), for which member artists donate a portion of their sales to the conservation project of their choice. Sutton said, "Most people do not know that there are between five and eight species of giraffes, and scientists are discussing whether three other kinds are subspecies or bonafide species."

Originally trained in oil painting, Sutton switched to watercolor in order to break free from her teacher's stylistic influence and develop her own style. Recently, a mentor suggested she might try oil again. The two mediums are very different from each other.

She clarified, "You 'push' oil paint, but you 'chase' watercolor," before clarifying that "watercolor paint dries very quickly and the artist must yield to that boundary, while oil paint is the opposite."

Teresa Onoda's (www.onodaart.com) style of *plein-air* (open air) has a rich tradition in California, but her style is unique with its energetic brush strokes and use of bold color. She studied fine art at Creighton University and has taught art for many years. Currently, her work focuses on the "endangered landscapes" of Northern California, where beautiful rural areas are rapidly being developed to provide housing.

Onoda's roots in the Bay Area are tied to "The Society of Six," a *plein-air* group started in the early 1900s and held together over several generations. Onoda said she had the good fortune to paint with the last members of that group. She is currently represented by the Nancy Dodds Gallery (www.nancydoddsgallery.com) in Carmel.

Doug Crooks is a lifelong woodworker, who has created art that runs the gamut from small, intricate things like walking sticks to large structures such as his tear-drop trailer or his home. He won first prize at the California State Fair in 2010 for both his rocking

horse and carved walking sticks.

Sixteen years ago, Crooks retired from his position as a firefighter at the Albany Fire Department. Since then, Crooks has devoted himself full-time to his craft. He was very taken with the folk stories about wood spirits and began making wood spirit bird houses.

Wood spirits come from the 15th Century, when folks believed the forest to be filled with bad and good spirits. To protect themselves from the bad ones, they would knock on the trees to awaken the good spirits to protect them. We "knock on wood" to this very day.

Artist Lois Reynolds Mead began making ceramics while working as a special education teacher. She became a serious craftswoman who built her own kiln in her backyard and exhibited and sold her wares at craft fairs. Later, she became an art teacher at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. When she retired, she was drawn to painting with acrylics and making collages.

Mead deals more with the "nature" of human beings rather than outside nature. Her paintings are bright, colorful assemblages of the components on a dining table in a primitive style.

During the pandemic, Mead devoted herself to painting. The works exhibited in this show are part of the series called "On the Table," a reference to the family Zoom dinners during the pandemic and how much she missed her in-person gatherings with family.

Mead is secretary of the Lamorinda Arts Council. She is also a filmmaker and has submitted a few short films to the Lamorinda Arts Council film festivals. Her work can be seen on the side of the CVS building in downtown Orinda as well as on Instagram @loisreynoldsmead.

Art Gallery at Wilder:

The "Celebrating 40 over 40" display continues through Jan. 7. Juleen Lapporte (www.studiojule.com), an award-winning portrait photographer based in Lafayette, is featured in this exhibit. Celebrating women over 40 and their stories, the totality of the exhibition urges all to transform our representation of older women and celebrate their "authenticity, audacity and beauty."

The Wilder Art and Garden Center is located at 20 Orinda Fields Lane. To schedule a viewing by appointment, contact Curator Ani Breslin at anistonbreslin@berkeley.edu. For more information, call the Lamorinda Arts Council at 925.359.9940.

High School Visual Arts Competition

The 2022 winners are on view online through Feb. Visit bit.ly/3hIP8OV. Registration for the 2023 competition is open now until Friday, Feb. 17. The Lamorinda Arts Council hosts this yearly competition, open to high school students who live in or attend school in Lamorinda, including the Acalanes Union High School District. The competition features cash awards, merit citations and an in-person art exhibit in the Library Gallery, as well as an online public exhibit of entries on the Lamorinda Arts Council website.

Please visit the site to enjoy last year's winners. There are images of the winning work in these categories: 2 dimensions, 3 dimensions, tradition and digital photography and digital arts.


For rules, eligibility and registration, visit the Lamorinda Arts Council page for artists at bit.ly/3HLrkhQ.

Melanie Light can be reached at info@melanielight.com.



COURTESY OF LINDA SUTTON


Linda Sutton's new series at the Orinda Library in January is a return to oil paint after decades of working in watercolor. This 24" x 26" painting, *Easy Reach*, is of a giraffe she saw on safari in Kenya.



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FILM



THE REEL LESS TRAVELED

ISLANDS OF LOVE AND WAR

TOM WESTLAKE



One of the things I usually do when writing this column is to find a commonality between the films I write about. Sometimes it's easy – but not this month. On this, the start of the New Year, both the International Film Showcase and the Chiller Diller Theatre have seemingly conspired together to present two films which could not be further apart in nearly every way.

I must admit my curiosity is such that I genuinely wonder if there's anyone who would admit to going to both of them. If you do, I would truly like to hear about it.

We'll lead off with quality. The International Film Showcase has an offering from Finland, although it takes place in Ireland. *My Sailor, My Love* is a film which demonstrates once again that no one is too old for love.

This overall theme is a well-established one and yet one cannot deny that love later in life is usually approached with caution, and even resentment – at first. My readers may also, at this point, think they might know where this is going already, and in part, they would be right.

Where the surprise lies, however, is where the central conflict comes from. More than that, I'm reluctant to say, though the trailer alone, easily viewed on the International Film Showcase, www.internationalshowcase.org, does much to give what I'm purposefully withholding away.

Still, I feel this theme of love later in life should not be dismissed. The film will have

[SEE REEL page 15]

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◆ OUSD from page 1

tion. The district receives no concentration grant funding.

According to the district, OUSD's per student funding amounts to around \$8,500, while the state average for that funding falls between \$10,000 and \$11,000.

Glimme noted OUSD makes up for the lack of state funding with the current parcel taxes, which include Measure A, approved in 2003 and Measure B, passed by voters in 2009. The two tax measures have exemptions based on senior and low-income status. The new proposed parcel tax would only include the senior exemption, said Glimme, with anybody age 65 or older able to apply.

Measure A provides the school district with \$385 per parcel, while Measure B adds \$124 per parcel.

The two taxes add up to about 12% of OUSD's revenue, as explained by the district's funding information page. The funding raised by the measures used to account for much more of the district's revenue, explained Glimme, but since the amount collected remains stagnant, "[its] purchasing power has diminished."

Further complicating issues is the pay for OUSD teachers remains one of the lowest in the area, which affects the attraction and retention of high-quality instructional staff. In a pamphlet from the district, OUSD outlines its budget percentages, which illustrates around 80% of the budget is dedicated to supporting teachers

and school employees. The remaining 20% is spent on technology, books, instructional materials and other supportive services for schools.

Parent contributions through donations and fundraising add up to around 12% of district revenue through the Orinda Network for Education (ONE).

"They actually bear quite a bit on their shoulders to contribute towards the education of our students," said Glimme, acknowledging parents make up a small percentage of city residents.

Small class sizes and the continuance of school programs, as well as the retention of quality educators are areas OUSD aims to support. Given, however, the lack of state funding, "either you make cuts on [district] expenditures" affecting class sizes and strong academic programs, due to the inability to fill teacher positions, or "you [need to] find new revenue, and that's really where this parcel tax came in," said Glimme.

The new parcel tax would require a two-third approval from voters, and a decision regarding whether the tax will be determined via local election to be examined by the Board of Education.

In Orinda, "we pride ourselves on the quality of our schools, clearly," said Glimme. "Our scores and our programs demonstrate the high quality, and that's the reason why we don't want to go down the road of changing the quality of the programs, and we want to be able to recruit the best staff."

Andrea Madison can be reached at drea.madison.05@gmail.com.

◆ TRIBUTE from page 2

Chamber of Commerce members Mike McGill and Juliet Don to name just a few.

The program culminated with a ribbon-cutting and dedication of the Library Rotunda as the Amy Worth Rotunda.

Worth, who acknowledged being "overwhelmed" by all the accolades, thanked her husband Tom and daughters Betsy, Annie and Kate for not only putting up with her long hours, but for helping her with mailings and other tasks throughout the years.

A "Thank You" program included many more acknowledgements and well wishes, including Orinda City Clerk Sheri Smith who wrote, "Over the years, because of her vast knowledge and patience to teach, she has been a mentor and inspiration to me. We often spoke many times a day regarding the day-to-day workings of a city."

Smith noted she hoped to still call on Worth's "wise counsel from time to time."

Sally Hogarty can be reached at sallyhogarty@gmail.com.

◆ OCF from page 5

administrative costs. It relies on Board of Trustee members who volunteer their time and talents in the furtherance of improving the quality of life in Orinda.

In addition to myself, OCF would like to acknowledge the all-volunteer Board of Trustees for their tireless efforts: Sue Severson (president), Richard Westin (vice president), Annette Linney (treasurer), Vince Dell'Aquila (secretary), Larry Berger, Natalie Fay, Gene Gottfried, James Keefe, Larry Shustack and Tina Zwahlen. We thank these individuals for their commitment and dedication.

We also thank all of our donors in supporting the wonderful events and organizations which bring such joy and community spirit.

Carlos Baltodano can be reached at cbalt ldc@comcast.net.

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CLASSIFIEDS

◆ HOGARTY from page 10

to be at the ground breaking ceremony for what is now Wilder, with its beautiful playing fields, art center and lovely homes.”

Writing stories about people sometimes has an impact on reporters that lingers for years. One such story for Hogarty was about the execution-style murder in August 1995 of Maria Elena Corrieo, 68, and her daughter Gina Roberts, 51.

Corrieo owned Maria Elena’s restaurant in Concord. Carrying the day’s receipts home with them after work, mother and daughter were followed to their Orinda house on Moraga Way and brutally murdered for the cash they carried. Hogarty connected with the surviving family members and was invited to share a meal at the restaurant, where she was deeply moved by the family’s expressions of love.

Other stories that remain special to Hogarty include one about Orinda children making and delivering peace kits to Paradise students who were impacted by the devastating fire that destroyed their town in 2019.

Then there was the Holden student who overcame very difficult circumstances to stay in school, pursue her dream

and graduate high school. And Hogarty can’t forget the California Independent Film Festival that allowed interviews with stars like Tippi Hedren and Fay Dunaway.

In parting Hogarty said, “I want to emphasize how much I enjoyed getting to know the residents of Orinda, city staff and all the wonderful writers and editors I worked with.”

For three decades, Hogarty provided Orinda with a newspaper that residents could count on to deliver the facts needed to make good decisions about events in their city. She has told stories about Orindans and their talents, hopes, achievements and contributions to Orinda. She has served this community well, and she will be sorely missed.

Hogarty will continue with acting, her great passion. Early this month, she is off to New York to film a commercial for a Canadian medical research company. You can catch her next stage appearance at the Campbell Theater, 636 Ward Street, Martinez (www.campbelltheater.com) where she’ll perform in *I’m Herbert*, from Jan. 13 – 29.

Lynda Leonard can be reached at lyndaeleonard@gmail.com.

◆ MOFD from page 10

had several instances where the crew at [Fire Station] 45 has not been available to respond to a second call in their area, because they were either on the engine or ambulance. This puts lives and property in danger.”

For Jorgens, the bottom line is – more data is needed.

“Many members of the community spoke up and said we needed more data to make an informed decision,” said Jorgens. “The

board has a fiduciary duty to the community to invest and spend its money wisely in the provision of emergency services. Some of us on the board believe this requires data and benchmarking from surrounding areas.”

Jorgens believes shelving decisions with the United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County, IAFF Local 1230 until then, is the responsible route.

“I believe it would be prudent to postpone the negotiations with the Union about staffing,” said Jorgens. “to update

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our Standards of Coverage study and analyze the data from our surrounding communities regarding the type of personnel to staff any needed positions under the guidance of the Board that the community just voted to entrust with our MOFD resources.”

Charleen Earley can be reached at editor@theorindanews.com.

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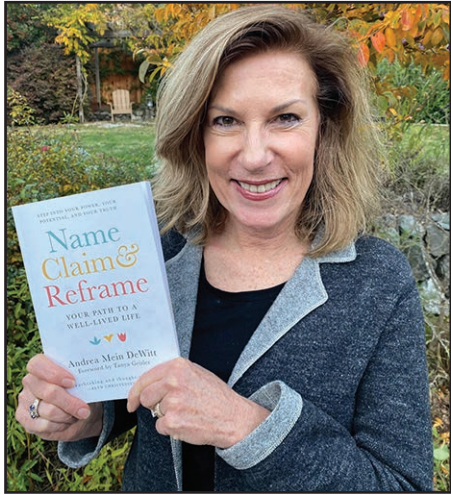
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BOOK AUTHOR

Orinda Author Gives Advice on How to Live Your Best Life



COURTESY OF ANDREA DEWITT
Standing with her first book hot off the press, **Andrea DeWitt** is thrilled to share the insights she learned through her life coach practice.

By KATHY CORDOVA
Staff Writer

Andrea DeWitt was always a rule-follower; she stuck to a tight script of academic and professional achievement her whole life, earning a master’s degree from UC Berkeley and building a successful 30+ year career in academia.

“I pretty much did everything right and felt I had done everything I wanted to do,” said DeWitt.

Yet a few years ago, DeWitt began to feel antsy, dissatisfied. It was time for change – a departure from “a stagnancy of a life that was no longer working,” as DeWitt called it.

It took a personal financial crisis – and her fear surrounding it, ironically enough – to give DeWitt a new perspective, along with the courage to leave her academic career and forge a new path to become a life coach. That journey also led her to write her recently published book, *Name, Claim and Reframe: Your Path to a Well-Lived Life*.

“I wouldn’t have done it if I wasn’t

afraid,” said DeWitt. “As I say in the book: fear and curiosity can’t exist together. If you’re afraid, just get curious; you’re going to learn something.”

Life’s disruptions (or “rogue waves,” as DeWitt calls them) such as divorce, illness or job loss can be major catalysts for change.

“When we’re off track, the universe gives us opportunities,” she said. “Great change is always preceded by chaos and confusion, and our darkest moments can have great purpose.”

People who have experienced life’s “rogue waves” are one audience for her book, as well as “anybody who wants to take their power back in a resourceful, intelligent way,” said DeWitt. “It’s about responding to life instead of reacting.”

While “reacting” and “responding” may seem like synonyms, DeWitt defines them very differently.

“When you’re triggered by a painful event or series of events in your past, you react in a wounded way,” said DeWitt. Some examples of self-limiting reactions are anger, defensiveness and violence.

By contrast, “A response means you have taken a beat to think about how you want to respond in a thoughtful way,” said DeWitt. “Such a response is visionary, resourceful and open-minded.”

The framework of DeWitt’s book explains the process of learning how to respond instead of react. It also includes a chart of corresponding behaviors to consider in the context of one’s own life. This process involves three steps:

- Name the triggers and limiting beliefs that are causing you to react instead of respond;
- Claim resonant actions that align with

your core values;

- Reframe your thinking so you can proceed with strategic and visionary optimism.

“It’s a structure that’s simple, but it’s not easy,” said DeWitt. “It’s about taking your power back in a graceful, optimistic way. Reframing is your opportunity to choose again.”

DeWitt calls employing these techniques the way of a “gentle warrior.” Of herself, she said: “I’m a recovering warrior. My natural response is to go for the sword. A gentle warrior can be powerful and graceful at the same time, but much more versatile. If more people chose to respond instead of react, we’d have less conflict in the world.”

A key component to becoming a gentle warrior is practicing self-compassion – being kind to yourself and knowing how to replenish your resources when you’re depleted. Instead of listening to the omnipresent inner critical voice, DeWitt suggests taking on a different perspective: “What if you treated yourself like someone you loved and wanted to help?”

In coaching her clients and writing her book, DeWitt applied all of her life experiences.

“In my role of a reading specialist, I helped emergent readers crack the code of print. Now I am helping seekers crack the code of themselves,” she said. “I help them understand what’s not working so we can find a pathway forward and they can find new ways of thinking and being.”

For more information, visit www.andreadewittadvisors.com.

Kathy Cordova can be reached at cordova@theorindanews.com.

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DeWitt’s three best pieces of advice for people who want to make a change in the new year:

- Take a leap and tell someone what you want to do in the new year. Tell them one goal and have a witness.
- Take one action towards that goal.
- Celebrate yourself for being brave and just keeping going.

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◆ **FORUM** from page 8

A specialist in insurgency and revolutionary warfare, Lamborn is the author of many books. His latest book, titled “Invisible,” focuses on covert Russian and Chinese efforts to use social media to spread disinformation with the intent to divide Americans and discredit U.S. Constitutional procedures.

Lamborn, who holds a BA in History from Washington University (St. Louis) and an MA in Chinese Studies from the University of Washington (Seattle), is an air war college graduate. A life member of the American Legion and a Past Commander, he has served his neighbors in various capacities and presently has turned his attention to addressing the problem of homelessness in San Antonio.

Registration at lopc.org/first-friday-forum is required to receive a confirmation email containing information about attending this free webinar.

Bobbie Dodson can be reached at bobbiedodson109@gmail.com.

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CAR TIME

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THE EV PROBLEM



XAVIER ESTRADA

Electrical Vehicles (EVs) are inevitable; they emit no greenhouse gases when driven, which is very different from fossil fuel vehicles. Problems regarding pollution from an EV occur in the manufacturing, charging and recycling process.

Manufacturing, fueling and recycling of the ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) has been perfected over the last 100 years, while the EV industry is still in its infancy. As a result, there is a lot of catching up to do in comparison.

A huge emission problem now has surfaced because the majority of lithium-ion batteries are produced in China, which uses coal as an energy source. Other countries have started to manufacture these batteries but have nowhere near the dominant percentage of the market China has.

Charging an EV brings the debate of “where is the electricity sourced?” The answer will vary from state to state, or country to country.

It isn't so much an EV dilemma, but an industry and legislation problem. For example, a state may rely on different forms of resources; one may favor renewables, another may rely more on fossil fuels, or a combination.

If an EV was charged solely on a fossil fuel power grid, it would still use less per mile of use than a gas vehicle according to research from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Also note that many states use a combination of renewable resources, projected to grow in the future, the impact of charging an EV is even less.

Lithium-ion technology isn't new, but

this is the first time it is used in a larger application on a mass consumer scale. Battery technology continues to advance on longevity, size and use, but will need to be replaced.

Recycling these large batteries is complex; it is not a simple process or logistically cheap. But many companies who have partnered with manufacturers, are working towards streamlining the process to help reduce mining of new resources. For example, Redwood Materials claims they can recapture 95% of the elements and reprocess them to be used in new batteries.

The problem isn't that EVs are a strain; it's more the carbon footprint has been ignored for a long time. For many decades the stranglehold of certain profitable industries has shaped our society to be what it is, making it difficult to change. But now the ramifications of the carbon footprint are at the forefront and we have to play catch up to turn the tables. Obviously, it would have been prudent to tackle them over time in the past.

Infrastructure and planning are way behind to break the long overdue reliance on fossil fuels. Getting up to speed is not easy or cheap. In fact, lithium-ion batteries made in China are detrimental to the environment, and the cost of purchasing an EV is high for the average consumer. Those two variables, along with the major lack of infrastructure, makes mass adoption a hard pill to swallow right now.

Xavier Estrada can be reached at xavier.estrada.freelance@gmail.com.

◆ SHOPPER from page 10

sweeter when cooked.

I find fresh turnip and rutabaga interchangeable in my recipes. Turnips remain white when cooked while rutabaga show off a gold color, but both are perfect candidates for baking, roasting, stir frying, mashing and boiling.

One of my favorite side dishes is a combination of mashed potato and rutabaga. Cook in separate saucepans since rutabagas take a little longer. Cook 2 pounds of each vegetable (peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces) in boiling, salted water before draining, mashing and combining with 2 to 3 tablespoons of butter, 1/3 cup milk, pepper to taste and a ¼ teaspoon nutmeg.

Fresh turnip or rutabaga greens are edible when harvested at the young and tender stage. Rutabaga leaves are mustard-tasting,

while turnip greens are more peppery. The leaves are good for salads or for sauteing and perfect in soups or stews to add texture and taste.

Rutabagas are better “keepers” than turnips because of their denser flesh and lower water content. Remove any greens and store separately before storing the unwashed roots in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Turnips store for two weeks; rutabagas for three.

The Orinda Farmers' Market is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Orinda Way in Orinda Village. For more information, visit www.cccfm.org, Instagram @OrindaFarmersMarket, facebook.com/OrindaFarmersMarket or call the market's hotline at 925.322.6228.

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◆ REEL from page 12

its premier showing at the Orinda Theatre on Jan. 20. Check the aforementioned website or www.orindamovies.com for further details and show times.

The next movie should not, in any reasonable world, even be mentioned in the company of the first film, but that's never stopped me before, so here goes.

I have written about the cheaply done, drive-in movies of the '50s and '60s, but I've neglected to write about another genre that is just as ripe for ridicule, namely the fine, high-class work from Japan's Toho Studios.

The studio's output is probably a staple of most generation's adolescent memories of sitting in front of the TV and watching giant monsters trample entire cities beneath their feet. Well, Lord Blood-Rah invites you to relive those memories with a showing of *King Kong vs. Godzilla*.

This film involves icebergs, Big Pharma, ape-napping and, of course, an epic battle between an iconic American monster and

an equally well-known Japanese giant lizard.

This latest installment of The Chiller Diller Theatre is at the Orinda Theatre on Jan. 21, at 9:30 p.m.

So now you know what you are doing for at least two days in January. For the rest of the time I, as always, encourage you to go towards those wonderful images made of sound and light, for that's where the reel magic lies.

Tom Westlake can be reached at poppinjay@earthlink.net.

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SPORTS / PET OF THE MONTH

Breaking Soccer Gender Barriers in World Cup and Orinda Soccer Clubs

By NEIL BUI
Contributing Writer

As soccer sports enthusiasts tuned-in to cheer their favorite 2022 FIFA World Cup teams, the inspiration to watch and play this sport extended to young female athletes.

The 2022 World Cup broke down traditional gender roles.

For the first time, the Qatar matches had female referees officiating the men's games, the first all-female referee crew and the first female lead referee.

Beyond Qatar, inspiration is found in Orinda's community as well.

Orinda's all-female referee crew – Joselyn Smith, Madison Bernstein, Elise Desai and Victorine Perri – are playing competi-



(L-R) **Joselyn Smith, Victorine Perri, Elise Desai** and **Madison Bernstein** are referees of the East Bay Eclipse Soccer Club.

tive soccer at high levels for the East Bay Eclipse Soccer Club (EBESC). At the same time, they are certified USSF (U.S. Soccer Federation) referees and officiate boy's and girl's matches during the weekends.

"I have admiration for the work that professional women referees are doing," said Desai, a Miramonte freshman and J.V. soccer player.

With the encouragement of their soccer club, these women have developed an understanding of the game achieved only by being on both sides of the referee's whistle.

"At Eclipse, we encourage female

involvement in all levels of leadership, including our board of directors and club staff," said Director of the East Bay Eclipse Soccer Club, Shane Carney. EBESC's home is in Rheem, though all tryouts take place yearly at Wilder in Orinda. "Having seen female referees succeed in the club, our teenage female players see the opportunity to be referees as well. They continue the cycle by being inspirations for the young girls playing in the games they referee."

Desai added, "I look forward to a day when being a female referee is commonplace rather than remarkable."

Orinda resident Kevin Desai, who is Elise' father, said the sport builds self-assurance in their kids.

"Both my daughters have played soccer from a very young age," he said. "As a parent, it's exciting to see the confidence and composure our kids gain from the sport."

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Pet of the Month

MEG SEXTON

Major is an energetic two-year-old English Springer Spaniel. "The nickname for this breed is "Velcro dog" and Major is no exception," said his owner Andrea McKee Cisternino. "He is loving and his favorite place to be is with his people. Major loves to go on hikes in Lamorinda, and if there is a pool or a river, watch out, he's going to be the first one to dive in!"

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