



# THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis  
Volume 37, Number 4

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12 Issues Annually  
April 2022

## City Council/MOFD Address Orinda's Need for Wildfire Prevention Plan

By ANDREA MADISON  
Staff Writer

The Orinda Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission (SSTOC), which was established by the City Council in 2021 to provide advice on Measure R funds, published the first draft of its annual report in early March.

Issues named within the report as priorities include the threat of wildfire for the City, reduction of fire fuels from public and private properties, disaster planning and emergency response. Measure R was approved by voters November, 2020, increasing the existing add-on sales tax in Orinda from ½ cent to one cent. It's set to run for 20 years.

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD), named as a "particularly critical" organization in the annual report, carries the responsibility to control hazardous vegetation and reduce wildfire fuels.

MOFD is an independent special district and, according to the SSTOC report, also carries responsibility for the enforcement of both California's and its own Fire Codes. MOFD's "Exterior Hazard Control Ordinance" sees the district working alongside private landowners, the East Bay Regional Park District, the City of Orinda and other public agencies and fire districts to mitigate wildfire risk in the area.

The SSTOC report states that a significant fraction of Orinda is rated as a "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone," highlighting the importance of a strong prevention plan.

"A lot of focus has been on fire prevention," City Manager David Biggs said on March 9. "We've also been doing a lot of communication to educate people. The expenditure side of it is only a small slice of the overall picture of fire prevention and emergency preparedness."

But is enough being done to reduce the risk of devastating wildfires in Orinda?

Resident Steve Cohn is concerned the City Council and MOFD are not adequately addressing the need for a wildfire prevention program in the city.

"Unless you have a program to keep the forest down, it's going to grow again," said Cohn. "You need an ongoing program."

The topic was on the table during a March 9 SSTOC Zoom meeting.

"We have a real opportunity here to make a difference with Measure R funds," SSTOC Commissioner Paula Reinman said, encouraging the commission to "think about this a little differently."

She spoke about the possibility of holding a workshop with Firewise USA, a nationally recognized program helping community members reduce the risk of wildfires affecting their homes and community.

"I do think that we want to be efficient, we want to be judicious, and we want to be effective in how this money is spent and that requires some long-term planning, as well as short-term," Commissioner Latika Malkani said during the meeting, speaking of the need for a strategic plan overall.

Malkani said a science-based approach to the wildfire prevention issue, which

[SEE WILDFIRE page 2]

### Miramonte High School Performance



JEFF HEYMAN

Front row (L-R) Lindsay Fontes and Nina Fontes, back row Alice Ball, Natalie Clauson, Chris Ionascu and Emi Hamiti are gearing up to perform four "Spring One Acts" to be performed April 26-29 at Miramonte High School. See article Pg 9.

### Goat Weed Abatement Done Naturally

By STACY CRINKS  
Contributing Writer

When it comes to weed abatement in the Orinda Oaks Park, the City is not kidding around. An organic alternative to controlled burns and weed whacking, 263 goats are quietly chomping away at the grass and shrubs the City removes each year before fire season.

"The goats are here on a trial basis, us-

ing Measure R funds for fuel mitigation efforts," said Measure R Commissioner, Latika Malkani.

Goats R Us is an Orinda-based family business owned by Terri, Egon and Zephyr Oyarzun since 1995. Shepherd Pedro Paocar and his dog Pinky – plus mesh electric fencing – keep the herd moving through the park and safe from predators. Paocar expects the goats to complete their tasty work by the end of March.



STACY CRINKS

Find these stories and more on our website [www.theorindanews.com](http://www.theorindanews.com).

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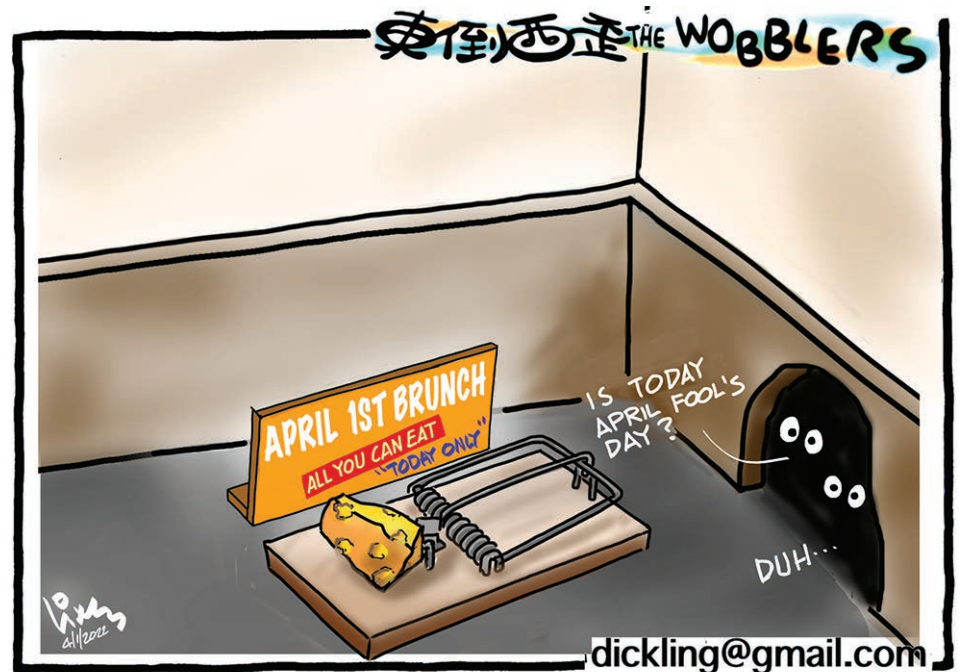
CARTOON

Orinda Rotary Spring Egg Hunt



RODNEY LAL

Orinda Rotary and the City of Orinda hosts its annual **Spring Egg Hunt**, Saturday, April 16 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., at the Orinda Community Center Park at the play field area across from Rite Aid on Orinda Way. This special event is geared for toddlers, Kindergartners, first and second graders. Prizes, treats and photos with the White Bunny will be available from 10:45 a.m. to 12 p.m. The Egg Hunt starts promptly at 11 a.m. Photo from the last Spring Egg Hunt pre-pandemic, 2019.



dickling@gmail.com

◆ WILDFIRE from page 1

would be presented to the SSTOC by UC Berkeley's John Radke, could "shed light" on the plan.

"It's basically using science to build a very dynamic strategy to mitigate [and] reduce the intensity of fire in Orinda," Radke, Professor of City & Regional Planning and Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning, said during the meeting.

It's not about responding to a fire, he said, it's about a long-term mitigation strategy that lives on in the community.

In the SSTOC annual report, recent wildfire prevention and preparedness efforts made by the City are listed and include the adoption of a disallowed plant list and the addition of a MOFD-staffed woodchipper and new truck for year-round service to Orinda residents.

A guide available on the MOFD website, focusing on wildfire preparedness and evacuation in the Lamorinda area, dedicates two pages to tips that reduce the risk for homeowners.

At a joint meeting held virtually on March 16, the Orinda City Council and MOFD recognized the City's need for both a collaborative effort between the two entities and resident participation regarding fire fuel mitigation and prevention.

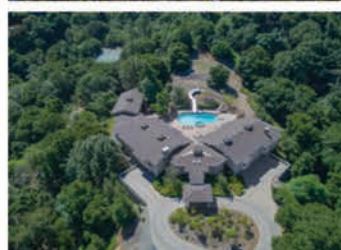
Mayor Dennis Fay spoke of the creation of a separate committee to handle the pressing issue, while MOFD Fire Chief Dave Winnacker acknowledged that, in terms of fire fuel mitigation on the ground, "We are far from taken care of."

"I do want to be careful about how far we step into the role of where the fire department should be, and I think that is some of the hesitancy that the City Council has," said SSTOC Commissioner Rachele Latimer.

"I just want to be sure we are being careful about how we are using the money," she added. "And making sure the fire department is meeting us equally in their obligations to get out there and do the community outreach and really work on this in partnership with us."

Andrea Madison can be reached at [drea.madison.05@gmail.com](mailto:drea.madison.05@gmail.com).

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Laura Abrams

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THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA Board  
Spring is in the Air



CINDY POWELL

Spring is in the air. On April 1, Walk to Work Day, get out and enjoy our beautiful town. And while you are out, play a practical joke on someone for April Fool's Day. If you are reading this too late and got fooled, sign up for the *The Orinda News* online and get added to the growing list of people getting their news early.

On April 3, I will attend the Live At the Orinda concert series with Natalie Douglas. Last month, Marilu Henner performed an incredible show. Mayor Fay and I agree, if you have not been to one of the cabaret shows, you are missing a real gem in the Lamorinda community.

By the way, the new curtains and screens are up and fundraisers are in the works for new speakers. Thank you, Derek and Leonard, for all your time and work.

April 6: "New Beer's Eve" was the night

before prohibition for beer was repealed in 1933 by President FDR. Over a 1 1/2 million gallons of beer were sold on April 7. Be grateful and enjoy a cold one ... after planting seeds for California Poppy Day.

April 11: National Pet Day celebrates the special relationship between humans and pets and the joy pets bring to our lives. It also raises awareness of animals awaiting rescue or a permanent home.

April 16 is Librarian Day and we have the BEST library and staff in the county! Stop in to say thank you and remember to always have a current library card. Michael Beller, who goes out of his way to keep everyone excited about reading, loves questions.

The Rotary Spring Egg Hunt is also on Saturday, April 16 at 10:30 a.m. at the Orinda Community Center Park. If you are

[SEE MESSAGE page 12]

Get Ready for Orinda Action Day

By SALLY HOGARTY  
Executive Editor

With COVID cases on a downward spiral, the City of Orinda, in partnership with the Orinda Community Foundation, will once again hold Orinda Action Day.

This year the community clean-up event takes place April 23 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Meet at Orinda Library Plaza where snacks

and a light lunch will be provided.

In past years, families, club groups and friends have come together to clean up the along Orinda's roads and downtown area as well as the creek and Orinda's parks.

To sign up for a slot, go to <https://bit.ly/34KFX49>.

Sally Hogarty can be reached at [sally@theorindanews.com](mailto:sally@theorindanews.com).



SALLY HOGARTY

These enthusiastic youngsters cleaned the Village District during the 2018 Orinda Action Day.

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- 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.

Visit our office at 26 Orinda Way  
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[www.OrindaAssociation.org](http://www.OrindaAssociation.org)

The Orinda Association  
P.O. Box 97  
Orinda, CA 94563



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WRITING CONTEST / CAR TIME

# Poul Anderson Creative Writing Contest Announces April 15 Deadline

By SALLY HOGARTY  
Executive Editor

If science fiction, memoirs, poetry and other creative writing fuels your passion, The Poul Anderson Creative Writing Contest should spark your interest.

Run by The Friends of the Orinda Library, the annual contest is open to students

who reside or attend high school in Orinda. Students submit one entry in any of the four categories for a total of three entries. The categories are Science Fiction/Fantasy, Essay/Memoir/Biography, Poetry and Short Story. Submission deadline is midnight, Friday, April 15.

The contest pays homage to the late Poul Anderson, a popular science-fiction writer and Orinda resident. Originally from Pennsylvania, Anderson wrote his first stories while an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota. He earned his B.A. in physics with honors but decided to pursue a career in writing rather than science.

The prolific author wrote fan-

tasy and historical novels as well as short stories. His accolades include seven Hugo Awards and three Nebula Awards.

A panel of professionals in writing and publishing will judge entries in the Poul Anderson Creative Writing Contest, with awards announced prior to the end of the school year. Up to four winners will be awarded \$500 each.

For contest entry forms, visit [www.friendsoftheorindalibrary.org/writingcontest](http://www.friendsoftheorindalibrary.org/writingcontest).

Sally Hogarty can be reached at [sally@theorindanews.com](mailto:sally@theorindanews.com).



COURTESY OF DOUBLEDAY  
This photo of Poul Anderson was used on the dust jacket of his novel *Trader to the Stars*, 1964.

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**CAR TIME**

IF I TELL THEM EVERYTHING  
IT WILL COST ME MORE

RAYMOND KUNZ

As a consumer, you may think, “if I tell them everything, it will cost me more” is an accurate statement. And there may have been times this could have been true, at least partially. The reality is, the more information you give your repair/service facility, the easier it is to get good direction about your vehicle’s corrective needs.

This may be your first experience with whatever issue your vehicle may be having, but a repair/service facility may have seen this symptom dozens of times. Detailing as much information as you can gives us a better direction more quickly, which in turn, can eventually cost less.

*Reputable repair/service facilities always tell their customers up front how much diagnostics will cost to avoid surprises.*

Facilities also have several “on-line” services they subscribe to that have common failure issues listed by system. Again, the more information the better.

And, even if you give them all you know, it may still require time (i.e., money) to inspect and test for the particular issue. In many cases, this time may be noted as diagnosis or testing time.

Some repair/service facilities may tell you that this “time” is included with the

repair, but make no mistake, you are paying for it somewhere.

Most technicians in the industry go to hours and hours of classes to keep up with today’s technology, as well as spending thousands of dollars on specialized testing equipment personally in addition to what the facility itself spends on equipment.

Since those costs (as with doctors) get passed on to customers somehow and somewhere, don’t be fooled by facilities that claim they don’t charge for diagnostics or testing time.

Reputable facilities always tell their customers up front how much such time will cost to avoid surprises when it comes to paying for services or repairs in the end.

Remember, that the more information you can give, the easier it is to find the cause of the problem. Conversely, keeping something from them could result in a direction that takes more time (and, yes, more money) to find the answer to the very same issue.

And for those of you who may think “auto-repair” is easy, think about this for a minute: There is more computing power in most newer vehicles today than there was in the Saturn rocket that sent a man to the moon!

Raymond Kunz can be reached at [service@orindamotors.com](mailto:service@orindamotors.com).

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NEWS BRIEFS / POLICE

# Around Town: Orinda News Briefs

## ONE Orinda Makes Progress Towards Helping Others

Orinda Network for Education (ONE), formed in 2020 by the Parents' Clubs of all six Orinda public schools and the Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO), is making progress towards reaching its \$4.6 million goal.

"Despite the pandemic, the ONE ASK concept is working!" said Operations Manager of ONE, Meredith Friedman. "Previously, school parents were asked to contribute to both their Parents' Clubs and EFO. By combining efforts and creating ONE, we're seeing more donations for the full ask amount, higher participation rates and more collaboration and communication among schools."

Friedman said the budgets of OUSD and AUHSD are fluid as district needs and personnel change throughout the year.

"We won't really know if we've achieved what we need for 'a fully funded school year' until the end of the fiscal year in June," added Friedman. "At this trajectory, we expect to reach that goal, but we are definitely not there yet."

ONE's community fundraising efforts are \$100,000 shy of its goal. There are several ways to donate. Community and business donations can be made at [www.oneorinda.org/community-giving](http://www.oneorinda.org/community-giving) and [www.oneorinda.org/business-giving](http://www.oneorinda.org/business-giving). School families can donate to their schools at [www.oneorinda.org/family-giving](http://www.oneorinda.org/family-giving).

For more information, visit [www.oneorinda.org](http://www.oneorinda.org).

## Nancy Rowland named New Head of School at Orinda Academy

On March 1, Orinda Academy (OA) announced Nancy Rowland will be the next Head of School for the 2022-23 school year. Rowland will succeed Head of School, Dr. Susan Eva Porter, July 1.

Rowland comes to the school with 28 years of progressive, independent school career experience at the Lab School in Washington D.C., a prominent arts-centered school for bright students with dyslexia and other language-based learning differences.

She visited Orinda Academy in February and said she was "impressed by the strong sense of individuality expressed by each student and the shared sense of belonging amongst students and

faculty."

As Associate Director of Admissions for the last 10 years at the Lab School, Rowland initiated relationships with the Black Student Fund and the Latino Student Fund and led the steering committee, which developed Lab's first DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) strategic plan. Rowland was also active in the Maryland Emerging Leaders Seminar (AIMS) to deepen her learning of school governance and continue her growth as a leader.

Founded in 1982, Orinda Academy is an independent, private high school serving grades 9-12 in Orinda.

## New Bill to Prevent Wildfires Introduced

Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan introduced AB 2070, to prevent wildfires by increasing coordination between local fire districts and utility companies, according to a Feb. 14 press release by Jordan C. Curley, chief of staff to Bauer-Kahan (AD-16).

According to the press release, "AB 2070 would require utilities to notify fire districts (24 hours before beginning high-risk mitigation work in a fire risk area during fire season) of controlled burns and other risky mitigation work during high fire-risk times, and it will increase accountability and transparency when a private utility company conducts high-risk fire mitigation work – ensuring that local fire districts are aware and prepared when utility companies conduct 'hot work' or controlled burns within their jurisdiction."

The utility will be fined \$500 for failure to complete such notification.

"Our fire districts do so much to protect us from fires. It's essential we give them all the tools they need, especially during fire season," said Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan in the press release. "Utility work must happen in collaboration with fire chiefs to ensure our communities are safe from accidental blazes."

The press release addressed what initiated AB 2070:

"This bill comes from the judgment in a legal case between PG&E and the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District. PG&E had actually sued the city of San Ramon to avoid an ordinance requiring the utility report when they did risky hot work. The court ruled in 2020 in favor

[SEE NEWS page 6]



# POLICE BLOTTER

February 15 through March 14

## Calls for Service

Adult Missing: 1 incident  
 Accident with Fire: 1 incident  
 Assault, Simple: 1 incident  
 Battery: 2 incidents  
 Burglary, Auto: 1 incident: Spring Ct.  
 Burglary, Residential: 1 incident: Glorietta Ct.  
 Children's Civil Commitment: 1 incident  
 Civil Disturbance: 1 incident  
 Court Order Violation: 1 incident  
 Driving Under the Influence Misdemeanor: 1 incident: Los Cerros Way  
 Failure to Obey Officer: 1 incident  
 Fraud: 1 incident  
 Fraud, Impersonation: 1 incident

Grand Theft: 2 incidents: Orinda Way, Southwood Dr.  
 Malicious Telephone Calls: 1 incident  
 Outside Assist: 2 incidents  
 Petty Theft: 1 incident: Irwin Way  
 Petty Theft from Vehicle: 1 incident: Monte Vista Rd.  
 Property Found: 1 incident  
 Terrorist Threats: 1 incident  
 Vandalism: 2 incidents  
 Wrong Way Driver: 1 incident

## Arrest

Probation Violation: 1 arrest  
 Recovered Stolen Vehicle: 1 recovery  
 Warrant Arrest: 4 arrests

– Compiled by David Dierks  
 Assistant Editor



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EDITORIAL

# Editorial

## Doing Our Part to Help the Ukrainian People

It is with a heavy heart that I write about this senseless war waged by Russian President Vladimir Putin against the brave and courageous Ukrainians. Today (as I write this), it is Day 17, and my heart breaks every single day this unwarranted war continues.

I listen daily to my radio, CNN and MSNBC, and while there have been a few days I've had to take a break from the gut-wrenching, hard-to-hear updates, I know in the back of my mind, there is no break for the millions of Ukrainians, many of whom have since fled west to neighboring countries for safety.

As a journalism teacher, I gave my students an opportunity to voice their thoughts and feelings of what they were/are experiencing. Many have friends, or friends-of-friends, who live in Ukraine. My students expressed pain, anxiety and heartbreak. They spoke of difficulty concentrating and dire thoughts of nuclear war – all the thoughts that I'm sure echo the worries of everyone in the world today.

I've also thought of the helplessness felt, a sense of what-can-I-do-to-help and a question about whether it would make a difference.

Immediately, instead of complaining about the soaring prices at the gas pumps (which was \$4.53 at my usual ARCO gas station in Oakley before this war crime started, and today it's nearing \$6.00), I see paying the extra money without complaining as a minor sacrifice if it helps the Ukrainians in some way.

I also donated to the World Central Kitchen. A hot meal for those displaced makes me feel a bit of relief.

Founded by Jose Andres in 2010, the World Central Kitchen is a non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to feeding those in the wake of natural disasters. Here's the link I used to donate: <https://bit.ly/3i3vL9O>.

Another reputable organization is The Rotary Foundation, one of the largest humanitarian non-profits.

John Germ, trustee chair of The Rotary Foundation, sent out an email communication early March to Rotary International District 5160 in response to the deepening refugee crisis:

"The Rotary Foundation Trustees have decided to prioritize contributions made to the Disaster Response Fund until April 30 to support disaster response grants for districts affected by these events. These expedited disaster response grants can be used to supply water, food, medicine, shelter and clothing."

He added, "Half a million people have fled Ukraine and are in dire need of emergency aid. The United Nations estimates that number of refugees could grow to as many as five million people displaced. Rotary clubs in Europe and around the world have stepped up their relief work, some working on the ground to help displaced families."

Here's the link to the Disaster Relief Fund, <https://my.rotary.org/en/disaster-response-fund>.

As of today's writing, over 2.5 million Ukrainians have fled their homeland.

One more reputable organization – and there are many more – is Catholic Relief Services, and here's its link: <https://bit.ly/3I8KE5n>.

Sometimes it's difficult to know which organization to trust. My advice is to do the research and talk to others you know and trust.

I believe in prayer too. Praying for peace and solidarity, staying updated through reputable news outlets, finding ways to help and continued research – all of this helps, in my humble opinion.

– Charleen Earley, Editor-in-Chief

*Charleen Earley can be reached at [editor@theorindanews.com](mailto:editor@theorindanews.com).*



JEFF HEYMAN

On March 7 (L-R) Orinda resident **Jud Hammon**, **Vice Mayor Inga Miller**, **Mayor Dennis Fay** and **City Councilmember Amy Worth**, attended the Lamorinda Solidarity with Ukraine peace vigil at the Lafayette Hillside Memorial. A fitting location, the Memorial was started in 2006 as a place of healing for loved ones and veterans to pay respect to fallen comrades. It not only commemorates individual national service contributions, but also serves as a reminder of the terrible costs of war.

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## Letter to the Editor

### Many Orinda Residents Want a More Vibrant Downtown, Let's Hear From Them

I enjoyed reading your coverage on the Downtown Precise Plan ("City Council Looking at Downtown Rezoning and Housing Needs") in the February 2022 issue.

One nitpick. While several quotes were scattered throughout the issue that questioned the need for revitalization, there were no opinions included from anyone on the pro-revitalization side as a counterbalance.

I suspect that a large percentage of Orinda residents feel strongly that the downtown does, in fact, need to be updated. While this cohort may not be as vocal in this medium, it's important that their positions be reflected in these pages in the future. I would say that it's likely a top civic issue for many residents in the under 50 set in particular and a source of civic pride (or lack thereof).

Orinda residents like to think of the City as a village. It's entirely possible to keep the village feel intact while providing more contemporary food/entertainment offerings

and some measured development. Adding a few more diverse restaurants or grocery options to a city plan that also injects a bit of charm into the surroundings will not cause people to confuse Orinda with Manhattan anytime soon.

We all have our favorite spots in Orinda. That said, we could do a lot more, given the great space, resources and demographics that are in place.

- Jeff Balaguras

### ◆ NEWS from page 6

of the Fire District, which then reached a compromise with PG&E that will be codified in AB 2070," according to the press release.

For more information on AB 2070 and other new bills, visit <http://a16.asmdc.org>.

*Compiled by Charleen Earley, who can be reached at [editor@theorindanews.com](mailto:editor@theorindanews.com).*

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PERFORMING ARTS

# Cabaret and Jazz Vocalist Natalie Douglas Performs at the Orinda Theatre

By CHARLEEN EARLEY  
Editor-in-Chief

When the pandemic hit in 2020, Michael Williams and Derek Zemrak of the Orinda Theatre had to make the difficult but necessary decision to postpone their world-renowned cabaret and jazz singer Natalie Douglas – a show that would kick off the Live At the Orinda concert series.

The good news is she's back, and her show is set for April 3 at 5 p.m. at the Orinda Theatre, located at 2 Orinda Theater Square.

Douglas will perform her show titled, *Four Women: Nina, Lena, Abbey & Billie*, which is a tribute to legends Nina Simone, Lena Horne, Abbey Lincoln and Billie Holiday. Douglas, who has lived in New York for the last 30 years, is married to actor and personal fitness concierge, Billy Joe Young. Together, they raise Moses, their cat.

For Douglas, her life in the spotlight began when she was young.

"I started singing when I was a little kid," said Douglas. "My mom taught me to sing in the kitchen when I was four. I've

been singing my whole life. I just fell in love with it."

As an only child with a lot of time on her own, Douglas immersed herself in books, songs and music.

A discovery was made when she began listening to vinyl records.

"My parents had a great record collection," she said. "And once I realized that you can listen to a song and go learn it, it just started for me. I was like, 'oh, that's who I am' and 'that's what I do! I'm a singer.' It was almost before I knew what all those words meant."

In high school, Douglas performed in chorus and madrigals, in her school plays and musicals, "but it wasn't necessarily something I thought about pursuing as a career," she said.

Graduating high school at age 16, Douglas found herself at grad school by age 19. She worked on the campus newspaper at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where she received her master's degree in psychology and certificates in theater and Women's Studies.

It's where her friends got a taste of her

singing at a café.

They encouraged her to continue, but Douglas was doubtful about their praise, since she figured these were her friends. Of course, they're going to be kind.

That's when she took the next step and began singing to strangers – audience members who didn't know her – at clubs, bars and steakhouse restaurants. She began hitting open mic clubs, and when a couple of her UCLA friends moved to New York, she went to visit them.

Falling in love with New York, she stayed after singing in a club one night. A waitress came over to her and said, "Danny wants [SEE DOUGLAS page 17]



BILL WESTMORELAND

Renowned jazz vocalist, **Natalie Douglas**, performs her show titled, *Four Women: Nina, Lena, Abbey & Billie*, which is a tribute to legends Nina Simone, Lena Horne, Abbey Lincoln and Billie Holiday, April 3 at 5 p.m. at the Orinda Theatre, located at 2 Orinda Theater Square.

# Improvements at Orinda Theatre

By SALLY HOGARTY  
Executive Editor

All three theaters at the Orinda Theatre now boast state-of-the-art screens, including a larger screen in Theatre 2 (180 seats). This marks the first time the screens have been replaced since 1989. New curtains were also installed in Theatre 2 and 3.

"We are working with a designer to closely match the curtain in the main auditorium," said owner Derek Zemrak. "We also purchased a new lens and installed a brighter bulb in the projector, which truly makes the picture on the screen come to life. If you have not already seen a movie in the main auditorium, please come soon and see the difference."

For the past six months, Zemrak and his staff have been working to improve the sound experience at the iconic theater complex.

"We've also negotiated with a world-renowned sound engineer, but the deal is not yet completed. So, keep your fingers crossed. If all goes as planned, the historic Orinda Theatre will have the premier sound in the area," Zemrak added.

Zemrak plans to begin installation of the



COURTESY OF ORINDA THEATRE

Star of television, film and Broadway, **Marilyn Henner**, performed with her band in Theatre 2 at the Orinda Theatre March 6. Theater staff hope to soon have a new sound system installed to enhance both movie and concert attendees' experience.

new sound system in Theatre 2, where the Live At the Orinda concert series performs. Special fundraising events to pay for the new system are taking place. The first one, an Oscar Preview Brunch, took place March 20, hosted by film critics Matias Bombal and Zemrak.

For more theater information, visit [www.orindamovies.com](http://www.orindamovies.com).

*Sally Hogarty can be reached at [sally@theorindanews.org](mailto:sally@theorindanews.org).*

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PETS OF THE MONTH / STUDENTS

Pets of the Month



SEAN CUNNINGHAM

"These are our dogs **Bones and Parker**. Bones is the larger one, he's almost 10-years-old, and likes to go on long hikes in Wilder and swim in any body of water. Parker, she's 4-years-old, loves to cuddle with anyone that is willing and loves to play with all dogs. Bones and Parker are constant companions, half-siblings and from the same breeder," said Sean Cunningham.

Two Local Students Make Their Professional Debut in a Fun Musical



SALLY HOGARTY

Local students **McKenna Rose** (left) and **Keenan Moran** will soon be performing five days a week in a professional musical in San Francisco while their families do their own "dancing" through elaborate carpool schedules.

By SALLY HOGARTY  
Executive Editor

Not too many people would use the adjective "fun" to describe a funeral home, but such is the case for the five-time Tony Award winning memoir *Fun Home*. Based on Alison Bechdel's graphic novel about growing up in the family-owned funeral home (where caskets became familiar playthings), Lisa Kron and Jeanine Tesori's musical adaptation makes its San Francisco debut this month. But, more importantly for two young Lamorinda students, it marks their professional theatrical debut.

Orinda Intermediate School 6th grader McKenna Rose plays the precocious and highly opinionated Small Alison and St. Perpetua School 4th grader Keenan Moran, plays her energetic younger brother John.

"It's so exciting being in my first professional theater role," said Rose, who previously performed at Sleepy Hollow Elementary School as well as Lafayette's Performing Arts Academy and the Peter Pan Foundation. "I've never been in a play before where I didn't know everyone."

Moran, who also can't wait to be performing in San Francisco, looks forward to rehearsing one number in particular, where he sings and dances on top of a coffin.

"It's a ridiculous solo that opens the production and shows what a funny character I play," said Moran. "He doesn't really understand what's going on and just keeps interrupting everyone. He has lots of energy

and a quirky imagination."

A finalist for the 2014 Pulitzer Prize in Drama, *Fun Home* explores Bechdel's life at three different stages, with Rose playing the youngest Alison. The story is told in a non-linear fashion with Small Alison and young John popping in and out as the production goes back and forth in time.

"It's a little confusing," Rose said. "But I can relate to a lot of what Alison's going through. She fights with her dad, and my own dad and I have little fights over homework, so I can use that on stage."

Not a light-hearted comedy, *Fun Home* delves into Bechdel's journey to discover her sexuality and into her troubled relationship with her hot-tempered father.

"When I was auditioning, my mom let me know it wasn't a kid's show," Moran said. "I'm a little nervous about this big fight that happens when everyone is getting ready to go to a party. It's a big transition point in the show."

While the young thespians learn their lines and work on their characters, their moms, Renee DeWeese Moran and Shelly Rose, busily construct elaborate carpool schedules. When one mom is driving Keenan and McKenna to rehearsal, the other might be driving children from both families to various activities in the East Bay.

"We're ready and excited, and we have our carpool schedule all worked out," said Shelly, who is also the marketing and op-

[SEE FUN HOME page 12]

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STUDENTS

# Treading the Boards at Miramonte: Four One Acts and a Choral Concert

By ELANA O'LOSKEY  
Staff Writer

Miramonte High School musical and drama events scheduled for April begin with a free concert at St. Mary's Chapel April 20, while also featuring four original, all-student "One Act" plays on campus, April 26 – 29, 7 - 9 p.m.

Music Teacher Meredith Hawkins will lead three Miramonte choruses in the concert April 20 from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. The 60 singers, from grades 9 through 12, along with instrumentalists, will perform separately and together with solo and small ensemble performances included.

Hawkins said the music they have chosen shows off the wonderful acoustics of St. Mary's Chapel. "Unaccompanied choral music was made for spaces like this. It takes the music and just elevates it, making for a really special experience for the singers and the audience," said Hawkins.

Attendees will hear a wide range of music from traditional hymns in Latin to songs from South Africa and Haiti, contemporary choral music and African-American spirituals.

"Thanks are due Colleen O'Healy da Silva and the crew at St. Mary's for making this concert possible, Orinda ONE for supporting choral music at Miramonte and, of course, the many students involved in our program," Hawkins added.

Heather Cousins, Miramonte Theater arts director, said the students take pride in their work.

"We've been doing the 'One Act' project for five years. They've become popular because the students have a tremendous amount of ownership over them. Each play is treated with full production value, as in lighting designers, set designers, hair



JEFF HEYMAN

Miramonte High School student actors (L-R) **Nina Fontes**, **Lindsay Villamor**, **Christian Ionascu**, **Alice Ball**, **Emi Hamiti** and **Natalie Clauson**, rehearse one of four "Spring One Acts" for April 26-29 performances. Each original, 45-minute play uses the theme "Somewhere in Between." Advanced drama students, including actors, directors and a full stage crew, worked together to produce the shows.

and makeup, props and costumes," said Cousins.

She said each play gets a team of about 20 students and is 45 minutes in length. Each night two plays are performed so each play has two performances.

The plays go through a process before being chosen. Advanced drama students write project proposals and speak with great

passion about their projects and concepts. The proposals are voted on and the playwright has to write a short scene. The scene becomes a staged reading. Each "One Act" is student-written and student-directed.

The theme this year is "Somewhere in Between." For more information about Miramonte's Music and theater activities, visit their calendar at <https://bit.ly/3ioZXfY>.

Last year – in a nod to the pandemic times – the Miramonte thespians waited until after school let out to perform their "One Acts" outdoors at Cal Shakes. This took place during summer with pandemic masks on. The theme, fittingly, was, "The Masks We Wear."

This year, all involved are happy to say masks are optional for performers who will be back on their home stage at Miramonte.

Look for tickets to see *Blood and Roses*, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, *The 42nd Biennial Meatloaf Eating Contest* and *Getting Away with Accidental Murder* at [www.showtix4u.com](http://www.showtix4u.com).

Elana O'Loskey can be reached at [business.orinda@gmail.com](mailto:business.orinda@gmail.com).



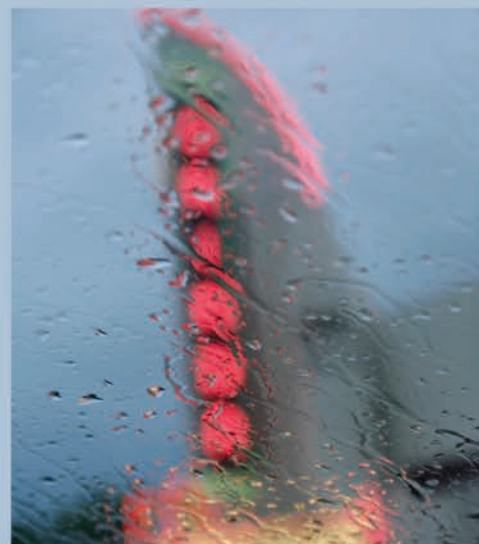
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STUDENTS

# Students Work Towards Winning Wharton Global Investment Competition

By CHARLEEN EARLEY  
Editor-in-Chief

Miramonte High School junior, Jonathan Su, and his teammates have anxiously awaited word of the Wharton School's Global High School Investment Competition results since their submission late December.

"It arrived as I checked my daily emails on an especially chilly Thursday morning," Su said.

There it was – a new email appeared at the top, a blue dot hovering on the left and the bold letters of "Congratulations."

"I had a skip of a heartbeat when I got the news of a lifetime: 'MATADORS-

OF1 is a semi-finalist in the 2021-2022 Wharton Global High School Investment Competition. You are now part of the final 50 teams from around the world!" Su is the MATADORS-OF1's team leader.

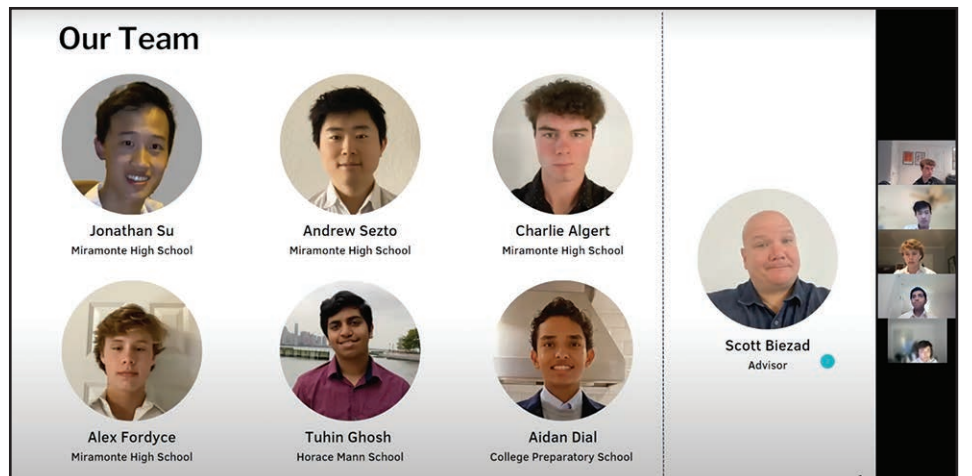
The grand prize winner will be announced April 23, at which point, team MATADORS-OF1 hopes to travel to Philadelphia to claim the prize.

The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania announced the semi-finalists for the Wharton Global High School Investment Competition Jan. 20. Close to 1,300 teams competed, making it a highly driven atmosphere. Teams create their own unique strategy that best fits a real-person, case study.

*"I had a skip of a heartbeat when I got the news of a lifetime: 'MATADORS-OF1 is a semi-finalist in the 2021-2022 Wharton Global High School Investment Competition," said Jonathan Su.*

Su said this year the 7,000 students who signed up, took on the case of Nichole Jordan, a client who has several goals she hopes to achieve. Winners are selected based on the strength and creativity of their investment strategy, rather than their return.

Six members make up team MATADORS-OF1, five from Orinda. They include Su, Andrew Sezto, Charlie Algert, Alex Fordyce and Aidan Dial. The sixth teammate is Tuhin Ghosh from Jersey City, New Jersey. Local team members attend Miramonte High School and College



JONATHAN SU  
Team Leader of the MATADORS-OF1, Jonathan Su, takes a screenshot of their team while recording their virtual presentation for the semi-finals round in their Wharton Global High School Investment Competition. The team is currently part of the final 50 teams from around the world. Grand prize winner will be announced April 23.

Preparatory School. Ghosh attends Horace Mann School in New York City.

Judges from Aberdeen Standard Investments, an asset management firm in Philadelphia, selected MATADORS-OF1 as one of the 50 global semi-finalists in this competition sponsored by CitiBank.

Miramonte Club Advisor for the last two years, Scott Biezad, said he had very little to do with these kids' success.

"To say I'm advising is way overstating my role!" said Biezad, who has taught at Miramonte for the last six years, currently AP macroeconomics and government. "I fill out the paperwork, periodically give them a space to meet and forward emails. That's about it. Jonathan approached me during summer before the 20-21 school year to be the team's official advisor."

Although the competition didn't start until September last year, the team worked for several months, beginning last summer, to develop their unique strategy.

"We wanted to start early for a chance to win the title," said Sezto. "We spent countless hours just scrutinizing every single detail of the case study given to us so that we could develop the optimal strategy to meet her every need."

Team member Fordyce said they were honored to be a semi-finalist in such a prestigious international competition: "We will put in our best effort to become an international champion."

Biezad said he is extremely proud of the team. "Jonathan approached me because they needed an advisor to enter the tournament. They have literally done all the work themselves," he said. "I wish I could claim some responsibility, but this was a great example of a student taking the initiative, figuring out what needed to be done and doing it. I'm really excited for them!"

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

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VISUAL ARTS / STUDENTS

# Congratulations to High School Visual Arts Competition Winners

By ELANA O'LOSKEY  
Staff Writer

There were 230 entries in the 2022 Lamorinda Arts Council High School Visual Arts Competition. Each of the four categories has 1st place \$300, 2nd place \$200 and 3rd place \$100 cash awards, as well as honorable mention awards \$25; in addition to a Best of Show award \$300, with a total of \$3,000 in awards given.

All students who live or attend school in the Acalanes Union High School District were eligible to submit work. Event co-chairs, Pat Jenkins and Olga Larner, were delighted so many high school student artists participated in the show. Their entire show can be viewed online through Feb. 2023 at [www.lamorindaarts.org/past-winners-archive-vac/](http://www.lamorindaarts.org/past-winners-archive-vac/).

### Best of Show

*Controlling the Youth* by Kate Lee, Bentley, 12th Grade, Teacher: Kelsey Jones, 2D

### 2D Awards

1st Place – *Pieces of Identity* by Natalie Mangani, Las Lomas, 10th Grade, Teacher: Jessica Jurgens

2nd Place – *Distance* by Kallie Cheung, Las Lomas, 12th Grade, Teacher: Jessica Jurgens

3rd Place – *I'm So Blue All the Time* by Ava von Behren, Bentley, 12th Grade, Teacher: Kelsey Jones

### Honorable Mentions

*Untitled* by Andrea Liu, Bentley, 11th Grade, Teacher: Kelsey Jones

*Gateshead* by Kaitlyn Yasumura, Carondelet, 10th Grade, Teacher: Darla Sur

*Daucus* by Claudia Cruse, Campolindo, 12th Grade, Teacher: Heidi Cabra

### 3D Awards

1st Place – *Get Yourself Together* by Emma Ngo, Campolindo, 11th Grade, Artwork Created Independently

2nd Place – *Owlberry* by Indie Lee, Miramonte, 10th Grade, Artwork Created Independently

3rd Place – *Summoning* by Holden Bennett, Bentley, 9th Grade, Teacher: Aram Muksian

### Honorable Mentions

*Societal Confinement* by Emile Starkweather, Bentley, 12th Grade, Teacher: Michelle Cho

*Body Image to the Core* by Kate Lee, Bentley, 12th Grade, Teacher: Kelsey Jones

*Untitled (Hammer)* by Walter Yip, Bentley, 11th Grade, Teacher: Aram Muksian

### Photography Awards

1st Place – *Ambiguity* by Emma Ngo, Campolindo, 11th Grade, Teacher: Collette Sweeney

2nd Place – *Ataraxia* by Avery Sims, Bentley, 11th Grade, Teacher: Aram Muksian

3rd Place – *Self Portrait of a Pianist* by Sydney Zhang, Campolindo, 11th Grade, Teacher: Collette Sweeney

### Honorable Mentions

*Driving in the Rain* by Leonardo Siu, Bentley, 11th Grade, Artwork Created Independently

*Untitled* by Leyla Nabipour, Campolindo, 11th Grade, Teacher: Collette Sweeney

### Lamorinda Arts Alliance Digital Art Awards

1st Place – *Different Perspective* by Jeanette Lavoie, Campolindo, 12th Grade, Artwork Created Independently

2nd Place – *Explosion of Color* by Irene Yoon, College Prep, 11th Grade, Teacher: Yousun Kim

3rd Place – *Chronic* by Charles Platt, Miramonte, 11th Grade, Teacher: Stacey Churchill

### Honorable Mentions

*Bending Dimensions* by Benjamin Randall, Bentley, 12th Grade, Teacher: Aram Muksian

*Purple* by Vivian Tolajian, Campolindo, 9th Grade, Teacher: Collette Sweeney




BILL CARMEL

**Kate Lee**, a 12th grade student at Bentley Upper School won Best in Show for her mixed media piece using charcoal, colored pencil, graphite pencil and cloth. She was awarded \$300 in prize money and is pictured here with her entry entitled *Controlling the Youth*.



BILL CARMEL

**Natalie Mangani** who is in grade 10 at Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek was excited when *Pieces of Identity* won first place in the 2D category. Mangani received \$300 in prize money for her watercolor, ink and collage artwork. Her art teacher is Jessica Jurgens.



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## CELEBRATE YOUR GRADUATE!


Now is the perfect time to honor and celebrate your favorite graduating student!

*The Orinda News* is offering special, low-cost ads in the May issue for grads at all grade levels.

From kindergarten to college and all grads in between!

Sample Ad

Leo, we are so proud of you and grateful for you! Always enjoy the journey! Love, mom, dad, Sadhana and Keshini.



2022 graduate ads will be placed near the commemorative Miramonte Alumni center section, so this will be a keepsake issue for sure. Ad prices start at \$55, are in full color and we will help put it all together for you.

We are accepting space reservations through April 5. Contact your ad representative now to guarantee your grad will be included!

**Miramonte:** Contact Jill Gelster at 925.528.9225 or [jill@aspenconsult.net](mailto:jill@aspenconsult.net)

**OIS, Holden, Orinda Academy:** Elana O'Loskey at 925.984.1751 or [elanao@mac.com](mailto:elanao@mac.com)

**OUSD Elementary Campuses:** Trish Ward at 510.685.1437 or [trish@theorindanews.com](mailto:trish@theorindanews.com)



**What's On Deck With Parks & Rec!**

**Sign Up Now for 2022 Youth Summer Camp Sessions, June 6 - Aug. 5**

**Now Hiring for Summer Camp Counselors. Apply Today!**

**Currently Accepting Facility and Picnic Area Rental Requests Under Current Health Guidelines**

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Orinda Parks and Recreation Department  
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[www.OrindaParksandRec.org](http://www.OrindaParksandRec.org)  
[OrindaParksandRec@CityofOrinda.org](mailto:OrindaParksandRec@CityofOrinda.org)  
28 Orinda Way – Orinda Community Center  
Administrative Office Hours – 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

ORINDA ART SCENE

Orinda Art Scene

APRIL IN THE ART GALLERIES AT THE ORINDA LIBRARY AND WILDER

ELANA O'LOSKEY



Art Gallery at the Orinda Library: Ceramics, Paintings & Exquisite Turned Wood

The Lamorinda Arts Council presents ceramics by Brad Krebs, paintings by Joseph Loria and Silvia Villanueva Mallon and turned wood by members of the Bay Area Woodturners Association during April in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library.

Meet the artists at a reception on Saturday, April 9 from 3 p.m. to

5 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

Ceramicist Krebs of Pleasant Hill has collected ceramics from artists such as Rowena Brown and Mary Fischer for many years. While on an extended hike along the Pacific Crest Trail, Krebs spent a lot of time in reflection. He then decided to take advantage of the nearby Walnut Creek Center for Community Arts ceramics programs. That was about six years ago, and he hasn't stopped yet.

"I chose to focus on a simple house form because of my interest in architecture. My intent is to explore the house form in as many ways as possible," said Krebs.

He focuses on materials, design, additions to clay and the meaning of the house. Look for over 200 ceramic pieces on display from this prolific ceramicist. Follow him @krebs.brad.

Loria's theme for his exhibit is "Stories We Tell Ourselves" because, "My focus is on people and places – how I represent that is an intuitive leap." Some of his favorite artists are Philip Morseberger, Grace Hartigan, Leland Bell, Richard Diebenkorn, Camille Claudel, Max Beckman, Mia Lin, deKooning and Matisse.

A Lafayette resident, Loria uses bold, colorful, structural forms to do what he loves best, communicating via the visual language of art. *The Bridge* is a 60" x 48" painting on canvas made using oil stick, spray paint and tape. The forms in this work repeat as if you are in the white boats sailing in front of the bridge. Learn more about his artwork on Instagram @joeloriaart or visit [SEE ART page 13]



COURTESY OF LARRY BATTI

Members of the Bay Area Woodturning Association are working with the Beads of Courage Program, a resilience-based intervention designed to support children and teens coping with illness. Children tell their story using colorful beads that serve as meaningful symbols honoring their courage. **Larry Batti's** 7" x 9" turned wood container, entitled *Beads for Courage Box*, is made with colored pencils and hard wood. He will donate it to a child so they may save the beads they receive.

◆ MESSAGE from page 3

age 7 or under or share a life with somebody that age, the Orinda Rotary has just the event for you.

Also on April 16, the Bay Area Storytelling Festival returns. Five internationally known storytellers will awe and entertain at the Orinda Community Center from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

This year, income taxes are due on April 18, pushed back because April 15 is a holiday, Good Friday. The 18th is also National Columnists Day.

April 23 is Orinda Action Day when local groups, individuals and families pitch in to clean up our city. The Orinda Juniors have already signed up. Have you? See story on Page 3.

The Orinda Volunteer Center is updating the volunteer guide on our website. Stay tuned for more information. Again, thank you to our volunteers and supporters; we couldn't do our events or programs without you!

Cindy Powell can be reached at [oa@OrindaAssociation.org](mailto:oa@OrindaAssociation.org).

◆ FUN HOME from page 8

erations manager for the Lamorinda Arts Council.

"It's pretty complicated for everyone with Keenan and I also balancing rehearsals with homework," said Rose. "We even miss some school, which is a bit more stressful. But it will be worth it to prove I can handle a professional show and keep my grades up."

*Fun Home* runs Wednesdays – Sundays from April 21 through May 8 at the Gateway Theatre, 215 Jackson Street, San Francisco. Produced by 42nd Street Moon, the show is directed by Tracy Ward with Dave Dobrusky as music director and Natalie Greene as choreographer. Tickets are available now at [www.42ndstreetmoon.org](http://www.42ndstreetmoon.org).

Sally Hogarty can be reached at [sally@theorindanews.com](mailto:sally@theorindanews.com).

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ORINDA ART SCENE

◆ ART from page 12

www.joeloriaart.com.

Mallon grew up in Rubielos de Mora, a small village in Spain, which was home to renowned artists Salvador Victoria and Jose Gonzalvo. On her first trip to Madrid to the El Prado and Thyssen Museums, she was drawn to a collection by Kandinski. Now living in Oakland, Mallon is most inspired by her neighbor and friend, artist Elaine Toland.

Mallon plays with texture and color via a topcoat of epoxy that protects the paintings, livens up the colors and reflects light in unique ways throughout the day.

“Each time I look at one of my paintings, it looks different,” she said.

Of the seven paintings in this show, *Neila* is a large expanse of acrylic color, 40” x 60” of luminous cloud-like shapes. View more of her work at [www.dirty-canvas-company.site](http://www.dirty-canvas-company.site).

Kim Wolfe organized the Bay Area Woodturners Association (BAWA) exhibit. BAWA is a non-profit organization which provides a place for woodturners to share and learn, in addition to educating the public about the art of woodturning.

BAWA’s Beads of Courage Box exhibit displays 20 – 30 small wood boxes created

by woodturners.

“The boxes turned and decorated by our members are donated to local hospitals for distribution to children undergoing medical treatments,” said Wolfe. “These wonderful pieces of art become a sacred vessel for the children to house the numerous beads they receive.” Professional medical practitioners

give colorful beads, representing courage during their treatment period, to the children to support them through their ordeals.

You can view the group’s work at @bawa\_woodturning; more information about BAWA and the Beads of Courage Program can be found at [www.bayarea-](http://www.bayarea-woodturning.com)


[SEE WILDER page 14]




COURTESY JOSEPH LORIA

Joseph Loria’s, *The Bridge*, is a 60” x 48” painting on canvas made using oil stick, spray paint and tape. The forms in this work repeat, as if you are in the white boats sailing in front of the bridge.

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-David and Catherine B.

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**MATADOR ALUMNI!**

The next issue of *The Orinda News* features in-depth, personal remembrances of the first graduating classes at Miramonte. It’s a fun and informative article and YOU can be a part of it!

Here is a great opportunity to get into the Matador spirit to remember and support your Alma Mater in the special center-section of the May issue!

SAMPLE AD



Sharing Miramonte memories for six decades! 1960 Miramonte graduate Nancy Gosch Peterson with Matador sons (L-R) Kris '82, Tate '00 and Brent '86.

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ORINDA ART SCENE / STUDENTS

◆ WILDER from page 13

woodturners.org.

To learn more about the Lamorinda Arts Council, visit [www.lamorindaarts.org](http://www.lamorindaarts.org). This exhibit runs April 1 through 30 during library hours in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library at 26 Orinda Way. Hours are Mon. – Thur., 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fri. – Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Sun.

Call 925.254.2184 for more information about the Library, or visit [www.ccclib.org](http://www.ccclib.org). Email the curators with questions at [galleries@lamorindaarts.org](mailto:galleries@lamorindaarts.org) or call the Lamorinda Arts Council at 925.359.9940.

**Art Gallery at Wilder: Transience – Paintings of Disquiet and Uncertainty**

The Lamorinda Arts Council’s featured artist in the Art Gallery at Wilder for April is painter Matthew Felix

Sun. Meet him at his reception Sunday, April 3 from 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Viewers can see his virtual exhibit at [www.lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries](http://www.lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries) and a video preview of his show at [www.youtu.be/M1iNayeEKZ0](http://www.youtu.be/M1iNayeEKZ0). For directions to the opening, visit [www.lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits-wilder/](http://www.lamorindaarts.org/current-exhibits-wilder/).

Sun has loved drawing since childhood. He said he found reproducing images that interested him on paper or canvas endlessly fascinating. The 10 pieces he presents in this show are oil paintings he worked on over the last two years.

“I strive to discover and capture what is hidden, emphasizing the unspoken over verisimilitude,” said Sun. “This tendency comes from my years growing up in China where much is hinted at, but rarely spoken aloud. These experiences sharpened my awareness of the invisible burdens born by people everywhere.”

“Transience – Paintings of Disquiet and Uncertainty” is an exhibit about Sun’s ideas and experiences while living through the pandemic. This surely is a theme about which many people can relate.

His work, in collections in the U.S., Canada, U.K. and China, has been selected for exhibitions in San Francisco, New York and Seattle. To learn more about his work, visit [www.matthewfelixsun.com](http://www.matthewfelixsun.com) or follow him on Instagram at @matthewfelixsun.

The Wilder Art and Garden Center is located at 20 Orinda Fields Way. The exhibit runs April 2 through 30 and is in-person on the reception date, but otherwise accessible by appointment with Curator Aniston Breslin. Contact her at [wildergallery@lamorindaarts.org](mailto:wildergallery@lamorindaarts.org). Questions? Call the Lamorinda Arts Council at 925.359.9940.

*Elana O’Loskey can be reached at [business.orinda@gmail.com](mailto:business.orinda@gmail.com).*

Tri-Valley CYO Champions



ALEX ARANOFF

The Orinda third grade boys celebrated a Tri Valley CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) Boys National Champions Feb. 20. Not only did they win the championship, but also celebrated an undefeated season, which included two tournament championships. (Top L-R) **Jax Keene, Boden Buster, Oliver Colner, Greyson Aranoff, Aiden Jaynes, Xavier Portet,** (Bottom L-R) **Coach Chip Kelly, Robby Hatton, Jackson Noga, Dex Kelly, Coach Brian Noga.** Visit their website at [www.teamsideline.com/sites/trivalleycyo/home](http://www.teamsideline.com/sites/trivalleycyo/home).



COURTESY MATTHEW FELIX SUN

**Matthew Felix Sun’s** theme for his solo show in the Art Gallery at Wilder during April is “Transience.” *Boyhood*, his 28” x 22” oil painting, was conceived during the pandemic when introspection was the norm. The smiling face of this boy looks up at us as if the world were brand new as he transitions from boyhood into adolescence.

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Reserve your time. Registration required:  
**[RecycleSmart.org/ICAW](http://RecycleSmart.org/ICAW)**

This event is open to: Lafayette, Orinda, Moraga and RecycleSmart residents only.

**Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.** (registration required)  
Event hosted in Lafayette. Register for event information.



CLUBS / CALENDAR

# Club Meetings in April

Some clubs are meeting in person while others still offer Zoom meetings. Use contact info for more information.

**American Association of University Women-Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch (AAUW-OML)** general meeting April 19 9:30-11 a.m. at the Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way. More information at <https://oml-ca.aauw.net>.

**Community Gentle Yoga**, via Zoom, Mondays and Thursdays 9-10 a.m. Contact Gaby Mozee at [gcmozee@gmail.com](mailto:gcmozee@gmail.com).

**Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe.** Third Monday, 7:30 p.m. Contact Kent Long for Zoom link at [kentlong@moragaadobe.org](mailto:kentlong@moragaadobe.org). [www.moragaadobe.org](http://www.moragaadobe.org).

**Friends of the Orinda Creeks.** Fourth Wednesday, 3 p.m., 925.408.1840. [www.orindacreeks.org](http://www.orindacreeks.org). or [info@orindacreeks.org](mailto:info@orindacreeks.org).

**Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition.** Third Wednesday, 10 a.m. 925.687.8844, ext. 227. <https://bit.ly/3egD3EZ>.

**Lamorinda Meditation Community.** Mondays and Thursdays, 10:30 - 11:25 a.m., through Zoom. All levels and philosophies welcome. Contact Gaby Mozee at: [gcmozee@gmail.com](mailto:gcmozee@gmail.com).

**Lamorinda Republican Women Federated.** Third Thursday. For more information, visit. [www.lamorindarepublicanwomenfederated.org](http://www.lamorindarepublicanwomenfederated.org).

**Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary.** Weekly meetings conducted in hybrid format – in person & Zoom, and are recorded for after-the-fact playback.

General public can access at no charge. 7 – 8:15 a.m. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82609498205>. Meetings are held at the Veterans Memorial Center, 3780 Mount Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. For information: [www.lamorindasunrise.com](http://www.lamorindasunrise.com) or [lamorindasunrise@gmail.com](mailto:lamorindasunrise@gmail.com). April 1: Club Assembly; April 8: Dr Lisa Feldman Barrett, How Emotions Are Made; April 22: Tony Kaufman, 2020 COVID-19 Outbreak On Cruise Ship; April 29: Paul Fillingner, Member Magazine: What is it? How can I get some?

**Montelindo Garden Club**, membership open to all. For more information, visit [www.montelindogarden.com](http://www.montelindogarden.com).

**The Orinda Association.** First Monday 7 p.m., Zoom meeting. 925.254.0800 or

[www.orindaassociation.org](http://www.orindaassociation.org).

**Orinda Chamber of Commerce** April 6 Executive Board Meeting, April 13, Membership Meeting 4 p.m., April 29 Board Meeting 8 p.m., – via zoom. Contact Kristen Southworth at [president@orindachamber.org](mailto:president@orindachamber.org) for zoom link.

**Orinda Garden Club**, PO Box 34, Orinda, [www.orindagc.org](http://www.orindagc.org), 925.257.0668.

**Orinda Hiking Club.** Every weekend and first Wednesday, Ian at 925.254.1465 or [www.orindahiking.org](http://www.orindahiking.org).

**Orinda Historical Society.** Call 925.254.1353 email [information@orindahistory.org](mailto:information@orindahistory.org), <http://orindahistory.org> for times and location of meetings and appointments.

**Orinda Junior Women's Club.** First Tuesday, 7 p.m., [www.orindajuniors.org](http://www.orindajuniors.org). Contact Erika Rosenberg at 415.867.3065.

**Orinda Masonic Lodge #122 F&AM.** 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda Masonic Center. 925.254.5211.

**Orinda Rotary.** Virtual meeting Wednesdays, 12:15 p.m., [cmroeder@comcast.net](mailto:cmroeder@comcast.net) or [www.orindarotary.org](http://www.orindarotary.org) for zoom link.

[SEE CLUBS page 17]

# On the Calendar in April

1 **Christian Science Church** Prayer Garden open to all for Quiet Meditation. Pray, read, meditate. All are welcome anytime during daylight hours. 24 Orinda Way.

**Orinda Library** is open to the public. All events are currently online only. They can be viewed at: <https://ccclib.bibliocommons.com/events>. Open hours are 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 for more information or visit <http://ccclib.org>.

**First Friday Forum** presents *Astronomy: The 5% We Know and the 95% We Don't Know* with Dr. Larry Toy. 10 a.m. See article p. 20.

2 **Orinda Farmers' Market**, 9 a.m. Orinda Way in front of Rite Aid and the Community Park. [www.cccfm.org](http://www.cccfm.org) or market hotline at 925.431.8361. Also April 9, 16, 23 and 30. See article p. 16.

3 **Art Gallery at Wilder** - Features oil painter Matthew Felix Sun. Meet the artist at his reception from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. where light refreshments will be served. See article p.

13. **Orinda Theatre** presents *Live a the Orinda!* with cabaret and jazz singer Natalie Douglas. Beginning at 5 p.m. See article p. 7.

7 **Orinda Books Pat's Book Club** discusses *Pilgrim At Tinker Creek* By Annie Dillard 11 a.m. The book is available at Orinda Books. Call 925.254.7606 or email [info@orindabooks.com](mailto:info@orindabooks.com).

9 **Art Gallery at the Orinda Library** - Ceramics, Paintings & Exquisite Turned Wood. Artist reception with light refreshments 3 - 5 p.m. See article p. 12.

15 **Poul Anderson Creative Writing Contest** registration deadline at midnight. See article p. 4

**International Film Showcase** Dutch film, *The Judgement* at the Orinda Theatre for a week. For tickets, visit: [www.OrindaMovies.com](http://www.OrindaMovies.com).

16 **Bay Area Storytelling Festival** Five internationally known storytellers entertain at the Orinda Community Center from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. The event can also be livestreamed. Go to [www.eventbrite.com/e/bay-area-storytelling-festival-tickets-272360125467](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/bay-area-storytelling-festival-tickets-272360125467). See article p. 16.

**Rotary Spring Egg Hunt** 10:30 a.m. at the Orinda Community Park for age 7 or under. More info. at [orindarotary.org](http://orindarotary.org). See article p. 2.

20 **Miramonte Chorus Concert** at St. Mary's Chapel - 7:30 - 9 p.m. Three choruses totaling 60 singers will perform diverse music at this free concert. See article p. 9.

21 **Orinda Parks and Rec Senior Day Trips** to Oakland Museum of California. Call 925-253-4216 or email [jamerma@cityoforinda.org](mailto:jamerma@cityoforinda.org).

23 **Orinda Action Day** Lend a hand to help clean up Orinda. Sign up for a slot 10 a.m. to noon. See article p. 3.

26 **Miramonte One Act Plays** - Four completely original students plays, student run and staffed; performed 7 - 9 p.m. at Miramonte through April 29. See article p. 9.

Send calendar items to Jill Gelster at [calendar@aspenconsult.net](mailto:calendar@aspenconsult.net).

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7:30 AM - 12:30 PM    1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

SEASONED SHOPPER / CLASSIFIEDS

**Seasoned Shopper**  
Mirepoix and Celery  
BARBARA KOBSAR



**M**irepoix is used in our favorite dishes all year, and April offers its three simple ingredients at their peak. Carrots are freshly dug, spring onions arrive for their short season and celery is crunchy, sweet and a little “earthy” tasting.

In Cajun cuisine, a mirepoix or holy trinity, is a combination of onion, bell pepper and celery. The trio of vegetables is cooked slowly in butter or oil to coax out the flavors to add to sauces, soups, meats and marinades (Sofrito refers to a similar mixture in Italian or Spanish cuisines).

Celery is one of our most commonly

used vegetables. Remember ants on a log? Celery sticks are a must on a charcuterie board and Bloody Mary’s are so much better served with a celery stalk sporting bright green leaves.

Mild tasting celery stalks and celery root (celery knob or celeriac) are grown from different varieties of celery, and the stronger flavored leaves of a close cousin, seasoning celery, are used like an herb.

Since the ends of celery stalks hold some of the soil in which they grow, celery requires thorough cleaning. Trim and discard the base of each rib and trim off leaves to reserve for soups or stuffings. Remove

[SEE SHOPPER page 17]

## Oldest Bay Area Storytelling Festival Returns to Orinda Community Center

By CLAIRE HENNESSY  
Contributing Writer

**T**he multicultural and internationally renowned Bay Area Storytelling Festival brings storytelling back to the Bay Area at the Orinda Community Center, Saturday, April 16, starting at 9:30 a.m.

Jointly sponsored by Bay Area-based arts organizations Storytelling Association of California (SAC) and Six Feet Apart Productions (SFAP), the festival will be in-person with a virtual component.

It’s the West Coast’s oldest storytelling festival, with a history of over 30 years; the 2022 celebration features five award-winning, internationally celebrated professional storytellers to include historic character interpreter and imaginator, Sheila Arnold from Hampton, VA.

Featured tellers also include Bay Area artists Grammy nominee Diane Ferlatte, (accompanied on guitar and banjo by recording artist, Erik Pearson), movement performance duo Eth-Noh-Tec (Nancy Wang and Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo), musician and spoken word artist Willy Clafin and improv expert and host of The Moth, Corey Rosen.

The full day festival offers three storytelling concerts, an interactive panel with the featured storytellers, a workshop led

**BAY AREA STORYTELLING FESTIVAL**  
THE STORY CONTINUES...  
SATURDAY APRIL 16TH 2022

COURTESY OF BAY AREA STORYTELLING FESTIVAL  
The Bay Area Storytelling Festival returns to the Orinda Community Center, April 16 at 10 a.m.

by Sheila Arnold and Corey Rosen and an open mic story swap.

Festival Committee Member and Chair of the festival for 30 years, Linda Yemoto, said she’s excited to be a part of the team to bring the Bay Area Storytelling Festival

[SEE STORYTELLER page 18]

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MIMI BOMMARITO



I recently enjoyed a visit with college girlfriends last November in Texas, serendipitously wedged between Delta and Omicron surges. Not only that, we experienced a rare ‘crisp weather window,’ when Texans joyfully dust off their sweatshirts and celebrate Three-Day Autumn.

These reunions occur more frequently as we embrace empty-nesterhood. We currently occupy that happy place between schedules once dominated by baseball tournaments and dance recital, and those subsumed by ailments and operations. Although we recently lost one of the flock to (expletive deleted) pancreatic cancer, we’re not yet controlled by the ominous thought that each reunion could be our last. Acutely aware that life can certainly throw crappy curveballs, the odds of enjoying many more good years ahead remain in our favor.

Naturally, we reminisced in great detail about the tragic fate of our friend Mitzi, discussing her valiant fight, her last wishes and her Celebration of Life. It was here that I made my longtime friends an unusual promise. In fact, I hoped we could all make this promise to one another: No embarrassing stories at your Celebration of Life, in front of the offspring, co-workers and neighbors. Terms of Agreement: these campfire tales can still be told, but later, intimately – to the core group only. Never with a microphone in one hand and a glass of Prosecco in the other.

Reflect on your personal classics, your Hit Parade of naughty high school and collegiate anecdotes. Only those who were cast members are going to laugh. Okay, MAYBE if you have the comedic timing of Stephen Colbert or

Amy Poehler, perhaps there’s potential. But even the world’s most famous comedians had jokes bomb, plenty of times. Think back to the last time you attended a rehearsal dinner, and one blabbermouth in the wedding party stands up to tell a “funny story” containing the three most cringeworthy words in the English language: Wet T-shirt Contest. Crickets! If there’s any laughter at all, it’s a smattering of the nervous variety, to mask grandma’s awkward silence.

And consider the deceased. Let them cross over in peace, rather than straining over the impending public rehash of foolhardy teenage escapades. Broadcast to an audience that actually respects this person, now that they finally achieved “adulting.”

“But what if I still want to give a tribute?” you ask. “All that Toastmasters gone to waste?”

I’m not Debbie Downer saying “no tributes.” I’m simply proposing a litmus test: anything that happened after three drinks or involved police, nudity or a toilet should never be presented to a crowd of mourners. Oddly, it’s the innocent, silly stories that are home runs. Like the time they took a date to a baked potato restaurant – wildly popular in the 80s. As was dating. There they lost the cap on their front tooth, which dropped into the potato, mid-bite. Skip the low-hanging fruit. Delight the kids and comfort the elderly.

Here’s hoping this strategy works. If not, my fallback plan is simply to remain the last one standing and control the narrative. Pass the kale.

*Mimi Bommarito can be reached at editor@theorindanews.com*

◆ SHOPPER from page 16

any tough strings from the outer ribs by snapping a small piece of the celery at the top, without going through the strings, and pulling the piece towards the base.

Celeriac or celery root has long been known as the “lazy man’s” celery to grow since it needs very little attention in the garden and minimal preparation to get maximum celery flavor. It’s not much to look at with its knobby, rough brown exterior, but once peeled, it reveals a cream-colored flesh and pleasant celery/parsley flavor.

Approach celery root with caution, using a very sharp knife to cut off the top and bottom. This provides a stable base to cut the rest of the protruding knobs and thick outer skin. Soak root briefly in water and a teaspoon of vinegar to prevent browning. Shred the root to use raw in salads, or slice to boil, sauté or bake.

The Orinda Farmers’ Market is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Orinda Way in Orinda Village. More information is available at [www.cccfm.org](http://www.cccfm.org), [facebook.com/OrindaFarmersMarket](https://facebook.com/OrindaFarmersMarket) and Instagram at [OrindaFarmersMarket](https://OrindaFarmersMarket) or call the market hotline at 925.431.8361.

*Barbara Kobsar can be reached at Barbara@cotkitchen.com.*

◆ DOUGLAS from page 7

to see you.”

“Danny Brack was the manager at the time; he later became a dear friend,” said Douglas. “He said ‘you want a job?’ I said, ‘oh no, I don’t live here.’ He said, ‘move here!’ It took me about a year, but I moved to New York.”

The rest is history. Since then, Douglas has won 12 MAC Awards (Manhattan Association of Cabarets) and has brought audiences to their feet at stages from Carnegie Hall and Birdland Jazz Club to concert halls in the UK, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Monaco, Argentina and beyond.

The daughter of the Reverend Arnold Townsend, a story in and of itself she will share at her show, Douglas is also a well-sought educator who works worldwide with singers of all ages as a master teacher for the Mabel Mercer Foundation. Douglas also specializes in presenting diversity workshops and master classes in public and private schools.

She’s excited to perform at the Orinda Theatre. “It’s such a gorgeous space,” she said. “So welcoming, warm and lovely!”

For tickets and more information, visit [www.orindamovies.com](http://www.orindamovies.com).

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

◆ CLUBS from page 15

**Orinda Satellite Rotary Club.** Second Wednesday. Call Sylvia at 510.224.8548.

**Orinda/Tábor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation.** Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m., social, 7:30 p.m. meeting via Zoom. For more information, 925.254.8260.

**Orinda Teen Advisory Council** for information, email Recreation Coordinator Matt Delmartini at [mdelmartini@cityoforinda.org](mailto:mdelmartini@cityoforinda.org).

**Orinda Woman’s Club.** Meetings Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. Garden Room of Orinda Library. Email Jean Barnhart [jean.barnhart@gmail.com](mailto:jean.barnhart@gmail.com) to confirm location.

**Road Runners.** Runners meet 5:45 a.m. Tuesday at Papilion (67 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette), Wednesday (Gepettos 87 Orinda Way), Thursday (SiSi, 910 Country. Club Drive, Moraga) and Friday (Starbucks, 470 Moraga Road, Rheem). Contact John Fazel [runmnts@prodigy.net](mailto:runmnts@prodigy.net).

**Sons in Retirement (SIR)** Lamorinda Branch 174, the second Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. For info, call Tyler at 925.963.5741 or Bill at 925.963.0442 or [www.branch174.sirinc2.org](http://www.branch174.sirinc2.org).

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NATURE AREA

# Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area's New Name



JEFF HEYMAN

President **Erica Bains** replants newly propagated native plant *Fremontodendron Californicum* (commonly known as Flannel Bush), *Ceanothus* and *Manzanitas* in the green house at the newly-renamed The Friends of Orinda Nature Area.

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By **BILL HUDSON**  
 Contributing Writer

tiful 18-acre site that is a separate campus of the Orinda Union School District and officially designated the Wagner Ranch Nature Area.

The former and well-known "Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area" has a new name, "The Friends of Orinda Nature Area." Regardless, it will continue to provide the outstanding outdoor environmental education programs that have been the heritage of Orinda students for more than 40 years.

The Friends, a 501(c)(3) organization independent of the School District, adopted the new name to clarify that its programs are for all the District's schools. It is currently working with the District to resume class visits safely in the coming months.

This is a change in name only, not operations.

*Bill Hudson can be reached at [wllm2@comcast.net](mailto:wllm2@comcast.net).*

The essential stage is the valuable, beau-

## ◆ STORYTELLER from page 16

back to the Bay Area. "It was so popular and after two years of storytelling being mostly virtual, I feel people really miss the community and camaraderie of live storytelling," said Yemoto.

Stoops, believe stories build community and connection.

SAC is a non-profit and is actively looking to partner with story-minded organizations and community members to support this Bay Area tradition.

"Although the virtual world has opened many doors and widened our network of storytellers, there is nothing so wonderful as being in the same room with other people," said Stoops.

Sara Armstrong, SAC chair, said there are many opportunities for event sponsors, starting at \$75, with benefits to include advertising on publicity materials, complimentary tickets, swag, shout-outs and more.

The festival's youngest committee member, Velvella Weiss, is happy the festival is returning to the Bay Area.

Those interested in joining the festival can email [bayareastoryfest@gmail.com](mailto:bayareastoryfest@gmail.com).

"We offer scholarships, plus special pricing to anyone 30 and under, to welcome both young artists and newcomers to the art of storytelling," she said.

Online storytelling production company, SFAP, who has produced over 50 virtual shows and festivals – will handle the online portion of the festival.

The festival will follow the Contra Costa guidelines regarding COVID-19 safety and precautions.

SFAP Founder and Co-Producer, Regina

For more information, visit <https://www.bayareastorytelling.org/>. To partner or become a festival sponsor, visit <https://bit.ly/3tekBWk> and to purchase tickets, visit <https://tinyurl.com/BASFReturns>.

*Claire Hennessy can be reached at [bayareastoryfest@gmail.com](mailto:bayareastoryfest@gmail.com).*

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AUTHOR / SCOUTS

# Harmindar Sran Teaches Children to Wash Germs Down the Drain

By ANIA KEENAN  
Staff Writer

For Harmindar Sran, writing *Washing Germs Down the Drain* was just “ComSenS” (an abbreviation she uses for “common sense” throughout her book).

Sran, a registered environmental health specialist originally raised in the Fiji

Islands, drew inspiration for the book after working for the State of California. Her work inspecting restaurants and schools exposed her to what she described as “a lack of enforcement” when it came to hand washing and general personal hygiene.

“Sometimes they didn’t have hot water or there weren’t enough towels,” said Sran.

Sran said she created *Washing Germs Down the Drain* in hopes of fostering greater dedication to personal hygiene, especially among young people.

She wrote her book with the intention of creating a comprehensive guide to germs that could be used by parents and schools to instruct young children about the science behind and how to prevent illness. Once she had her inspiration, she self-published through Outskirts Press after dedicating a year to writing the book.

Sran, however, was quick to add that regardless of age or occupation, “the book is targeting everyone because I am dedicated to all humans.”

Sran said the pandemic offered partial inspiration for her work, but “this was something that I always had inside of me.”

“COVID is going to come and go, but this is timeless,” she added. “Germs are not going to go away.”

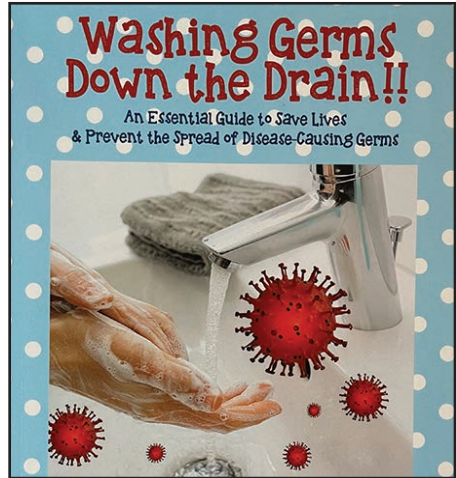
While currently in the process of moving to Orinda from El Sobrante, Sran reported she is reaching out to libraries across the Bay Area in hopes of adding her book to their shelves. She said COVID-19 precautions allowing, she is looking into giving readings at schools and hopes her book will prove an effective educational tool.

After publishing a review manual for the

Food Safety Manager Certification Exam (currently out of print) in 2000, *Washing Germs Down the Drain* is Sran’s second book, but certainly not her last.

She shared plans to expand into a “ComSenS” series to include books that tackle other topics “such as family values and relationships.” She hopes to continue to reach a wide audience with her upcoming titles.

Ania Keenan can be reached at [ania@7keenans.org](mailto:ania@7keenans.org).



COURTESY OF HARMINDAR SRAN

*Washing Germs Down the Drain*, written by Harmindar Sran.

## Orinda Troop 303G is Recruiting for a New Class of Girls in Scouts BSA

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ture is covered. For more information, email [troop303g@gmail.com](mailto:troop303g@gmail.com). You can also visit <https://bit.ly/3w8o2Q4>, meet in person or use this link to apply <https://my.scouting.org>. Next monthly meeting is Monday, April 11 at 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.



ANGELICA STEINMEIER

Taken last year, Orinda 303G Girl Scouts troop members (L-R) Zia Cohn, Nori Blandford and Aimee Steinmeier take a moment on a nature hike during campout at Rock City, Mount Diablo.

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FIRST FRIDAY FORUM

# First Friday Forum - Astronomy: What We Know and What We Don't Know

BY BOBBIE DODSON  
Staff Writer

**I**n the last 60 years, there has been no scientific field that has undergone a more drastic change in the amount of what we know than astronomy," posits Dr. Larry Toy, the First Friday Forum speaker appearing April 1 at 10 a.m.

Contrary to this increase in knowledge, the title of his talk is "Astronomy: The 5% We Know and the 95% We Don't Know."

"This is not what we typically expect from science," Toy said. "When I was studying astronomy in college and grad school, we thought we knew pretty much everything about the universe in detail. At a minimum, we at least had a broad

outline. Fast-forward to today and astronomers now believe we know about 5% of the universe." Toy clarified, "In my lecture we'll talk about the 5%, particularly the parts that affect our daily lives, and the big questions about the 95%, including why we think 5% is known and 95% unknown."

Toy has been interested in astronomy since he was a child.

He graduated from Harvard, majoring in astronomy and then went to the University of California, Berkeley, for an M.A. and Ph.D. in astronomy. He spent 30 years as a professor of astronomy at Chabot College and was chosen from among 15,000 faculty statewide to receive one of the first four Outstanding Faculty Awards for the California Community Colleges. He then spent 10 years as the founding president/CEO of the Foundation for California Community Colleges.

A recipient of two Resolutions from the California Assembly, Toy was also awarded the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Harvard Club of San Francisco. He has served as president of both the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges and the Californians for Community Colleges. He is president of



PEARL TOY

First Friday Forum Speaker, **Dr. Larry Toy**, will talk about *Astronomy: The 5% We Know and the 95% We Don't Know*, April 1 at 10 a.m.

Lamorinda Village.

Toy's personal story provides an interesting insight about the value of community colleges: "My grandfather was a laundry

man who brought his children from China to the United States. My father was 12, and, at that time, no one in my family had even graduated from high school. My father ended up getting his high school diploma before attending Joliet Junior College in the 1930s. He later transferred to the University of Illinois to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry.

"So, my dad, the son of a laundry man, got his Doctorate after attending a community college, and had his son graduate from Harvard, an example of what community colleges can do and a big reason why I champion them."

Toy's lecture, sponsored by the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, will be a webinar presentation. Registration is required at [lopc.org/first-friday-forum](http://lopc.org/first-friday-forum).

*Bobbie Dodson can be reached at [bobbiedodson109@gmail.com](mailto:bobbiedodson109@gmail.com).*

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## Orinda Woman's Club Helps Others with Festival Proceeds

By Suzanne Murillo  
Contributing Writer

many Bay Area organizations.

**C**hristmas came in February this year for the Assistance League Diablo Valley as the Orinda Woman's Club (OWC) presented the group with a check for \$21,500 on Feb. 9. The Assistance League will use the funds for its Operation School Bell - Common Threads program, which provides clothing for homeless high school students in three school districts in Contra Costa County.

The OWC was able to present the funds to the Assistance League and others thanks to its Festival of Trees. Held Nov. 18, 2021, the popular fashion show, raffle and luncheon raised \$41,000. Coupled with other fundraisers, OWC made a difference for

In addition to the Assistance League Diablo Valley, another \$21,500 will provide educational grants to former foster children as well as support such non-profit organizations as Orinda's Seniors Around Town, Infant Mental Health Program in Richmond, START Program at DVC, Orinda's Holden High School, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) and Sweet Beginnings (both of Contra Costa County), Berkeley Hope Scholars, Project Second Chance and Renaissance Scholars of California State University, East Bay.

For more information on OWC, visit <http://orindawomansclub.org/>.

*Suzanne Murillo can be reached at [suzannemurillo@gmail.com](mailto:suzannemurillo@gmail.com).*

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— Rumi

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SALLY HOGARTY

Lots of young people will benefit from the \$21,500 check the Orinda Woman's Club presented to the Assistance League Diablo Valley's Operation school Bell, which will provide homeless youth with new clothing. (L-R) **OWC Beneficiary Chair Janet Clark**, **Assistance League President Suzi Geldin**. The colorful banner to the left was created by Clark's 9-year-old granddaughter Priya Clark.

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