

# THE ORINDA NEWS

Gratis  
Volume 21, Number 8

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

10 Issues Annually  
October 2006

## The Friends of the Orinda Library Celebrates 50 Years

■ Fifth Anniversary of New Library and Annual Book Fair Happen October 7

By PAT RUDEBUSCH  
Assistant Editor

When Lynn Olson was trying to raise funds for the construction of a new library in Orinda, there were some who proclaimed that the information superhighway would reduce libraries to a pile of dust. Fortunately, Olson, who chaired the fundraising campaign for the new Orinda Library, wasn't dissuaded. She, and others, had a vision that placed libraries squarely in the center of community life. Today, five years since its opening, the new Orinda Library has proven that libraries are every bit as important to a community as they were before the technological revolution.

The Orinda Library, as we know it today, is the result of a partnership between the nonprofit Friends of the Orinda Library and

the City of Orinda, which together, generated just over \$10 million to build a new facility that has become a shining example of what a library can be in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. "I personally credit [former city manager] Bill Lindsay for bringing this project together," Olson says. The old library, despite its many charms, had become obsolete due to its size and a dated infrastructure that couldn't readily support the level of wiring needed to take advantage of the new information technologies.

According to Olson, the library has become the hub of the community, thanks, in part, to a downstairs coffee shop, an auditorium, art gallery, and access to technology. During the fundraising campaign, Olson says that she would start off presentations by answering the question "Why libraries?" "We'd say that, yes, information is being transmitted differently, but that doesn't change the role of the library as a central place for all people to get that information," she continues. "Yes, libraries have changed," Olson continues, "Everything evolves and that's a good

[SEE FRIENDS page 20]



CHARLIE JARRETT

Two dragons did the Lion Dance to ward off evil spirits and bring good luck when the Orinda Library opened in 2001.

## Fire District Employs State-of-the-Art Technology to Identify Fire Risk

By PAT RUDEBUSCH  
Assistant Editor

This month marks the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oakland Hills firestorm in which 25 people lost their lives, 150 were injured, and over 2,800 homes were destroyed. Within an hour, what started as a brush fire quickly overwhelmed local fire fighting agencies. Orinda shares many of the conditions that accelerated that fire moving through the Oakland and Berkeley hills.

The Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD) has turned to hyperspectral imagery flyover technology to identify various levels of fire risk throughout the community and at the property-owner level. MOFD Fire Marshall Tonya Hoover reports that, with the use of this new technology, her department is able to collect pertinent information related to the type and density

of fuel, roof types, vegetation, roadway accessibility, and water supply throughout the district. This, she says, is the same technology used by the military and watershed agencies. A similar risk assessment study was conducted in 1999; but, Hoover says that while it was good for its time, newer technologies have improved her department's ability to more accurately pinpoint risk factors.

Given its surrounding topography and vegetation, Orinda is considered a wild land-urban interface area, meaning that we

[SEE FIRE page 20]

## Plans for Art and Garden Center at Montanera Beginning to Take Shape

By SALLY HOGARTY  
Editor

For years, the plans outlining the Montanera development in Gateway Valley have included a spot on the map designated as the community art and garden center. Described in planning commission documents, the center would be situated at the southern end of the project site on approximately 4.5 acres and would be a public facility operated by the Orinda Parks and Recreation Department. Trying to flesh out exactly what that operation would involve is a group of local volunteers who have been meeting since last spring.

Made up of representatives from the Orinda Arts Council, local garden clubs, the Orinda Jrs., the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the City Council, the committee has been touring a variety of other garden centers including the Marin Art and Garden Center in Ross. "We want to build something that will inspire artists and be something Orindans can enjoy for years," says Parks and Recreation supervisor Tod Skinner.

The Los Angeles architectural firm of Robert Heidi has been retained along with local landscape architects Hart Howerton to design the proposed four main buildings totaling 6,000 square feet. The buildings would consist of a 2,500 sq. ft. multi-purpose room, two 1,500 sq. ft. art studios, and a 500 sq. ft. greenhouse. Skinner describes one of the art studios as a "clean" studio with industrial fans to be used for such things as painting and jewelry making. The other "dirty" studio would house the ceramics facility complete with kiln. "We're looking at having higher ceilings in the studios with a cupola on top, sort of a ranch barn style," explains Skinner. "This would allow in more northern light, and,

[SEE MONTANERApage 19]



DON RODGERS

The proposed art and garden center will be in the foreground overlooking the hills surrounding the Gateway Valley.

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## Public Forum October 5

Orinda Library Auditorium

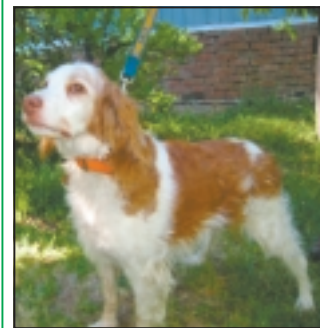
7 p.m. - Presentation of bond issue by Infrastructure Committee followed by question and answer session.

8 p.m. - Candidates for City Council will present their views and goals, moderated by League of Women Voters.

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[www.orindaassociation.org](http://www.orindaassociation.org)  
for more details.

## The October Orinda Dog



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Amy, city councilmember Victoria Smith's Brittany, is the Orinda dog for October. All of the dogs featured on page 2 belong to city employees.

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YEAR OF THE ORINDA DOG



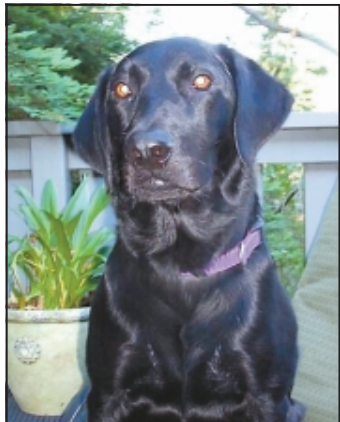
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Oski is **Karen Langan's** (Community Center) adorable white lab.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Three is definitely not a crowd for **Officer Mike Jimenez** who has **Faith (pug), Hope (Beagle), and Lily (Puggle)**.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
**Jersey**, an Australian shepherd, likes to stay close to owner **Officer Nate McCormack**.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
**City Manager Janet Keeter** comes home to her black lab **Ruby**.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
**Community Services Officer Scott Tracy** has a friend indeed with his yellow lab **Max**.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
**Sgt. Andrews' Australian shepherd** is appropriately named **Pepper**.



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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
**The Police Chief's assistant, Haleh Williams-Cain**, takes pride in **Riley (yellow lab) and Dora (German shorthair pointer)**.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
**Trista**, a yellow lab, belongs to **Todd Skinner**, Director of Parks and Recreation.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
**Police dog Chef**, a Belgian Malinois) keeps the seat warm for **Officer Danny Vargas**.

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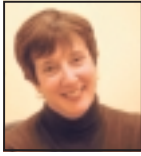



THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President

Public Forum on October 5

Kate Wiley



Politics is definitely in the air this month. It's that time of year to learn about the issues and the candidates and make time to vote. To help Orindans better understand the issues, ballots, and candidates, the OA is hosting a public forum on Thursday, October 5, 7 p.m. — 9:30 p.m. at the Orinda Library Auditorium. The first half of the program will be presented by representatives of the city's infrastructure committee, Measure Q, followed by questions and answers. After a short break, the League of Women Voters will moderate a candidates' night with candidates for the Orinda City Council. We encourage you to attend and come early as seating is limited. If you are not able to attend, of course, *The Orinda News* will have in-depth articles about the candidates and ballot measures. The League of Women Voters is also hoping to televise the debate on Comcast. Check our new website for the

date and time.

While you're thinking about candidates and nominations, it's that time of year to nominate the individuals or groups who have displayed outstanding contributions through volunteer efforts that benefit the community and the environment for consideration as Volunteer of the Year and the William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award. The deadline for nominations is October 21. The winners will be announced in the December/January issue of *The Orinda News* followed by our annual awards dinner at the Orinda Country Club on Sunday, January 28. You can download a nomination form from our new website or send us a letter via e-mail, post or fax.

To better serve the community, we have redesigned our website offering an easy to navigate site with more information on upcoming and current events. Check it out at [orindaassociation.org](http://orindaassociation.org).

Volunteer Drivers Needed for Seniors Around Town Program

The Orinda Association's rideshare program, an on-demand, door-to-door transportation program for Orinda seniors is in need of volunteer drivers. Volunteers take seniors to various appointments within the Lamorinda, Berkeley, and Walnut Creek area, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. –

4 p.m. **Volunteers choose how far and how often they wish to drive.**

It's a truly rewarding, easy, flexible program that provides an invaluable service to our seniors and allows them to remain independent longer. Call 254-0800 for more information. Sign up today!

The Orinda Association

The Orinda Association is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to:

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

P.O. Box 97  
24 Orinda Way (Lower Level Library)  
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POLICE



**POLICE BLOTTER**

Compiled by Haleh Williams-Cain,  
Orinda Police Department  
August 2006

**False Residential Alarms:** Officers responded to 59 false alarm calls throughout the city.

**Auto Burglary** (theft from a locked vehicle): 6 incidents in the areas of Lost Valley Ct., Camino Pablo, Dalewood Dr., Muth Dr., Glorietta Blvd., and Irwin Way.

**Petty Theft From Vehicle** (theft of less than \$400 value from an unlocked vehicle): 3 incidents in the areas of Estabueno, Sleepy Hollow Ln., and Meadow View Rd.

**All Other Petty Thefts:** No reported incidents.

**Grand Theft From Vehicle** (theft of more than \$400 value from an unlocked vehicle): No reported incidents.

**All Other Grand Thefts:** 3 incidents in the areas of Altarinda Rd., and Oak Dr.

**Vehicle Theft:** No reported incidents.

**Residential Burglary:** 3 incidents in the areas of Owl Hill Rd., Monte Vista Rd., and Estates Dr.

**Commercial Burglary:** 4 incidents in the areas of Van Tassel Ln., Las Aromas, Theatre Square, and Orinda Way.

**Vandalism:** 4 incidents in the areas of Donald Dr., Overhill Rd., Moraga Way, and Charles Hill Rd.

**Identity Theft:** 2 incidents in the areas of Lost Valley Dr. and La Cresta Rd.

**Credit Card Fraud/Forgery:** 6 incidents in the areas of Moraga Way, Orinda Way, Holly Ln., and El Camino Moraga.

**Special Notes** – Schools are back in session - please make it a priority to drive carefully! Here are some precautions we should all keep in mind (courtesy of AAA):

- Slow down in or near school and residential areas.

- Drive with your headlights on - even during the day - so children and other drivers can see you.

- Look for clues such as school safety patrolters, bicycles, and playgrounds that indicate children could be in the area.

- Scan between parked cars and other objects for signs that children might dart into the road.

- Practice extra caution in bad weather.
- Always stop for school buses that are loading or unloading students.

Keep in mind that the physical differences in children make them extra vulnerable. These differences and their consequences include:

- Children's peripheral vision is one-third narrower than adults. This makes it more difficult for them to see a vehicle approaching from the side.

- Children's smaller stature makes it harder for them to see a car or for motorists to see them.

- Children's immature judgment makes it more difficult for them to judge a car's speed or distance.

- Children have misconceptions such as that cars can stop instantly, and that if they can see a car, the driver can see them. This puts them at greater danger as pedestrians.

Remember, motorists must share the roads with everyone: pedestrians, bicyclists, and other motorists. Let's keep our streets safe for everyone. Anticipate traffic congestion during school drop-off/pick-up times - leave early, don't speed, and keep your attention on the road at all times. Your courtesy as a safe driver can save the life of another.

**Halloween Safety Tips**

**Trick-or-Treaters:**



- Carry a flashlight.
- Walk, don't run.
- Stay on Sidewalks.
- Obey traffic signals.
- Stay in familiar neighborhoods.
- Don't cut across yards or driveways.
- Wear a watch you can read in the dark.
- Make sure costumes don't drag on the ground.
- Shoes should fit (even if they don't go with your costume).
- Avoid wearing masks while walking from house to house.
- Carry only flexible knives, swords or other props.
- (If no sidewalk) walk on the left side of the road facing traffic.
- Wear clothing with reflective markings or tape.
- Approach only houses that are lit.
- Stay away from and don't pet animals you don't know.

**Parents:**

- Have your child eat dinner before setting out.
  - Ideally, young children of any age should be accompanied by an adult.
  - If your children go on their own, be sure they wear a watch, preferably one that can be read in the dark.
  - If you buy a costume, look for one made of flame-retardant material.
  - Older children should know where to reach you and when to be home.
  - You should know where they're going.
  - Although tampering is rare, tell children to bring the candy home to be inspected before consuming anything.
  - Look at the wrappings carefully and toss out anything that looks suspicious.
- If you suspect your child may have received tampered candy or any other suspicious item(s) in their bag of goodies, call 24-hour police dispatch at (925) 284-5010. 24-hour Poison Control is 1-800-222-1222.



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**Taking Steps to End Alzheimer's Disease**

By SOLANA OLMER  
 Staff Writer

As the population of the United States ages, the number of people suffering from Alzheimer's disease continues to rise. Statistics show that in 50 years, one out of 45 Americans will be living with Alzheimer's. In a Gallup poll commissioned by the Alzheimer's Association, one in 10 Americans said that they had a family member with Alzheimer's, and one in three knew someone with the disease.

Miramonte graduate Ericka Smith is one of those family members dealing with the disease. Her mother Suzie was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at 52. "Suzie was once the owner and friendly face at the Squirrel's Nest in Orinda's Theatre Square. Suzie now lives in a care home in San Diego and does not recognize her family when they come to visit," explains Meghan Daily, Smith's friend and colleague. The former Miramonte students find themselves working together for the Alzheimer's Association and their special project, the Memory Walk, which takes place on Treasure Island on October 7. The money raised will be allocated for research efforts and for services for families who have been touched by Alzheimer's disease. The Memory Walk on Treasure Island is the largest walk in the entire United States.

Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging. It is a devastating disorder of the brain's nerve cells that impairs memory,

thinking, and behavior and leads, ultimately, to death. The impact of Alzheimer's on individuals, families, and our health care system makes the disease one of our nation's greatest medical, social and economic challenges. Thanks to research and advances in medicine, the length of survival after diagnosis has risen from three years to eight years. While the rapid decline has been slowed and quality of life for the afflicted improved, there is still a long way to finding a cure.

Smith and her family learned about Memory Walk four years ago, and since then, they have raised money for the event through their annual Chili Cook-off and Music Festival held at the family home in Orinda. This year, they raised over \$20,000 in one day.

You might recognize Meghan Daily from the annual blood drives held in her honor in Orinda. After being diagnosed with a rare and life threatening illness, Daily received almost 1,000 units of blood from anonymous blood donors in 2001 and 2002. She now speaks to blood donors and works at the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health. In her new position as events specialist at the Alzheimer's Association, she also champions donations for Alzheimer's research.

Last year over \$1 million dollars were raised at the Memory Walk, and this year's participants are striving to increase that amount. To signup, donate, or just learn more, go on-line to [www.alz.org/memorywalk](http://www.alz.org/memorywalk).

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CREEKS

# Taking Good Care of Our Creeks

By ADRIENNE BOYARS  
Contributing Writer

There's a saying, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing" but having no knowledge, or having it and not acting on that knowledge can be far more dangerous in the long run. For instance, residents close to San Pablo Creek may not be aware of several potential problems — problems that may literally be in their own back yard and that could have further reaching and expensive consequences if ignored.

In 2003 and 2004, Cinda MacKinnon of MacKinnon Environmental Consulting was contracted by the City of Orinda to inventory stretches of San Pablo and Moraga Creeks. The city recognized that drainage obstructions are a primary cause of flooding within Orinda and that erosion and other problems are continuously degrading portions of the creek and its adjacent portions.

These inspections were designed to help the city identify, classify, and locate obstructions and other issues, then prioritize them so that city officials could remedy problem areas. The creek conditions and findings detailed in these reports address not only the integrity of the creek-side property, but also that of neighbors. Even the city's storm water infrastructure itself could be in jeopardy if nothing is done to rectify the trouble spots.

During heavy storms, debris accumulates at the entrances of creek culverts, blocking water flow, and causing flooding. A portion of accumulated creek debris is caused by natural processes, such as the downhill movement of dead and dying trees and other types of vegetation; however, some of this accumulation is caused by human activity, such as the dumping of yard waste and other debris in the vicinity of creek channels. If the debris remains and is not removed, blockage of the creek culverts could result in damage to Orinda's streets and utilities, impede the movement of vehicles, flood residences, businesses, and public buildings, and increase the likelihood of landslides.

Other problems in the creeks are caused by construction and landscaping in the riparian (creek-side) zone. Such alterations made to the banks and streams cause erosion along with other dangers. Erosion degrades the soil, increases the sediment load in the waterways and can ultimately result in property loss and damage to roads and other structures. The very structures that property owners erect in order to protect and beautify their property can potentially result in the litany of problems.

Although the city is responsible for all public areas and culverts, the Orinda Stream

Ordinance in our Municipal Code, particularly Chapter 18.02 and 18.03, states that "each watercourse in the city shall be maintained so that water will flow adequately and unimpeded through the watercourse." An existing natural watercourse shall be left unaltered unless: (1) improvement is necessary to protect life, health, and property, or (2) riparian restoration is required under this title (Section 18.03.030). The ordinance further states that "the responsibility for maintenance and repair of watercourses, or portions of them, shall belong to the property owner on whose property the watercourse, or portion of the watercourse, is located" (Section 18.03.040 (B)).

Permits are required for any alterations to a creek. Planting willow stakes and other bank-holding native plants such as dogwood and alder, however, is an easy and very effective way to repair erosion and enhance the riparian corridor in multiple ways. Such "bioengineered" bank repair improves habitat, water quality, and is aesthetically pleasing.

For creek-side property owners interested in reading more about the findings and conclusions of the creek inventories, documents are available both at the city offices and the Orinda Library. There are three creek inventories, entitled as follows: "Creek Inventory of the Upstream Reaches of San Pablo Creek;" "Creek Inventory of Lauterwasser Creek and a reach of San Pablo Creek;" and "Creek Inventory of Moraga Creek." These reports provide detailed, number-assigned maps and tables of the specific problem areas and corresponding photo documentation of some of these different problems, such as rusted and failed culverts and retaining walls, obstructions, and more. If you wish to arrange to review any of the creek inventories at the city offices, please call Cathy Terentieff at the Public Works Department at (925) 253-4251.

For property owners concerned about possible ordinance violations on their property, or who just want to become more informed and better stewards of the creeks, there are several reliable resources. One good resource is the Urban Creeks Council, which comes out to the property and does a free assessment for owners. The best time to call is during the spring, summer, and early fall, before the heavy rains arrive, when the council is swamped with emergencies. Urban Creeks Council's phone number is (510) 540-6669. The City of Orinda also has an excellent educational publication you can access online, "Caring for Our Creeks" (Creekside Property Owner's Manual). This manual can help



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Volunteers cleaned San Leandro Creek during Earth Day last year.

you to learn what your responsibilities are as a creek-side property owner. It lists what the signs of a healthy vs. an unhealthy creek area are, how to check for erosion, how to prevent flooding, how to avoid polluting the creeks, and how to build, garden, and landscape in a creek-friendly way. It also summarizes city ordinances and gives resources that can help you keep your creek-side property healthy and enjoyable for yourself and future generations. Go to the City of Orinda website: [www.ci.orinda.ca.us](http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us) and enter "caring for our creeks" in the search box.

Finally, if you are an Orinda resident interested in creek restoration, Friends of Orinda Creeks is a grassroots, non-profit group that has been actively working since 1994 to preserve, enhance, and restore

Orinda's creeks and watershed. This group sponsors creek clean-ups, appears at city meetings, and gatherings and seeks to educate the public about creek and watershed issues. The restoration of the channeled portions of San Pablo Creek in downtown Orinda is an ongoing and long-term goal, with the practical benefits of creating a natural erosion and flood control by restoring the creek's innate meandering course. The Friends' creek restoration plan aspires to create an urban oasis for native plants and wildlife and provide educational and recreational uses for visitors, right in the midst of a highly-frequented commercial area. For more information on getting involved with the Friends' efforts, please contact Maya Rappaport at Friends of Orinda Creeks at [mayarapp@comcast.net](mailto:mayarapp@comcast.net).

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## 18<sup>th</sup> Annual San Francisco Author's Luncheon Has Orinda Appeal

■ Fundraiser for the National Kidney Foundation draws local book clubs

By PAT RUDEBUSCH  
Assistant Editor

Walking into the San Francisco Marriot ballroom during the San Francisco Author's Luncheon is entering a virtual sea of book lovers; but look closely, and you're apt to see some familiar faces. The annual event, sponsored by the National Kidney Foundation and chaired by Orinda resident Tyler Hofinga, has become a seasonal favorite for avid readers and book clubs from Orinda.



**Orindan Tyler Hofinga** chairs the Annual Author's Luncheon that benefits the National Kidney Foundation.

According to Hofinga, the luncheon has become the premier event for Bay Area book lovers and a hugely successful fundraising event for the National Kidney Foundation. He has co-chaired or chaired the San Francisco Author's Luncheon for the past 11 years and has yet to lose his

enthusiasm for the event or the Kidney Foundation. "The National Kidney Foundation is one of the premier health care-focused organizations in the world," Hofinga says. "Over 13,000 patients and their families in Northern California benefit from the National Kidney Foundation's programs and services. These programs include emergency financial aid for patients, pre-dialysis conferences, community outreach, and professional education and research into finding a cure for kidney disease. Many of these programs directly enhance the lives of children in our communities who are either dialysis or transplant patients or who are at risk for developing kidney disease."

According to Hofinga, this one-day event raises roughly one-third of the National Kidney Foundation's budget for the San Francisco area: "Last year, we raised \$335,000 – our best year to date."

Hofinga says that this year's event, to be held on Saturday, October 28, promises to be every bit as exciting as previous luncheons. Six, internationally acclaimed authors whose works range from gripping tales of growing up in war-torn and/or repressive communities to lyrical children's books. Featured authors include Bay Area comic Brian Copeland whose autobiographical work, *Not a Genuine Black Man: Or How I Learned to be Black in the Lily-White Suburbs* looks back on his 1970s childhood growing up black in San Leandro; Elizabeth George, whose latest novel, *What Came Before Her*, is the latest installment of her English murder mysteries; Khaled Hosseini, a Bay Area physician and author whose novel, *The Kite Runner*, is a moving story of friendship and betrayal, and a glimpse at life in Afghanistan at the brink of Taliban rule; renowned photographer Annie Leibovitz [SEE AUTHORSpage 25]

## National Charity League



Orinda residents Kelly Honens and her daughter Haley along with Darlene Kingery and her daughter Julianne are members of the Acalanes Chapter of the National Charity League. The philanthropic organization helps raise awareness and devotes time to local and national charitable projects. The Acalanes Chapter was among the volunteers at this year's Relay for Life, which raises money for the American Cancer Society.

## Find Out Latest Best Sellers at Fun Event With Random House Representative

■ Ron Shoop will be at Orinda Library October 11

By DEBBIE TYLER  
Interim Head Branch Librarian

Project Second Chance, the Contra Costa County Library's adult literacy program and the Friends of the Orinda Library will be hosting a special evening for people who love to read, on Wednesday, October 11, starting at 7 p.m.

Ron Shoop, a representative from Random House will talk about at least 12 different titles that he believes book clubs, as well as individuals, will enjoy reading, thinking about, and discussing. Shoop has supported Project Second Chance with these presentations for the past six years

and has developed a following of devoted fans that find his recommendations provocative and fun and his descriptions entertaining and engaging.

Although all of the books Shoop describes can be checked out from the library, representatives from Orinda Books will have copies of the titles available for purchase, with a percentage of the proceeds being donated to Project Second Chance and the Friends of the Orinda Library.

So, if you are looking for a suggestion of what to read next, as well as a night out, this is an event you won't want to miss. Bring a friend and join us for an entertaining good time. The event is free and will take place in the Garden Room of the Orinda Library. For more information, call Susan Lynn at (925) 927-3250.

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# ORINDA MOTORS



HELPING OTHERS

# Orinda's Lombardy Branch Benefits Children's Hospital

By MEG PAULETICH  
Contributing Writer

Back in the 1950s, women from Orinda formed a group to support Children's Hospital in Oakland. Later, they expanded to include interested women from Alamo, Lafayette, and Moraga. They named the group the Lombardy Branch and joined 64 other branches located around the East Bay.

Over time, as women began joining the work force, membership fell and many branches dissolved. Though the number of branches has diminished the remaining members contribute around one million dollars a year to the hospital. This enables the hospital to treat children from all over Northern California whether they can afford medical help or not.

About 10 years ago, Lombardy Branch's membership number waned to about 15. In

an attempt to keep the group active, members began to invite their daughters to join. A handful of "seasoned" women assist the enthusiastic younger members. The energy is great and enthusiasm is high.

Fundraising has changed drastically over these past 50-odd years. In the beginning, many fundraising events were modest such as bridge luncheons held in members' homes. Others were all-branch supported events such as a day at the races, bay cruises, and holiday boutiques featuring handmade items. Later, auctions of all kinds became popular and were combined with black tie galas to raise even more money.

Eleven years ago, Lombardy began a new tradition of holding just one big event a year. They invited friends to a cocktail garden party in July at the homes of local residents. The price of admission included

[SEE LOMBARDY page 22]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
(L-R) Cheri Campo, event chair, with Marily and Seymore Hertz, Wendy Dunn, Lombardy Branch president, and Larry Hertz.

# Orindawoods Tennis Tournament Raises Money for the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center

Center named after Orinda woman who lost her battle with breast cancer

By MOYA STONE  
Staff Writer

Tennis pros and amateurs alike came out for the *Ace It!* tennis tournament at the Orindawoods Tennis Club on June 24 to raise money for the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center at Alta Bates Summit Medical Center in Berkeley. In its fourth year, the annual tournament has raised a total of \$55,000.

As a breast cancer survivor herself, *Ace it!* committee member, Gina Tracey, felt she wanted to do something that could make a difference for other women with breast cancer. "A few of the women here at the club got breast cancer at the same time," says Tracey. "We wanted to do something, and since we play tennis, it made sense to hold a tournament."

This year the event raised \$14,000 and sold out with 70 tennis players from around the Bay Area showing up to play and support the cause. "I play tennis so this is something I can do," says Walnut Creek resident Karen Sellinger. An active tennis player for four years, Sellinger found out about the tournament from friends. "I've



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Orinda resident Joan Smith (L) and Melody Thompson won the ladies doubles at the Ace It! fundraiser.

known survivors and non-survivors of breast cancer," says Sellinger, "and I wanted to help."

Every year 7000 women are screened for breast cancer at Alta Bates Summit Medical Center and more than 500 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed. Currently, there is no complete breast health care center in the Bay Area, which means patients must travel to various medical

[SEE ACE IT page 22]

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## Automotive Adviser

The Fall Season is Here

by ALLEN PENNEBAKER

And, so now the political season is in high gear. What does that have to do with your car?

Well, how about taxes? Automotive repairs are one of the large budget items in everyone's life. As well as being one of the most painful for some people. One of our candidates for governor has stated on numerous occasions that he intends to raise taxes on a number of things. One of those things is the labor for servicing and

repairing vehicles. This has become known as the "Tune Up Tax." Now, before everyone gets in an uproar, this article is not meant to be an endorsement of one candidate over another. It is to address an issue that is dear to my heart for more than one reason. The State of California is in an economic recovery phase. I will say that some of those who benefit the least from the economic upturn will be hurt the most by taxing the cost of the labor to repair their

vehicles. Those people, with limited income, who struggle the most to maintain the vehicle they need to get to work, the store, the kids to school, the family to the doctor etc. will be the ones disproportionately hurt by this sort of tax. Their vehicles cost just as much to fix as the more expensive, usually newer, vehicles. In fact, they often require more labor charges to diagnose and repair problems. Let us not forget, this is not tax on a business, it is a tax on the consuming public. You pay it. This is money that you cannot spend on something that you need or want. It creates no jobs, produces no income for anyone. Has nothing but a negative impact on the economy that sustains everyone. The State of California already spends a large amount of money to subsidize some of the repairs on vehicles that fail their smog tests. Now, the State can pay even more out, or use less of their budget to repair the cars, so they can pay that same tax. If you also think this proposed new tax is unfair, let your legislature know before this gets proposed as legislation or actually is passed into law.

That would be Tom Torlakson and Loni Hancock I believe. OK, now I am done venting about that.

So, now it is October. Orinda Motors sponsored Orinda's second annual Endless Summer Classic Car Show in September. The show was a huge community event. Local residents and their classic cars were on display, raising money and awareness for the benefit of the Orinda Seniors Around Town project. At the time of this writing, the car show expected to have over 400 residents come through. Orinda Motors also held an open house that same Saturday to show off their new service waiting area and newly painted shop. Well, newly painted on the inside at least. So, if you were at the show and were one of the first 20 who made the donation for a ride in one of the classic cars during the parade, show your hat and get a complimentary oil change. This offer is good till the end of this month.

Fall is here and winter is coming. But first the Thanksgiving travel time. Depressing for some, exciting for others. Time to make sure the wiper blades are new,

[SEE AUTO page 25]

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## Former Miramonte Grad Follows His Passion Into His Dream Job



Dave Watson poses beside his 1949 Ford F1 pickup.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By BARBARA BOSTER  
STAFF WRITER

Everybody wants a dream job, something that they are passionate about. While others just think it, Dave Watson is doing just that — living out his passion in his dream job. Watson, who was raised in Orinda and is a 1985 Miramonte graduate, co-owns Professional Automotive Enterprises in Lafayette with Scott McKenzie.

Watson loves going to work. The auto repair business is a perfect fit for Watson

who has revved his engines and brought new rpm's into this racy line of work. Some might think of auto repair as one accident after another, but not Watson. You can see his mind race when checking out a car that needs to be repaired quickly. He never stops searching for ways to solve a problem, as he handles each request carefully and with precision. He is a pro.

Watson has tailored Professional Automotive Enterprises to fit his personal expectations of quality, timely, and professional service. A car enthusiast at heart, Watson is a car enthusiast at heart.

[SEE DREAM page 22]





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## Lots of Great Fall Produce at The Orinda Farmers' Market

By BARBARA KOBSAR  
Contributing Writer

The Orinda Farmers' Market is particularly appealing to me during the fall months. Tasty tomatoes still tempt me and beautiful berries keep filling the stands until the heavy rains begin. Apples and grapes are crunchy, and peppers, persimmons, and pomegranates match the vibrant colors in the hills framing the market site on Avenida de Orinda.

Apple season really kicks off in August with the first harvest of Gravenstiens, followed closely by the Royal Galas. Both varieties are favorites for snacking, and just a small sample of the many types of apples ripening in the orchards.

Heirlooms are a big hit with me in the apple world – old-fashioned varieties with outstanding flavors. Any apple should be crunchy – the differences come in size, skin color, and degree of sweetness.

Since heirloom apples are not great "keepers," I browse the apple stands every Saturday for my weekly supply. I have my

favorites – Arkansas Black, Pink Pearl, and Jonathans – but I'm open to trying any fresh harvest apple.

I highly recommend storing apples in the refrigerator. Apples ripen ten times faster at room temperature than in a cool crispener, so I refrain from showing them off on my kitchen counter.

Grapes, like apples, need cool surroundings for proper storage. Seedless Red Flame and Thompson grapes are my mainstay, but I don't pass up a bunch of sweet Ruby or slightly tart Crimson grapes when in-season. Grapes such as Muscat, Ribier and Tokay are worth dealing with only because I'm guaranteed a full-flavored grape after I pop out the seeds.

Grapes may be classified according to their color, how they are used, or by their skin type. All grapes in the pale yellow to green category are considered light, while dark types include grapes with pale red to deep purple-black skin. Those labeled as fresh eating table grapes are considered low acid; wine grapes such as cabernet are high acid and too tart to eat. Commercial grapes are used for producing raisins, juices, and jellies.

I have instant gratification when I arrive home with my bags of grapes. Grapes are picked ripe and ready to eat when color indicates the fruit is sweet and mature. Green grapes are best when they show a yellow hue; red and blue-black grapes should be deeply colored for their variety. In addition to checking color, I also look for nice, plump grapes attached to fresh, pliable stems.

Only a smattering of the hundreds of varieties of peppers grown worldwide arrive at the Farmers' Market. There are still plenty of choices to fill my needs for salads, sautéing, sauces, and soups.

Peppers are either sweet or hot.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Farmers' Market still boasts an array of colorful vegetables and fruits.

Confusion only surfaces when fresh peppers are dried and they change names. For example, poblano or pasilla peppers are called ancho when dried or ground, fresh Anaheim peppers become dried California peppers, and Jalapeno changes its name to chipotle when smoke-dried.

Many sweet peppers are bell shaped, mild tasting, crisp, and juicy. All immature bells are bright green in color and, as they ripen, these same peppers turn red, yellow or purple, depending on variety. I like variety so I include other sweet peppers in my collection – Banana peppers such as Hungarian wax peppers and Cubanelles like Gypsy peppers and pimientos.

Chile peppers conjure up thoughts of hot, but I find Anaheim and Pasilla peppers in this group to be relatively mild. My general rule of thumb is, as the pepper varieties become smaller, the more heat I'm in for. Jalapenos and Fresnos are in the middle of the scale, while the Thai and lantern shaped habaneros hit the top.

I only cleaned hot chili peppers once without wearing rubber gloves – my hands burned for hours afterwards. Always protect your hands from the volatile oils and do not touch your face or eyes when cleaning hot peppers. (There's no problem until the

pepper is cut.)

The Orinda Farmers' Market remains open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Avenida de Orinda in Orinda Village until November 18. Check out the **Veggie Valet** at the end of the market closest to Orinda Way. Leave your bags of produce and bring your car around for easy pickup.

For more information, visit the website at [www.cccfm.org](http://www.cccfm.org) or call the market hotline at (925) 431-8361

See you at the market!

Barbara Kobsar can be reached at [cotkitchen@aol.com](mailto:cotkitchen@aol.com).

### **Pan Roasted Peppers – from *The Pepper Harvest Cookbook* by Barbara Ciletti**

Pan roasted peppers are simple to make and can be easily added to many other recipes or made to accompany a plate of risotto or cheese, bread, and salad.

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil  
6 large green or red Italian or Hungarian sweet peppers, seeded and halved lengthwise  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1/2 cup toasted pine nuts

[SEE RECIPE page 22]



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A young mother and her son enjoy the Saturday Farmers' Market on Avenida de Orinda.

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"My husband Tom and I love Orinda and greatly appreciate the opportunities we have been given over the last 25 years to strengthen our community. With your support, I will continue to work to preserve and enhance the quality of life in Orinda. Please vote for me, Amy Worth, on Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. Together we will work to address the challenges we face as a community."

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**Linda Landau, CPA**  
**Jim Landau, retired investment company CEO**

"Amy brought people from all parts of our community together to raise the funds needed to improve library hours in Orinda and to make sure our community is served by one of the best libraries in the Bay Area. Please, join me in voting to keep Amy Worth working for all of us on the City Council."

**Elizabeth Gross, library volunteer**



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DOLL MUSEUM

# Dolls' House: Orinda Resident Has a Passion for Antique Dolls

By MOYA STONE  
Staff Writer

Helen Hoffman's four children may have left the nest, but she still has the company of her other children – her 200 dolls. For the past 20 years, Hoffman has not only been collecting antique dolls, she's been designing and making her own dolls, and recently she won best in show for the non-professional category in the National Doll Artisan Guild Competition.

"I didn't have dolls when I was a child," Hoffman says. The youngest of five girls, toys were sparse for her while growing up. "But I always wanted a doll of my own," she says. Long into adulthood and after her children had grown, just as a joke, a friend gave her a Madame Alexander doll. That joke ignited something in Hoffman and soon one doll led to several and a collection was born.

Initially, she bought dolls from her travels to various countries. "Every country has a national doll," says Hoffman. "I have the Moroccan doll and the German ... the Italian doll is made of felt." Soon Hoffman began buying broken antique dolls and restoring them to their youthful blush. "I'd find heads with no bodies, dolls with no clothes, and put them back together," says Hoffman.

*"I'm not a doll fancier," says David Hoffman, "but Helen's dolls are so beautiful. I'm really proud of her."*

While collecting and restoring dolls, Hoffman was also attending doll shows and seminars, meeting other doll collectors and doll making instructors. Just two years ago, under the tutelage of renowned doll designer, Jackie Chimpky, Hoffman started designing and making her own dolls from



A small selection of Helen Hoffman's over 200 dolls on display at her "Doll Museum" in Orinda.

scratch. "Helen came to me wanting to improve her skills and she truly has," says Chimpky.

Hoffman buys liquid porcelain and French and German replica molds of antique doll heads. Her favorite period is 1890s French, because she loves the ornate costumes and delicate faces. According to Chimpky, the antique dolls are the most challenging to paint and costume. "Besides many hours of painting, Helen will then spend more hours on the costumes, using only the finest silks and laces and lots of hand sewing on all the final details," says Chimpky. "She is very dedicated and works hard to achieve perfection."

For each new creation, Hoffman painstakingly pours the porcelain into the molds, fires up the kiln, and then buffs and buffs. "It takes forever," says Hoffman, "but I want the dolls to be perfect."

Hoffman works on up to four dolls at a

time and each doll takes about a month to complete. After the firing and buffing, she paints the face striving for just the right lip and blush color. She sews each costume by hand with fabrics such as silk, velvet, and handmade lace. Hoffman also hand knits the socks and even sews the leather shoes. Mohair from the Angora goat is used for the hair, which she buys white and dyes yellow, auburn, or brown. Each doll has around \$500 invested in it, and after completion, Hoffman says she can't part with them, "They're like my children."

Some of the dolls are artfully displayed around the Hoffman home in antique baby carriages, but most are kept in enclosed shelving in what she calls her "doll museum." Her husband, David Hoffman, built shelving with sliding Plexiglas doors, which nicely shows off each doll. "I'm not

a doll fancier," says David, "but Helen's dolls are so beautiful. I'm really proud of her." On occasion, young visitors come to the museum, and she says seeing how much the children enjoy her creations validates for her how special they are.

Winning the non-professional best in show at the recent competition was also a big validation for her, and she has the blue-ribbon doll proudly displayed in her living room. "I couldn't believe it when I won," says Hoffman. "It's so exciting. ... I get a high off my dolls!"



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Helen Hoffman with her prize-winning antique doll from the 1800s on the left and her recreation of a Norwegian bride doll on the right.



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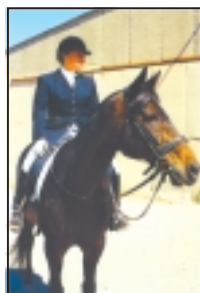
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## BACKYARD GETAWAYS

## Backyard Getaways and Beyond

## Wild, Wild Alaska

Ksenija Soster Olmer



I have a friend for whom camping is slow service at a five-star hotel. I am not quite as comfort sensitive, yet I was a bit taken aback when my husband suggested we spend a week this summer camping in Alaska. I reluctantly agreed and immediately wished I didn't when I saw the weather forecast for Anchorage. Rain, rain, and more rain.

Rain welcomed us upon arrival but the next day the sun was out, and we had three glorious sunny days then three rainy ones, ending the week with more sun. I would suggest taking a sturdier tent and testing your inflatable mattress at home, but otherwise would recommend camping as an economical and an active alternative to a cruise in Alaska. The campsites are plentiful and well maintained, albeit full of monstrous RVs. We pitched our tent at the Quartz Creek on Lake Kenai with beautiful views and a salmon run going right through it. Not only did we bring the Alaskans some California sun, the day we arrived the ban on salmon fishing was lifted. The rivers and streams were full of differently shaped and colored salmon, and I finally learned which was which. At least I think so. Let's see: There is chinook or king, the biggest Pacific species and a trophy for sport fishers; it can reach up to 120 pounds. Second largest is chum, then comes silver, closely related to sockeye, or red, the most sought after salmon due to its rich flavor and firm red flesh. When they spawn, sockeyes turn bright red with green heads and do not bite. They have a rather unattractive hooked mouth but, when they swim next to each

other, they turn the streams red and are a sight to behold. Even more dramatic is the sight of silvers struggling up the rushing rivers. A leisurely hour-long hike up the Russian River brought us to the waterfalls, where silver salmon stoically struggled against the crushing current and forcefully flung themselves over the rocks. At the end, battered and exhausted, they arrive at their destination, the place where they were born to release their eggs and sperm and...die. What parents won't do for their offspring! The last of the wild salmon is called pink, and are nicknamed "Humpy" because of a large hump on its back. Humpies are the lucky ones, as the fishermen will always release them, since they are the least tasty of all.

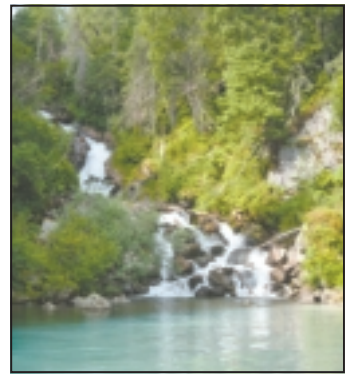


Fishing guide, Chris, and Mirek Olmer with the daily catch of silver salmon.

There were thousands of fishermen everywhere from morning till night, knee deep or chest deep in the waters. The craziest site is from the windows of the Bridge Restaurant spanning the historic Ship Creek in downtown Anchorage, where diners watch men and women called "combat fishermen" because they stand in long lines across from each other, casting continuously and sometimes hooking the fisherman in front or next to them.

## The Fish and Bears

We didn't have to contend with too many fellow fishermen because we took a flight on a small 10-seater seaplane for some fishing lessons and bear viewing. As we flew out on Maverick Air, we enjoyed the perfect view of the snowcapped mountains over the sea and tundra. From high above, we could see moose and the spawning fish. We landed on a lake where fishing boats and guides awaited us. Three by three we jumped into the boats and were taken to the guides' favorite fishing spots. Ours was in a peaceful lagoon next to a waterfall where we proceeded to pull out the first half of our daily quota of huge silver salmon (three per person). Our daughter, fishing for the first time in her life, insisted that most of the fish she hooked be saved and put back in the water. She had no problem eating the ones we caught, though. Our guide Chris, who gave up his architecture practice for fishing, grilled the first silver on a portable grill right on the boat and a fresher and more delicious fish could never be had. I must fault him with forever spoiling my restaurant experience. I have tried salmon (and halibut) in many different Alaskan restaurants and none compared, though Gwin's Lodge at Cooper Landing does make a mean smoked salmon chowder. He then took us to fish at another spot where different kinds of salmon were simply choking the mouth of a stream on their way uphill to their spawning grounds. Many of them did not reach their place of birth and died that day. Not only because of the



The waterfall on Big River Lake sparkles in the mid-day sun.

fishermen like us, but because it is a favorite fishing hole of the local brown and black bears. We spent hours watching the oblivious bears right in front of our noses and fishing rods. Some would swim in the lake with just their ears sticking out of the water; others would jump off of a rock when they saw a particularly tasty morsel. Others, not wanting to get wet, would just amble over to the mouth of the stream and scoop out a helpless flopping salmon. I felt we were right in the middle of a National Geographic special.

## Alaskan Wildlife

There are many other animals to be admired quite close in Alaska. Right out of Anchorage we met our first moose, followed by white dolly sheep. Perched high up in the trees everywhere one can find bald eagles and their young. A good spot to view Alaska wildlife is the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center at Mile 79 on the Seward Highway. You can see elk, caribou, moose, Sitka black-tailed deer, wood and plains bison, muskoxen, and brown, black, and grizzly bears. Homer and Seward both have wonderful marine [SEE BACKYARD page 16]

## Join us in Supporting Laura Abrams for Re-Election to the Orinda City Council.



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New Orinda Library Council Sub-Committee  
Montanera Art and Garden Center Sub-Committee  
Initiated Orinda Farmer's Market, Board Member  
Downtown Revitalization Review Team  
Theatre Square Council Sub-Committee

## Community Involvement and Awards

Orinda Park Pool Renovation Committee  
Co-Director Friends of the Orinda Theatre 1982-1994  
1989 Volunteer Of The Year Friends of the Orinda Theatre  
1989 Resolution County Board of Supervisors For The Orinda Theatre Preservation and Restoration

"When issues affecting our street and neighborhood came before the City Council, Laura Abrams came to our rescue. She dedicated her time and attention to us and we were extremely impressed with her professionalism and integrity. We are some of many Orinda residents who are fortunate to have her running for re-election to the City Council. Please vote for her!"  
Allison and John Banisadr

"I can say without reservation that if it were not for Laura's efforts over a nine year period, the Orinda Theatre would not be standing today."

Nina Horn, Co-Director, Friends of the Orinda Theatre

"Laura's passion is making sure that each Orindan has a voice in our community. Laura reaches out to include the entire community in fixing problems and planning for the future."

Joyce Hawkins, former Mayor

"Thanks to Laura's hard work, Orinda's triple A insured bond rating is the envy of our neighbors. Laura has a proven track record in maintaining Orinda's financial resources."

Victoria Smith, Councilwoman

Thank you, Laura Abrams

BICYCLING ACROSS THE COUNTRY

# Adventurous Cross Country Bike Trip

■ Orinda resident chronicles adventure in new book

By PAT RUDEBUSCH  
Assistant Editor

Mike Foley and his buddies were not unlike many of their peers at Chico State in the summer of 1992. That is, they were entering their senior year of college and not really certain what would come next. But unlike many of their fellow students, that summer Foley and five of his friends Jeff Cantarutti, Darion Frederick, Ken Husband, Gary Thompson, and Jon Wynacht set off on a 55-day, cross country bike trip, pedaling from Chico, California



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Orinda resident Mike Foley penned a book about his cross country bike trip.

to Santee, South Carolina. Along the way, the group gained a broader perspective of America and a deeper understanding of self.

Today, Foley is riding high on the success of his recently published memoir, *Bicycling Beyond City Limits: A Journal of Endurance, Friendship, and Discovery*. The book recounts the cross-country cycling trip he took 14 years ago. Thanks to journal writing, Foley was able to recreate the adventure in such a way as to make the reader feel as though he was along on the ride.

"I encourage journal writing," Foley says. "Just getting your thoughts down on paper can help you get through problems that you thought were bigger than life." In fact, Foley was grappling with one of those bigger-than-life problems the summer he set off on the cycling road trip. After the death of a high school friend, Foley, who attended Campolindo High School, admits to feeling somewhat adrift and cycling gave him the connection – or distraction – he needed to work through that loss. When you lose a friend like that, you start asking yourself questions of mortality. Biking became a good vehicle for me to work through those questions. It was one thing that I could finally call my own."

"There's such a feeling of accomplishment," he says of cycling. "Sweating up the hills, earning the downhill, and knowing that you

accomplished it on your own power – it's a validation that you're still vital." The cross-country trip provided nearly two months of accomplishment as the group rode roughly 500 miles with only one day of rest per week. Riding to elevations of 10,000 feet, across deserts, and through swarms of grasshoppers tested their mettle. In the end, Foley says that it was their ability to get along as a team that made the journey a success. When you spend that much time together, day in and day out, you learn to deal with each other at all levels. "

Cycling, Foley says, brings many unexpected gifts. Moab, Utah was one such gift. "It was a high point of our trip. It's such a beautiful place, a very athletic place," he recounts. Eureka Springs, Arkansas was another such place with beautiful landscapes, great people, and wonderful festivals. In the end, Foley says it was "the kindness of the American people," that he came to appreciate most.

Since the bike trip, Foley has earned a master's degree, worked in the high-tech industry, and served as ski patrol in Bear Valley and as a fire fighter with the U.S. Forestry Service. Clearly someone who needs to be active and outdoors, Foley says that his service with the Forestry Service was a great experience. "There are a lot of similarities between that work and the bike trip. You're working 14-day shifts with two days off, sleeping in the forest and eating MRE's [freeze-dried/dehydrated Meals Ready to Eat]. It's very labor intensive, often working 16 hour days." With a territory that included New Mexico, Idaho, Utah, and Oregon, he says that it would



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Orinda resident Mike Foley on his ride in Norwood, Colorado.

sometimes take two days just to get to the fire. "It can wear you down. I give everyone credit who makes a career out of the U.S. Forest Service." Ultimately, Foley says it was time for him to settle down.

Today, he's living in Orinda and working with his brother-in-law as a project manager for Dalton Construction. And, of course, he's still riding. Locally, his favorite rides are in the Berkeley Hills on Grizzly and Skyline Drive and a bit further afield, he looks forward to riding the Wildfire Century in Chico and the "Death Ride," which he describes as a tour of the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
The team stops at Geysers Pass for a short break and photo op. (front L-R) Ken Husband, Mike Foley, Gary Thompson, and Jeff Cantarutti (standing L-R) Darion Frederick and Jon Wynacht.

California Alps with cyclists riding over five passes and climbing 15,000 feet in one day.

If you'd like to catch Foley in a more relaxed setting and hear of his adventure first-hand, stop by Orinda Books on Saturday, October 21 at 11 a.m. when he'll

be a guest speaker and signing copies of his book.

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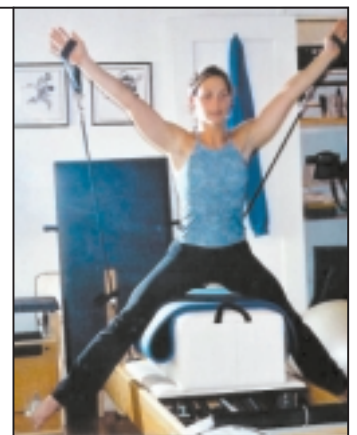
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## BACKYARD GETAWAYS

## ◆ BACKYARD from page 14

centers. Alaska Sealife Center in Seward is educational as well as entertaining. In a naturalistic setting, one can observe the seals' antics while they're being fed by their trainers or admire the different species of cute puffins and other seabirds nesting on the ledges. It is wonderful to stand by the window of the big tank and come eye to eye with the graceful seals or watch the puffins, also called sea parrots, dive after their meals between the anemone and colorful fish.

## A Glacier Tour

Despite the prediction of rain, the skies cleared as we boarded the comfortable vessel for a boat tour into the Kenai Fjords National Park. The crew that included a naturalist, armed with guidebooks on marine and bird life, greeted us with their friendly smiles. Everywhere one goes in Alaska one encounters friendly, helpful people, full of smiles and good cheer. Many are students, local or out-of-state, taking advantage of the summer opportunities for work, and others are transplants, seeking a connection with nature, and a small business opportunity. All understand that the season is short and that tourism is an important part of the industry, so they are hard working, efficient, and welcoming.

I am not sure what was more exciting on our daylong trip, the abundance of wildlife or the loud silence of the enormous tidewater glacier that was our destination. We were lucky to spot playful otters, majestic whales, blubbery sea lions, and colorful puffins. Right at the foot of the glacier, a lovely and lively addition was awaiting our arrival – a pair of black bear cubs and their protective mama. Watching them play and climb did not distract us from being awed by the majestic site of the glacier, the enormous bulk of white, translucent, and bluish ice raising out of the water. The sounds – the whispers, creaks and sighs of the crackling ice, and calving

icebergs are eerily beautiful.

Should you want to touch or stand on one of the 100,000 glaciers in Alaska, you can easily hike to a few (like Exit Glacier) or you can even take a helicopter ride to some. Or wouldn't it be fun to go on a real dog sled ride on one of them?

We opted for the warmer and cheaper version – an IdidaRide, a summer sled dog ride and tour at the Seavey Homestead near Seward. There we met two sons and some of the 75 dogs of Mitch Seavey, the 2004 Iditarod winner. The boys were excited to share the history and intricacies of the famous race, started by their grandfather Dan, Sr. in 1965. Our daughter loved the visit to the kennels and an opportunity to hold the cuddly new puppies. Contrary to our beliefs, the best Iditarod dogs are not the pure, beautiful Alaskan huskies but mangy mutts, Alaskans crossed with hounds or gundogs, whose only reason for living is to run. On the rare occasion when purebred teams are entered into big races, they nearly always finish last. We learned that Seavey family dogs, world-class dogsled racers can be extremely valuable. A top-level racing lead dog can bring from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

I do not know if the dogs that were pulling our summer sled with attached



**This brown bear** has his own way of catching salmon.

KSENIA SOSTER-OLMER

wheels through the forest on the homestead were top-level racers, but they sure loved the chance to race. When they were waiting to be picked out for the ride, they were yapping and jumping straight into the air to attract the trainer's attention. "Pick me, pick me!" they were begging.

## The Peoples of Alaska

There are still remnants of the Russian population, whose adventuresome ancestors came to Alaska after its discovery by Vitus Bering and Aleksiei Chirikov in 1741. For the next half a century, they were mostly fur traders of sea otter and seal pelts for the lucrative China trade. There was a strong influence of the Russian Church supported by Catherine the Great, wife of Tsar Peter the Great. A short stop above Ninihchik affords one romantic views of the bay and an old white, gold, and blue Orthodox Church, surrounded by a cemetery of white crosses and colorful flowers.

Some of the natives carry Russian names, among them Peter Kalifornsky, a self-taught writer and scholar who wrote and compiled traditional stories, poems and language lessons in the *Dena'ina Athabaskan* language. If you have a deeper interest in the Native Alaskans, the best place to understand how they lived is the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage. You can attend a performance or demonstration, meet some of the native artists and craftswomen, and walk through the *skansen*, an outdoor setting with reconstructed dwellings of the 11 distinct cultures. The best place to buy the native art: masks, carvings, beadwork of outstanding quality is not a downtown gallery, nor a museum, but a hospital in Anchorage. The Auxiliary at the Native Medical Center on Ambassador Drive runs an amazing gift shop. The native artists bring in their own art and the retail margins are small. If you are lucky, you might meet the artists as they walk through the door and purchase their art directly from them.

## A Rafting Adventure

What do you do when the weather turns rainy in Alaska? We decided we might as well get even wetter by rafting the Six-mile Creek. It was difficult to leave the cozy sleeping bags at seven in the morning and drive in the pouring rain to Hope, where we met our rafting guides and the other participants. Despite the early hour and the dreary weather, everyone was in a good mood.

"How many teenagers dragged their parents into this?" asked one of the fathers in the group good-naturedly. We soon squeezed into wetsuits and helmets and drove to the launching site. Dropping over 50 feet per mile as it flows out of the Chugach Mountains, Six-mile Creek has cut its way through three separate canyons offering Class IV and Class V whitewater. Because of the difficulty, we were forewarned when booking the whitewater adventure that we would have to pass a swim test. It was not the most pleasant start of the trip, but floating, swimming, and kicking your way down the rapidly flowing freezing cold river to the awaiting raft gave us a healthy respect for the danger and no desire to fall out of the raft on the rapids.

We didn't have much time to admire the towering canyon walls, draped in a lush carpet of old growth rainforest with cascading waterfalls pouring in from the sides. We were busy, navigating one rapid after another under the expert direction of our guide. With each succeeding canyon, we encountered whitewater of increasing difficulty. Yet we survived all the rapids aptly named "Suckhole," "Merry-Go-Round" and "Jaws," without overturning. As a reward, the ladies of our expedition were served fresh wild strawberries, picked on the banks by our guide.

Despite our active exploration, we covered only a tiny area of Alaska in a week. We sure are glad of Seward's folly when he purchased Alaska for two cents an acre from the Russians! Thanks, we'll be back!

## Tom McCormick for Orinda City Council - Fresh Ideas - Dedication



TERRY RIGGINS PHOTOGRAPHY

- Fiscal Responsibility
- Work with Orinda Schools
- Streamline Remodeling Process
- Revitalize Business Areas

*"Tom has demonstrated a commitment to the schools, and would bring a new and refreshing perspective to the Council."*  
— Riki Sorenson, President, Board of Trustees, Orinda Union School District.

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Join Us In Supporting  
Tom McCormick for Orinda City Council

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Nancy & Tim Fitzmaurice  
Patti & Steve Fleming  
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*"Tom's background and experience as an attorney, business person and Orinda volunteer will make him an excellent City Council Member. I urge you to vote for Tom!"*  
— Steve Glazer, Mayor Pro Tem, Orinda City Council

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Vickie & George Gallegos  
Gary Gibbs  
Bekki & Neil Gilbert  
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*"Tom's work on the Orinda Baseball Association Board of Directors was thoughtful and complete, he will make a very good City Council Member"*  
— Rob Weikert, President, Orinda Baseball Association, 2006-2008

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*"Tom McCormick represents the thoughts and feelings of the Orinda Community. You can be guaranteed that he will follow your beliefs and concerns on any current and future issues affecting the Orinda Citizens. I served with Tom on the OBA Board."*  
— Alex Miller, Orinda Volunteer of the Year



THEATRE SQUARE / HALLOWEEN

# What Would You Like to See at Theatre Square?

Photos by BARBARA BOSTER



"I would like to see a clothing, shoe, and handbag store with reasonable prices. Come to think of it, I would also like to have a really good and healthy take-out food restaurant."

— Kris Stuart



"I would like to see a sporting goods store come in."

—Jim Wiltshire



"I would love to have an up-scale grocery store with take-out and deli with an array of fruits, vegetables, and flowers – a cross between Rockridge's Market Hall and College Avenue stores."

— Sharon Foot



"I would love to have a scrap-book store come into Orinda Theatre Square."

— Nicky Zabetian

# Halloween Festivities at the Schools



SALLY HOGARTY

Last year, Sleepy Hollow's Pumpkin Patch included hitting a golf ball into an over-sized bat.

by SALLY HOGARTY

Editor

Orinda's elementary schools are busy preparing for a favorite holiday -- Halloween. Sponsored by the parents clubs at each school, the Halloween events are not only fun, they also raise funds for various needs at each school such as classroom assistants, P.E. teachers, school libraries, and computer labs.

Glorietta Elementary School starts things off with Fright Fest on October 14 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Next up is Del Rey with their annual Pumpkin Patch and movie night slated for October 15 from 3 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Wagner Ranch begins its festivities with Scary Story Night on October 18 followed by Monster Mash on October 21. Call Wagner Ranch at 258-0016 for exact times. On October 26, Sleepy Hollow will have its Scary Story Night with its Pumpkin Patch scheduled for October 28. Call Sleepy Hollow at 253-8320 for times.

## Starlight Auction at St. Stephen's Church

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church will again host its Starlight Auction on October 6 from 7 - 10:30 p.m. The night features dinner, dancing, and many wonderful silent and live auction items including vacation getaways, golf packages, and other unique items. One of the most popular auction items is a gourmet dinner for eight at the St. Stephen's Rectory served and hosted by Fr. Larry Hunter, Fr. Tom Trutner, and Warden Scott Rhoades...and yes, they will even do clean up duty! If you would like to take part in this special community evening benefiting the St. Stephen's Outreach Program — which in turn helps charities, local and abroad — go to [ststephenorinda.org](http://ststephenorinda.org).

## Sue Severson for Orinda City Council

"I heartily endorse Sue Severson for election to the Orinda City Council. Our 2004 Citizen of the Year, Sue has given distinguished service to our community, especially to our schools. She has the qualities of leadership that assure she will be a great asset to our city's governance."

Dick Heggie, Orinda's First Mayor

"Orinda's children benefit each day from Sue's decade long commitment to our schools. Her forward-thinking, sensible approach to problem solving will have an immediate impact in getting our city council on a better track. I strongly support Sue's candidacy!"

Riki Sorenson, President, Orinda Union School District Board

"In working with Sue, I have found her to be very bright, conscientious, thoroughly on top of the issues, and always respectful of others in the process. She is a consensus builder and excellent problem solver. I endorse her candidacy for the City Council with great enthusiasm!"

Steven Glazer, Mayor Pro Tem, Orinda City Council



**SUE CLARK SEVERSON**

My approach throughout more than 20 years of volunteer public service has been to maintain a respectful attitude, to foster open and responsive communication, and to focus on fiscally prudent practices for our tax dollars.

My promise is to help establish priorities to best allocate scarce resources through diligent fact gathering, thoughtful study of all options, inclusion of all interested parties, and decisions made with a fair and open mind.

Sue Severson  
 Miramonte Parents' Club President, 2006-2007  
 Orinda Citizen of the Year, 2004  
 Orinda Union School District Board, 1993-2002  
 Orinda Disaster Preparedness Committee, 1990-1993

Aldo Guidotti, Mayor retired  
 Bobbie Landers, Mayor, retired  
 Allan Tabor, Mayor, retired  
 Victoria Smith, City Council  
 Amy Worth, City Council  
 Glenn Alper, OUSD Board  
 Linda Landau, OUSD Board  
 Pat Rudebusch, OUSD Board  
 Pam West, OUSD Board  
 Vanessa Crews, AUHSD Board  
 Aaker, Kay  
 Akin, Paul & Christy  
 Alper, Lynne  
 Anderson, David & Nancy  
 Kaible  
 Andrews, Bob & Pam  
 Rhodes  
 Arnon, Steve & Joyce  
 Attard, Paul & Tamara  
 Bains, Ravi & Erica  
 Baker, Don & Shirlee  
 Barber, Brad & Cindy  
 Barber, Tom & Carol Ann

Barker, Jeanne  
 Barrows, Cathie & Doug  
 Barth, Neil & Gene  
 Behnke, Steve & Allena  
 Bennett, Jr., Jay & Susan  
 Bennhoff, Lucia & John  
 Bitzer, Kelly & Jim  
 Bomtempo, Jack & Barbara  
 Bluford, Peter & Nancy  
 Booth, Rick & Nancy  
 Brentano, Thama & James  
 Brinkerhoff, Michael & Betty  
 Bush, Dan & Amy  
 Butler, Sarah G.  
 Callaway, Denne & Caroline  
 Callister, Rick & Heather  
 Cannon, Bill & Pat  
 Caronna, John & Stephanie  
 Chaconas, Ted & Cecile  
 Chan, Tom  
 Charvet, Gabriela  
 Citron, Eric & Dvora  
 Clarke, David & Cristy  
 Coates, Stephen & Sylvia  
 Coe, Jan & Alan  
 Cooper, Micki  
 Cosden, Bill & Nancy

Crews, Jesse  
 Cwallina, Gail  
 Dath, Steve & Elaine  
 Davis, Stephen & Chris  
 Lascz-Davis  
 Dawson, Jim & Dana  
 DeLange, Mike & Pam  
 Dolbec, Mike & Cathy  
 Dougherty, Cathy  
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 Elder, Desmond & Pam  
 Eliason, Tim & Beth  
 Ellis, Luke & Laura  
 Sawczuk  
 English, Nancy & Bill  
 Engstrom, Peter & Lisa  
 Epstein, Tom & Susie  
 Epstein, Lynn & Len  
 Evans, Mike & Janine  
 Farrell, Jim & Catherine  
 Fearon, Patrick & Mary  
 Ferguson, Ken & Dorothy  
 Fernbacher, Kathy  
 Fleming, Steve & Patti  
 Foster, Dwight  
 Foster, Herb & Jeri  
 Frudren, Jo Anne  
 Fuhrman, Mark & Yvonne  
 Gardiner, Barry & Pam  
 Garrett, Phil & Lynn

Giers, Pete  
 Gilbert, Neil & Beth  
 Gilbert, Karen Derr  
 Ginsburg, Eric & Leann  
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 Glade, Kurtis & Britta  
 Glauser, Rudy & Nellie  
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 Gordon, Eve  
 Gottfried, Gene & Phyllis  
 Gray, Andrea  
 Grier, Dixon & Patti  
 Guest, Karl & Patricia  
 Haist, Whitney & Diane  
 Hall, Pam  
 Hamilton, Scott & Isabel  
 Hamilton, Susan & Bob  
 Harris, Marsha  
 Harwood, Steve & Tish  
 Heggie, Bea  
 Hemming, Carter & Pam  
 Hilly, Wayne & Vickie  
 Hirahara, Carl & Tak  
 Hofinga, Tyler & Beth  
 Holland, Jeff & Alison  
 Honens, Dexter & Kelly  
 Home, Brenda  
 Hotz, Valerie  
 Hyde, Jane  
 Jasper, David & Monique

Klingman, Jeff & Debbie  
 Sculberry  
 Landau, Jim  
 Laney, Gary & Carla  
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 Larson, Brent & Rebecca  
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 Lett, Ken & Valerie  
 Lettlo, Carol  
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 Libove, Joel & Barbara  
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 Ling, Dick & Margaret  
 Linsay, Mike & Annette  
 Logan, Jeff & Michelle  
 Loomba, Ramesh & Nancy  
 Marchick, Gloria B.  
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 Martin, Carol  
 Mayeri, Yoni & David  
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 McCoy, Chuck & Joye  
 McColom, Michael & Wendy  
 McCormick, Tom & Stacy  
 McDaniel, Yvonne  
 McDaniell, Russ & Barbara

Metzner, Peter & Aliza  
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 Montgomery, Bob & Joan  
 Moreau, Jackie  
 Morris, Merle & Pearl  
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 Nicholson, Cindy & Chris  
 Nicolaou, Liz  
 Niehaus, Christina  
 Nielsen, Stan  
 Nishioki, Gary & Sheila  
 Nye, Gary & Ann  
 O'Connell-Nye  
 Oshima, Diane  
 Pang, Elena  
 Pavey, Kent & Ina  
 Penskar, Carol  
 Powell, Bill  
 Pugh, Brad & Lisa  
 Purcell, Brian & Kim  
 Quist, Jim & Bonnie  
 Radloff, David & Cindy  
 Boyko  
 Rainis, Darryl & Jana  
 Ramsey, Diane & Bruce  
 Rhodes, Mitch & Karen

Riegins, Terry  
 Riley, Benjamin & Janet  
 Ritmann, Max & Katy  
 Rokman, Kevin & Susan  
 Rowland, Dennis & Maria  
 Rudebusch, Glenn  
 Ryan, Jim & Jane  
 Ryan, Nancy & Joe  
 Saccaro, May Lynne  
 Santangelo, Lynn  
 Seeth, Paul & Rebecca  
 Dahlberg  
 Severson, Brandt & Aubyn  
 Simon, Dave & Kathy  
 Sloven, Larry & Valerie  
 Smith, Gregory  
 Smith, Jack & Ruth  
 Sorenson, Andy  
 Sorenson, Bob & Stephanie  
 Sorenson, Lee & Ann  
 Soso, Randy & Catherine  
 Spurrer, Ida & Lon  
 Stenowce, Andy & Carolyn  
 Stueck, Greg & Pat  
 Szaecka, Tom & Carol

Swinton, Mark & Lorree  
 Tafjen, Don & Virginia  
 Tague, Anna  
 Talbot, Al & Lucy  
 Taylor, Matt & Nancy  
 Thatcher, Jeremy & Kim  
 Taines, Sarah  
 Thompson, Allan  
 Trumbo, Rita  
 Tuttle, Mark & Marcie  
 Ullman, Bev & Bert  
 Vann, Rich & Robin  
 Viadro, Chris & Julianne  
 Wendt, Sheila  
 West, Bob  
 Wilbur, Maureen  
 Wisner, Jane  
 Wrinkle, Ed & Joann  
 Wu, Norm & Marinda  
 Wujek-Thayer, Mary  
 Wyro, John  
 Yatch, Bran & Kathy  
 Yruel, Gloria  
 Zischer, Midge  
 Zuercher, Jane & Mark

Paid for by committee to elect Sue Severson for City Council ID #1288709.

Partial list of endorsers.

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# Say What?!

## Party Animals

Lana Olmer



At the end of my junior year, it was easy to become reflective. After concentrating so hard and working so single-mindedly towards one goal (survival), I now had the opportunity to catch my breath and admire the view from the summit. One of the things I've been reflecting upon is what else was on my fellow classmates' minds as we struggled towards our senior year: "Where's the party this weekend?"

It's a huge difference from the United States where I can buy cigarettes, lottery tickets, join the army and die for my country, long before I can have a glass of champagne on New Year's Eve. Unfortunately, many teens don't go to a party to socialize; they go to a party to drink as much as they can.

After hearing about an incident involving a few middle school students and alcohol, I was shocked. But, in truth, the incident only reaffirmed that underage drinking isn't limited to a small minority. Today, drinking isn't considered the rebellious act that it once was, done by only the defiant few. Today, the pressure to drink affects everyone.

I know that my inability to change this dangerous situation is just as great, if not greater, than my inability to change the laws concerning them. What I am doing is asking everyone to re-evaluate the attitude that we are safe in our beautiful community. Because when teens and preteens feel the need to drink or do drugs but cannot talk to their parents or any other adult about their situation, their safety is seriously jeopardized. The topic about alcohol and drug consumption cannot be approached with an attitude of zero tolerance, because that does nothing to alleviate the situation and can even escalate it. If teens feel scared to approach their parents or other adults about drugs and alcohol, it doesn't mean they won't partake in them, it just means that they will be unable to ask for help.

I am personally of the opinion that the movie *Dazed and Confused* represents a rather typical senior summer: loitering, terrorizing freshman, and yes, going to parties.

I am not a parent, and in no way can I tell any parent how to do his or her job. All I am asking is that parents be accessible when someone needs help - whether it be drug or alcohol counseling, a safe ride home, or an adult to talk to. Would you be more upset if your son or daughter called needing a ride home or if they tried to drive drunk and got into an accident? Or was arrested for drunk driving? Or worse? Make sure your teen feels safe asking for help.

I wrote this while I was in Buenos Aires, Argentina over the summer. One night, as I was playing cards with my house sisters, our host mom brought us a tray with three cups of beer. Despite the fact that a cup of beer was not going to threaten our fragile sobriety, we were, needless to say, shocked. Was an adult actually offering us alcoholic beverages? The funniest thing about the situation was that only one of us actually drank the beer. In Argentina, there is no legal drinking age, which means that I can drink if I want, and not drink if I don't want to without feeling like I've missed out on something.

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Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation's Newest Exchange Student



**On August 2, the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation** welcomed Czech Republic student Michael Vasek (L), seen here with former exchange student Petr Nemeck, at a well-attended reception at the home of Bea and Dick Heggie. Vasek is the fourth student sponsored by the foundation. He will attend Miramonte High School this year. Kathy and John Fernbacher are his host family for the fall semester.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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OUT & ABOUT

*Out  
and  
About* Pat Rudebusch



If nothing else, Orindans know how to put their time and talents where their hearts are. From local civic service to outreach efforts that span the globe, volunteerism is alive and well in Orinda. Last spring, 15 Miramonte High School students received national recognition when they were awarded the **President's Volunteer Service Award**.

The honorees were recognized for their service ranging from helping to build a school in Africa to serving food to the poor and homeless in the Bay Area. Awards were presented in four categories depending on the number of hours of volunteer service. **Haley Andrews, Rajan Banerjee, Michelle Chern, Alison Dahlstrom, Han Joong Kim, Laura Jorgens, Eileen Libove, and Becky Penskar** each received a bronze award for volunteering between 100 – 174 hours this past year. **Rae Weinstein** earned a silver award for contributing between 175 – 249 volunteer hours, and gold awards were presented to **Christina Choi, Ari Dallas, David Earl, Alex Issacs, Katy Reed, and Lauren Van Rheenen** for volunteering over 250 hours within a one-year period. The **Miramonte Parents' Club** also received a gold award for the group's volunteerism on behalf of the school.

If the high school gave honorary degrees, **John Stockton** would most certainly be a candidate. A longtime Orinda resident, Stockton was honored with the President's Call to Service award for his countless hours of volunteering on behalf of the

various Miramonte sports teams. Long after his children graduated, Stockton continues to attend Miramonte sporting events and support the school's athletic programs. If you're looking to congratulate him, chances are you can find him at any number of Miramonte sporting events cheering on the Matadors.

The President's Volunteer Service Award is a national initiative of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation along with the Corporation for National Community Service and the USA Freedom Foundation. The program was started by President George W. Bush as a means to encourage volunteerism and civic participation. In his 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush called upon Americans to commit to 4,000 hours – the rough equivalent of two years of volunteer service over the course of their lives. The USA Freedom Corps and the Points of Light Foundation were created to help facilitate and recognize volunteer efforts.

Four levels of awards are offered as part of the President's Volunteer Service Award program with the highest honor being the President's Call to Service award for individuals or groups who have contributed over 4,000 hours over the course of their lifetimes. Bronze, silver, and gold awards recognize service on an annual basis. For more information on the President's Volunteer Service award program, including how a group can become a certifying organization, go to [www.presidentialserviceaward.org](http://www.presidentialserviceaward.org).

◆ MONTANERA from page 1

hopefully, inspire those working within as they gaze out into the Gateway Valley with two riparian areas and a creek setting within view."

One thing that might help inspire those using the new facility is that they no longer will have to traipse back and forth carrying all their supplies and artwork. The new art studios will include lockers for students' work. "In the new facility, we will finally have room for storage and supplies. It makes it a much more comprehensive center," Skinner adds, who notes that Community Center classes such as art, dancing, and dog training must share the same space.

The new facility will also allow the Orinda Community Center to enhance the

number of classes it currently offers and become more of a regional facility. Skinner and his fellow committee members envision demonstrations in the greenhouse and a series of gardens that would make for informative and fun family hikes. "We're looking at different themes for each garden with maybe one being all native plants, another dealing with ecology, and another full of tactile, sensory plants. With the East Bay trail system adjoining the center, it would be easy for families and hikers to enjoy the gardens and then continue hiking through the valley," says Skinner.

Originally, the art and garden center, along with the swim center, was scheduled for phase four of the development. According to Skinner, the developer, Orinda Gateway LLC, became so excited

[SEE MONTANERA page 20]

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Vote For  
**Pamela West, Orinda Union School District Board**



I currently serve on the Governing Board of the Orinda Union School District. My tenure on the board has been one of the highlights of my experience as a resident of Orinda for the past 24 years.

I am seeking another term because of my appreciation of the job, level of experience, and commitment to several long-term projects that I would like to follow to completion. During my tenure, OUSD has made significant strides in delivering excellence in education to the children of Orinda with its strategic plan, the quality of our teaching staff, level of employee satisfaction, long-term planning commitment, and careful budgeting of resources.

If elected, I will continue to strive to maintain educational excellence by:

- Providing a world class curriculum
- Fully implementing the OUSD strategic plan
- Maintaining programs at the highest levels
- Striving for continued teacher satisfaction
- Serving on the Legislative Council
- Working to maintain equalization funding
- Securing Pine Grove funding
- Satisfactorily relocating the maintenance facility
- Aligning and balancing the budget

Finally, I would like to thank the Orinda community for the tremendous effort it puts forth each year to help its schools maintain excellence.

*Pam West*

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CONTINUATIONS

◆ FIRE from page 1

live in an area where housing meets with undeveloped land, thus creating the environment for wildfires to not only spread quickly, but also present the biggest risk to human life. Referring to the 1991 Oakland Hills firestorm, Hoover says, "I don't want to see what happened to our neighbors happen here. We have the fuel and the conditions to make that happen so it's important that we – the fire department and citizens – work together at reducing the risk to the community. You plan for the catastrophic event because that's what has the biggest impact on the community."

To that end, Hoover is anxiously anticipating the launch of the district's web-based map showing the results from the hyperspectral imagery flyover. "The website will show results for each parcel,"

says Hoover. "Homeowners will be able to go to the site and get the risk rating for their property." With that information, Hoover hopes that property owners will begin to take steps such as eliminating certain vegetation or upgrading roofing materials to help mitigate the fire risk. "I'm not talking about clear-cutting," she's quick to explain. "That would not be environmentally sound either. But by doing a little bit at a time consistently, we can make a big difference."

For those worried about having this type of information publicly available, Hoover points out that similar information is already out there. "The insurance companies are already doing this. Orinda is in a high-risk area. The whole point of doing this is to give the community good information," Hoover says. "If homeowners make changes to their property –

changes that they think should lower their risk assessment, I will go to the wall for the homeowner with the insurance company. I'm willing to put my scientific technology up against anyone's. Still, people need to understand that insurance companies want to work with local fire agencies to reduce risk. Of course, there will be occasions where people will never get out of a high risk because of the topography and slope of their property."

Hoover expects the website to be up by the end of the month and encourages residents to go to the site and contact her office with questions. As with any new undertaking of this magnitude, there are bound to be some bugs in the system. Still, she hopes people will be patient as they

work through any bugs and, more importantly, use the information that her department has diligently collected.

Checking to make sure that the house address is clearly visible from the street is one simple improvement that homeowners can make without waiting for the website to be up and running. "The typical response speed for an emergency vehicle is 30 – 35 m.p.h. Decisions of where to turn have to be made in 40 seconds," Hoover explains. "An address that is not clearly identifiable from the street can make a critical difference in an emergency. It's the little things that sometimes make the biggest difference."

To learn more, visit the Moraga Orinda Fire Department's website at [www.mofd.org](http://www.mofd.org).

◆ FRIENDS from page 1

thing."

One thing that hasn't changed in the last 50 years is the role of the friends of the Orinda Library in bringing library services to the community. Linda Landau, a longtime member of the friends' board, notes that the original Orinda Library was built with donations raised by the friends. "It was the only library in Contra Costa County to be owned by a friends group," Landau says. Over the years, the Friends of the Orinda Library have supported its growth in many ways – from funding the building to increasing the hours of operation. "From 1997 to 2001, when county funds were being diverted to the state, the friends contributed over \$83,000 to keep the library open on Saturdays and some evenings," Landau says. "In the past ten years, we've contributed \$282,000 to purchase library materials. Throughout the friends history, the organization has worked to support the library's growth."

Landau says that since the new library opened five years ago, the circulation rate has more than doubled, which is particularly noteworthy given the fact that Orinda's branch already had one of the highest circulation rates in the county library system. "We continue to improve the quality of the collection," Landau continues. "I encourage patrons who can't find what they're looking for to tell one of the librarians. If they make a request, chances are good that the friends can purchase the materials."

The Friends of the Orinda Library receives its funding from membership contributions, the sale of donated books at its book shop and monthly book sales, and

at the annual fall book fair. The book fair, which Landau has co-chaired with Linda Luini for the past several years, is a communitywide event that celebrates various civic organizations in town. In addition to thousands of books for sale, the fair includes the Orinda Garden Club's plant sale, a bake sale sponsored by the Orinda Woman's Club, the Orinda Community Church's sale of handmade quilted items, and the various scouting troops help with soda sales, balloons, and set-up and take-down for the event.

This year's annual book fair will be held on Saturday, October 7 – which also happens to be the fifth anniversary of the opening of the new library – from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. As Landau says, you'll want to come early (for the best selection of books) and come often (for the end-of-day bargains). Food, fun, and 50 cent paperbacks...what better way to spend an autumn Saturday...and it's a good bet that birthday cake will be served!

For information on contributing to the Friends of the Orinda Library visit the website at [www.ccclib.org/friends/ori](http://www.ccclib.org/friends/ori).

◆ MONTANERA from page 19

over the committee's plans that the center has been moved up in the construction schedule. "The art and garden center is a very important part of this project," says Montanera spokesperson Jason Keadjian. "I can't say enough about the great work that this committee has done."

Currently, the art and garden center is in the early design phase with plans to go before the planning commission sometime this fall.

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- ◆ *Orinda Rotary Board of Directors*
- ◆ *Member Lawrence Hall of Science Advisory Board*
- ◆ *Chair, OUSD Wagner Ranch Nature Area Long-Range Plan Committee*
- ◆ *Member, OUSD Maintenance Yard Relocation Committee*
- ◆ *Past board member, Mt. Diablo/Silverado Council, Boy Scouts of America*

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ORINDA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Orinda Intermediate School on the Fast Track



The OIS cross-country team with coach Jason Currya (in back).

LINDA FOLEY

By LINDA U. FOLEY  
Contributing Writer

When head coach Jason Currya (a.k.a. JC) talks about his track and basketball athletes at Orinda Intermediate School (OIS), his eyes brighten.

After graduating from San Francisco State, JC earned his teaching credential from Saint Mary's College. At the same time, he coached basketball and track, which eventually evolved into a full-time position. "Getting hired at OIS for a first job is like getting a Ferrari when you turn 16," he says trying to suppress a grin.

Three years ago when he began his coaching career, there were just 25 kids on the track team. Currently, there are 85 students, the ratio being 60 percent boys to 40 percent girls. "Luckily, they don't all come out at the same time to run," he chuckles but adds that he has excellent support from coaches Len Goldman, Rod Twain, Sue Juarez, and Nick Allen.

At the end of last school year, OIS (competing against Albany, Benicia, Joaquin Moraga, Martinez, Piedmont, Seven Hills, and Stanley) garnered second place overall in the 7/8 grade track championships. JC gives much of the credit for a successful athletic program to Ron Langer (who was athletic director for six years before becoming assistant principal), and the support of the Parents Club.

JC is a seasoned athlete, an avid basketball player (his height a natural slam dunk), runs six-minute miles, and has competed in Half-Iron Man and many triathlons. Does he expect the same of his kids? "No, I just want them to have fun competing and like running and not consider it some kind of punishment." He also recognizes that running is not everyone's thing, but may simply serve as a basis or springboard for other sports.

His goal for track is "to keep the momentum going." He works with what a student is actually able to do. "Often, they surprise themselves. They are still learning about themselves and their capabilities," JC adds. This sport is available to everyone, but a willingness to participate and a good attitude are the essential requirements. There are no try-outs and everyone is welcome.

In addition to a successful track season, basketball at OIS has taken off. "A lot of kids didn't think it was cool to play after-school hoops but with a great group of kids the last two years, the team went 25-7. Those kids put OIS basketball on the map," JC enthuses.

As to JC's future goals for basketball, he says, "The new group of eighth graders is pretty focused. Last year, we had our first rally-run by the leadership students and basketball coaches, which was hugely successful." It was held at lunch during the season and included three-point contests with kids winning prizes (e.g. "no-mile" passes to be used during P.E.). Everyone was involved including the Bulldog mascot handing out candy and the student body filling the gym cheering on the teams. "For this year's rally, we may lower the rims for a slam dunk contest or organize a game against the faculty. At any rate, I want to keep up the tradition of another big rally and make basketball a come-see sport," says JC. Eventually, he would also like to start a summer basketball camp at OIS.

Apart from his personal goals, which includes earning a master's degree and to do a full Iron Man, JC's primary goal is to stay committed to coaching track and basketball. From the looks of it, both are definitely "come-see" sports!

For more information on the sports program, go to the school website: [www.orinda.k12.ca.us/OIS/](http://www.orinda.k12.ca.us/OIS/).



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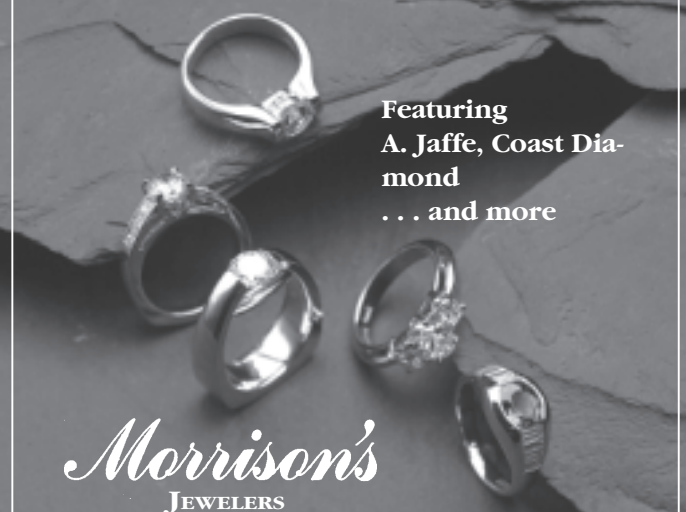
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CONTINUATIONS

◆ **RECIPE** from page 12

1/2 cup freshly chopped parsley  
1/2 cup balsamic vinegar  
1 tablespoon minced lemon thyme  
1 clove garlic

In a large frying pan, heat the oil over low heat. Sauté the peppers very slowly, 20 – 30 minutes. Turn the peppers occasionally to make sure that they are cooked on all sides. Season with salt and pepper. While the peppers are cooking, blend the pine nuts and parsley in a small bowl and set aside. Add the vinegar and thyme to the frying pan. Turn each pepper one more time, in order to pick up the scent and flavor of the vinegar.

Remove the peppers from the pan and transfer to a shallow wooden bowl rubbed with the garlic clove. Top with the pine nuts and parsley. Season with a little more salt. Serve at once. Serves 4 to 6.

◆ **LOMBARDY** from page 9

assorted beverages, wonderful food such as barbecued prawns and lamb chops accompanied by music, and silent auction items. The first year's earnings were modest but built to a high of over \$65,000 this year.

For several years, Lombardy's funds have mainly supported the hospital's Center for Child Protection.

The Lombardy Branch is grateful to the generosity of the following people who helped to underwrite expenses for the annual fundraiser: Mechanics Bank, Bank of the West, First American Title Company, McCaulou's, McKesson Foundation, Novagradic Rivers Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, Baypoint/Bass Institutional Group., The Hertz Team (Marilyn and Larry Hertz), Carl Miller of Geneva Real Estate Investments, Village Associates Real Estate, Kirby and Carol West, and the Yeatman Foundation.

◆ **DREAM** from page 10

heart with an affinity for the classic, vintage, and exotics in the car world, he has succeeded in his quest to put all car repair needs under one umbrella at Professional Automotive Enterprises. He is very pleased with the service he can provide given the high needs and demands of this area. His business meets auto body needs ranging from enhancements for a specific vehicle, to restoration of a classic, to mechanical repair.

Professional Automotive Enterprises provides another service. Watson and his team have helped a multitude of clients search for and acquire their dream classic, vintage, and exotic automobiles. He is relentless when it comes to finding the perfect car for his clients. With a scrutinizing eye and savvy business dealings, he will hunt until the car, truck, or sports coupe is delivered, and the client is satisfied. He says, "It is all worth it when you see them get into the car of their dreams. I am happy to be their liaison." Watson also helps owners restore their old cars. He loves to help rekindle the relationship between owners and their cars.

This enthusiastic entrepreneur has a service perfect for the busy woman. For a nominal charge, Professional Automotive Enterprises allows you to drop your car off

and have it hand washed and detailed – sort of a "car manicure" while you go next door to the nail salon "Pinkies" to get your own manicure and pedicure. Just make sure you call ahead, since the news got out about this special service, they have been inundated with customers!

The business has been at the same location since 1949, and though ownership has changed, the quality has not. Professional Automotive Enterprises grew stronger with the 2002 acquisition of Springs and Bertino Automotive and Body Repair. "We have been very happy with this addition to our business," says Watson. "It has allowed us to add new services."

Not surprising, but it is good to know that Professional Automotive Enterprises is on the insurance list of approved repair facilities in the area. When I asked Dave why people flock to their business, he says with a laugh that "some people are embarrassed about their fender-bender or other mishaps, they like coming to us because we are discreet and respectful." The other reason people come in, he adds, is because today's cars are more vulnerable than cars of yesterday which had more chrome. Watson says, "Professional Automotive cares about our customers' vehicles so we offer a lifetime guarantee on our work, and the highest level of service hands down."



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◆ **ACE IT** from page 9

centers around the area for tests and treatment. Bouncing from place to place causes delays in treatment and unnecessary stress.

The new breast health center will address this issue offering state-of-the-art diagnosis and treatment, genetic counseling, psychological support, and in-house testing and treatment. In addition, the center will provide complementary alternative therapies including massage, acupuncture, visualization, and herbal therapy, all of which help mitigate the side effects of Western medicine cancer treatments.

Dr. Lisa Bailey, medical director of the breast center at Alta Bates and a surgical oncology specialist, says that the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center is based on what a breast health center should be – committed to making the process from diagnosis to treatment easier and quicker for women and their families. "Our goal is to have this process complete within a week to reduce the time of terror that women experience waiting for their test results," says Dr. Bailey. "The center's main objective is to increase the community's rate of screening for breast cancer, which will decrease the stage of cancer diagnoses and improve treatment outcomes."

Breast cancer survivor Doris Bergman is

an avid tennis player and says she's amazed by the amount of support and enthusiasm the local tennis community has given to the *Ace It!* event. "Everyone here is willing to give time and their expertise to this cause," says Bergman. "This is an easy way to raise money because playing tennis is what we like to do."

Tennis pro, Brad Rieser, teaches tennis and coaches at Acalanes High School in Lafayette and has participated in *Ace It!* from the beginning. "This is one of the best events I've been a part of," says Rieser. "It's a great cause." Rieser knows first hand the devastating effects of breast cancer. His wife is a survivor since 1997. "It changes your outlook on life," says Rieser.

The new breast health center is named after Orinda resident Carol Read, who lost her battle with breast cancer in 1998. Her husband, Peter Read, offered the Alta Bates Summit Foundation a challenge grant to help jump-start the fundraising, and he also co-chairs the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center Campaign Committee. To date the project has raised \$9.5 million with another \$3 million to go.

For more information about *Ace It!*, please visit: [www.orindawoodstennis.com](http://www.orindawoodstennis.com). For more information about the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center, contact the Alta Bates Summit Foundation at (510) 204-1667, or go to their website at [www.absfdn.com](http://www.absfdn.com).

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MOVING / BONSAI

# Ease the Stress of Moving With Kids

By KEN RYERSON  
Contributing Writer

You've searched it out and found your dream house. You've made the deal, arranged the financing, and completed the paperwork. Now, there's just one thing left to do: move.

No doubt about it, moving is a hassle. It's the last step in the long process of acquiring a new home. Whether you pack yourself or employ a moving company, it's a lot of work. Adding children to the mix can make any move all the more complicated.

Yet a few simple steps can smooth a move with kids. Several time-proven suggestions to ease the stress of moving to a new home are listed below, gathered over the years from realtors, families, and child experts. Not all suggestions suit all situations, of course, but consider these ideas as hints and pointers and your move will proceed as easy as possible. It may even be fun!

It begins when you start looking for your new house. Try to keep as much the same or similar – as possible. If your old place had a large yard, for example, try to get at least some kind of yard for the kids instead of decks only. Of course, know that some things, like a favorite tire swing that you hung from the oak tree, cannot be duplicated. You can help your children work through this loss by pointing out new features that the old house did not have.

If your timing is flexible, try to make your move in June or July, a few months before school starts. This makes the transition easier, because the children can get to know the kids in your new neighborhood.

When moving day comes, try to have very young kids elsewhere. This will make it easier on them as well as you. You won't have to worry about the little ones and the furniture and the movers, and small kids won't experience the confusion and chaos firsthand when they're too young to understand what's going on. If possible, have a grandparent or friend take them for the day and deliver them to the new house once the worst of the move is done.

If young children will be part of moving day, excite them with something new or special. This might be a trip to a favorite park, a new stuffed toy, or a special party. Keeping them entertained and excited about change can help distract them from worries about the move.

It's different for older kids, of course. They should be encouraged to help with moving as much as possible. Involvement in the process helps give them a sense of ownership in the new house and neighborhood. Of course, some kind of


small reward works to motivate them too.

When you unpack in the new house, set up your children's rooms first. The idea is to keep things familiar for them as much as possible. For example, if your kids are used to sleeping together, let them continue to do so until they get used to the new space even if they have separate bedrooms in the new house. This simple step provides children with a safe, familiar space from which to begin exploring their new world.

Finally, once you're unpacked, explore your new neighborhood together. Make it an exciting adventure to check out new stores and hiking trails. Show them how to get to know a community and have them take initiative so they will learn the skills of adapting to a new place.

As soon as it is practicable, get your kids involved in activities they enjoy such as swimming, participating in dance classes, watching baseball games, listening to music — whatever they are used to doing. If you have an affiliation with a church, that is a great way for kids to acclimate to a new area and meet new friends.

In the end, don't worry too much about moving with kids. Although any move can be stressful and upsetting, the children often adapt faster than the adults. In fact, children can even help adults adapt to their new surroundings. Get involved in your kids' social network and invite their friends over to your home. Organize play dates, and invite new friends along on family outings. This helps cement new friendships for your children and is also an excellent way to meet their parents, which in turn may result in new friendships for the parents as well.




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## East Bay Bonsai Show



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**Orindan Bob Callaham** works on one of his bonsai creations for the East Bay Bonsai Society's annual show on October 14-15 at the Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue in Oakland. Located near Fairyland, the show takes place from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. on Saturday and from 11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. on Sunday. There will be a demonstration by Dave DeGroot, curator of the Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection near Seattle, on Sunday at 1 p.m. Admission is free. Call (510) 521-9588 for more information.

Before long, your children will be right at home in their new home and neighborhood — and so will you.

*If you have any questions on moving, you can reach Ryerson at (925) 878-9685 or at Ken@RyersonRealty.com.*

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## CALENDAR

## ON THE CALENDAR

## OCTOBER

- 1 **California Shakespeare Theater**, *As You Like It*, through the 15<sup>th</sup>, Tue.-Thu. at 7:30 p.m., Fri.-Sat. at 8 p.m., Sun. at 4 p.m., tickets (510) 548-9666.
- 5 **Orinda Books**, Janice Cooke Newman discusses her new novel, *Mary*, based on the life of Mary Todd Lincoln, 254-7606.
- 6 **St. Stephen's Church**, Starlight Auction, St. Stephen's Rectory, 7 - 10:30 p.m. go to ststephensorinda.org for more information.
- 7 **Friends of the Orinda Library**, Book Fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Library plaza.
- Orinda Farmers' Market**, every Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Avenida de Orinda and Orinda Way, www.cocofarmer.org, also Oct. 14, 21, and 28.
- 8 **Orinda Books**, Jess Walter discusses his new novel, *The Zero*, 1 p.m., 254-7606.
- 10 **Orinda Books**, Philippa Gregory discusses *The Constant Princess*, paperback, 2 p.m., 254-7606.
- 11 **Friends of the Orinda Library/Project Second Chance**, Book Club Forum with Ron Shoop, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Library Garden Room, 254-2034.
- 17 **Orinda Books**, Orinda Owls discuss Peter Pouncey's *Rules for Old Men Waiting*, 7 p.m., 254-7606.
- 18 **Orinda Books**, Myla Goldberg discusses *Wickett's Remedy*, paperback, 4 p.m., 254-7606.
- 21 **Orinda Books**, Michael Foley discusses *Bicycling Beyond City Limits*, a 55-day trip across America, 11 a.m., 254-7606.
- WomenSing**, annual Gala and Auction, Oakwood Athletic Club, Lafayette, 6:30 p.m., www.womensing.org, tickets call (925) 974-9169.
- 22 **Friends of Orinda Creeks**, creek cleanup, meet behind 23 Orinda Way, 10 a.m., wear long sleeves and pants, bring garden tools and gloves.
- 25 **Orinda Books**, Adam Gopnik discusses his new memoir, *Through the Children's Gate: At Home in New York*, 4 p.m., 254-7606.
- 26 **Orinda Books**, Sena Jeter Naslund discusses her new novel, *Abundance: A Novel of Marie Antoinette*, 3 p.m., 254-7606.

AT THE LIBRARY  
ADULTS

- 2 **Orinda Library's Teen Film Fest 2006** entries due.
- 4 **Orinda Library Book Group**, discussing Sebastian Junger's *The Perfect Storm*, new members welcome, 7 p.m.
- 20 **Teen Film Fest 2006** screenings, RSVP required, 254-2184.
- 25 **Mystery Author Panel**, Sisters in Crime, 7 p.m.
- 26 **Story Swap**, 7-9 p.m.

## CHILDREN

- 3 **Toddler Lapsit**, infants to age three and their caregivers, songs, bounces, and stories, 10 a.m., repeats at 10:30 a.m., also 4, 10, 11, 17, and 18. Please attend one Lapsit a week.
- 7 **Saturday Morning Live!** Family storytime for ages three to five, 10:30 a.m., Toddler Alcove, also October 14 and 21.
- 18 **Musical Stories With Andrea!** Movement and fun for children ages three to five, 3:30 p.m., sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library.

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

## CLUB MEETINGS

- Orinda Lions Club**, Europa Restaurant, 64 Moraga Way, every Tuesday at 12:15 p.m., 254-0482.
- Orinda Sunrise Rotary**, Postino's in Lafayette, 7 a.m. every Friday, 254-0440, ext.463.
- Orinda Rotary**, Community Center, every Wednesday at noon, 254-5537.
- Orinda Association**, Orinda Library, May Room, second Monday, 7:30 p.m., 254-0800.
- Orinda Historical Society**, third Wednesday of the month, OHS Museum, 3 to 5 p.m., 254-1353.
- Orinda/Tábor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation**, fourth Thursday of the month, 7 p.m. social, 7:30 p.m. meeting, call 254-8260 for location.

## CITY/FIRE/SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

## Acalanes Union High School District

First and third Wednesdays, district office, 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette, 7:30 p.m.

## City Council

First and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, www.ci.Orinda.ca.us.

## Historic Landmarks Committee

Fourth Tuesday, 3 to 5 p.m., Library Garden Room, public is welcome, for information, please call 788-7323.

## Moraga-Orinda Fire District

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

## Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees

Second Monday, 4 p.m., OUSD Conference Room, 8 Altarinda Road, www.orinda.k12.ca.us.

## Planning Commission

Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, 253-4210.

## Parks and Recreation Commission

Second Wednesday, 7 p.m., Community Center, room 7, 254-2445.

CALENDAR BY LYNDA LEONARD

Send calendar items to momcat1@earthlink.net

## Festival of Trees 20th Anniversary



Here are a few of the beautiful **table top trees** from last year's event.



PHOTOS BY SALLY HOGARTY

**Vickie Saputo and Police Chief Larry Gregg** were models in last year's show.

By SHEILA CANTOR

Contributing Writer

The Orinda Woman's Club celebrates its 20th anniversary producing the Festival of Trees. This year's event takes place on November 16 at the San Ramon Marriot Hotel and includes a luncheon, a raffle of beautiful table-top trees as well as holiday wreaths and gift baskets, and a fashion show featuring women's clothing by Helen Lyall of Vallejo, men's fashions by Nordstrom, and lingerie by Bonne Nuit. Proceeds from the event benefit the Sophia Project, which serves children and families striving for self-sufficiency, and the Royal Family Kid's Camp, where abused, neglected, and underprivileged children are

treated like "royalty" during the week-long camp.

For tickets to the Festival of Trees, call Rebecca Gunderson at 254-8347.

## WomenSing Holds Gala Auction

WomenSing will hold its 8th annual Gala and Auction on Saturday, October 21, from 6:30 to 10 p.m. at Oakwood Athletic Club in Lafayette. The theme, Baile de Máscaras an "evening of masks and mystery," anticipates WomenSing's trip in the summer of 2007 to a competitive festival in Cantonigros in Catalonia, in northeast Spain.

Costumes are optional. The evening includes regional food, wine and entertainment. For more information, call WomenSing at (925) 974-9169.

## Discover the Bay Area and Beyond With the Orinda Hiking Club

- Every month the Orinda Hiking Club sponsors several hikes in the Bay Area.
- **Regular Saturday/Sunday** hikes are typically eight to 10 miles in length with up to 2000 feet of total elevation gain.
  - **Short** hikes are on the fourth Saturday and typically are no more than five miles long, with modest elevation gain.
  - **Extreme** hikes are in months having a fifth Saturday and are usually 12 to 16 miles in length with up to 4000 feet of total elevation gain.
  - **Wednesday** hikes occur on the first Wednesday of each month and are typically less strenuous than the regular Saturday hikes.
  - **Evening Street Strolls** are on the third Thursday of each month and range from one and a half to three miles, mostly on paved trails or city sidewalks.
- Sturdy hiking boots are required for all weekend and Wednesday hikes. Bring plenty of water and lunch (except for Saturday short hikes). Hikers meet at the Orinda Community Center to get directions and form car pools; however, Wednesday hikers meet at the intersection of El Nido Ranch Road and Charles Hill Road. For the meeting location for Thursday Strolls, call the number listed in the hike schedule.

## October

- 4 **King Canyon Loop/EBMUD**, sturdy hiking boots required, 8:45 a.m., meet at intersection of El Nido Ranch Road and Charles Hill Road, 253-0131.
- 7 **Coastal Trail/Point Reyes National Seashore**, sturdy hiking boots required, meet at Community Center, 7:45 a.m., (925) 283-6400, repeats Oct. 14.
- 19 **Thursday Stroll, Martinez**, (925) 370-9729 for meet location and time.
- 21 **Mt. Olympia/Mt. Diablo State Park**, sturdy hiking boots required, meet at Community Center, 8:15 a.m., (925) 283-5098, repeats Oct. 29.
- 28 **San Francisco Historic Walk**, short hike, meet at Community Center, 8:15 a.m., 376-2455.



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## Quartet San Francisco

Friday, October 6 at 8 p.m.

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# Living Lean in Lamorinda

By SUSAN GILLERAN  
Staff Writer

Personal fitness trainer Sheena Lakhotia, with a body of steel that belies having given birth twice, is living proof that her program, Living Lean, works. It's a regimen that the Orinda resident developed using proven scientific principles and motivational practices, incorporating diet and exercise with personal one-on-one coaching. But, if you really want the skinny,

it's about busting myths:

Myth #1: Everyone who goes to a health club is healthy. Lakhotia is keenly aware from personal observation and experience — through teaching spinning and ball & muscle classes six nights a week — that exercise alone is not enough to reach weight goals. "I've seen people come into the gym everyday in a week, do the same thing and never seem satisfied," she says. "So I decided to do an exercise and diet plan teaching people how to integrate healthy habits into their lifestyle. Which brings us to..."

Myth #2: Diets are all about losing weight. They're actually about being healthy, according to Lakhotia. "If you eat well and exercise, you'll be strong and fit.



Orinda resident Sheena Lakhotia demonstrates one of the exercises in her new Living Lean program.

The importance of living lean is to have a healthy heart," she says. Towards that end, her Living Lean program begins with a personal health assessment, where clients are asked to divulge their entire health, diet, and exercise history as well as goals and food preferences. They are weighed and their body fat is measured.

Then Lakhotia digests the information using a software program and puts together a customized nutrition and exercise plan. Included along with a minimum six-hour per week workout schedule is a complete day-by-day menu that offers up the ideal combination of good protein, fats, and carbohydrates in their purest forms that are necessary to achieve goals. And this leads to...

Myth #3: You have to starve if you want to lose weight. The bottom line is you have to eat — to trick your body against storing fat, which it tends to do when hunger sets in, Lakhotia professes. "This is not a crash diet," she says. "You can actually eat five times a day. Certain vegetables are free foods so you can heap them on until you're blue in the face. You can even have shakes for snacks. Who doesn't like a smoothie? You can also have a glass of wine a day. We want to make sure this is something that you can incorporate into your life. "Your body needs high fiber foods that stay in your system a long time and prevent you from getting cravings because the goal is to lose fat and gain muscle to become lean," Lakhotia adds. And she goes on to bust ...

Myth #4: Diet foods are boring and monotonous. Lakhotia believes that flavorful foods and flexibility are the real pluses of her program. Clients may opt to do their own cooking (recipes are currently being developed to help guide them) or purchase fresh "gourmet" meals prepared by Susan Ford Catering in Lafayette for Living Lean's healthy meal supplier, Ortego. "These are fresh, wonderful meals that everybody loves and can be ordered online at ortego.com (a Living Lean portal is currently in the works) and delivered to your home or picked up locally," Lakhotia says. Which brings up...

Myth #5: Exercise always works. Actually, Lakhotia says, "If you want to increase metabolism, you really have to change up what you're doing. Otherwise,

your body gets used to the same routine." Focusing on the core, which is where she sees real body strength coming from, she provides her clients with a customized mix of weight training and cardio workouts. Duration and intensity vary with each individual as well. "I want them (my clients) to be independent and to live healthy. I spend as much time as I need, whether it's meeting every week, at the (Lafayette) reservoir or at the Lafayette Health Club (where she credits owner Debbie Swigert with choosing the name of her program) or in a home gym. And then there's..."

Myth #6: Sticking to any program is a piece of cake. "Motivation is the key," she says. It's actually a double combo of motivation and follow-through — as Lakhotia continues meeting with clients weekly until they're ready to be on their own, providing progress reports filled with kudos and inspiration to keep them on track. "Knowing that they're not alone really seems to work," she adds. And finally, there's...

Myth #7: Physical trainers have always been in great shape. Lakhotia remembers exactly when she caught the fitness bug, which for a young woman growing up in a traditional Indian household was considered somewhat of an anomaly. She'd put on the freshmen 10 while attending U.C. Davis from which she eventually graduated with a B.S. in genetics, and fell victim to her brother's jokes. So upon returning to school, she attended her first aerobics class and has been teaching ever since, along with step-aerobics, cardio-kickboxing, strength training and spinning. "In 20 years, I've worked at all kinds of health clubs and have never had to pay for membership," she said.

"This is my true love. I studied genetics for my father (having gone on to pursue an advanced degree in immunology at Cornell). I was in marketing and founded my own company (in the medical device and diagnostics industries), which allowed me to stay home with my children, but I'm really a people person. This is what I'm best at, and I love to do it!"

Additional information on the Living Lean program is available by calling 925-360-7051.

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BUSINESS BUZZ

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psychiatrist they don't trust because the therapeutic relationship is very collaborative. If there is no trust, there can't be any collaboration," Gordon explains.

An Orinda resident for 31 years, Gordon is married to Lloyd Gordon who is also a physician. "He was a "G" and I was an "H," and we had biochemistry together," quips Gordon. The couple has an adult son, Adam Gordon. Dr. Gordon's areas of expertise include anxiety, depression, life cycles issues such as marriage, divorce, and that phenomena known as empty nest. She practices only individual counseling.

"During the late 1980s, a surprising number of my patients were being laid off, and as a result, they had overwhelming feelings of humiliation and shame. In reality these layoffs were the result of changes in the American business practice, yet these high achievers were feeling like total failures, as if it were their fault that they were laid off. It turned out that corporate America was changing, and it was no reflection of the work product of these individuals," says Gordon.

The advantage of doing therapy with a psychiatrist who is a medical doctor is that if medication is needed, then the patient does not have to go to yet another provider. "I can dispense medication. Prescribing is an art form and should always be done in combination with therapy. I can better monitor the effects of the therapy and the medication when I see the patient regularly," she adds.

Women's issues is another area that Dr. Gordon specializes in. "It really does take a village to raise a child, and often we don't have grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins living close by so we have to learn skills necessary to build our own support network," adds Gordon.

The benefits of therapy are available and can only be achieved if an individual is willing. "Through the process a patient can see how he or she interacts in relationships and become conscious of it. Then they can discover for themselves what they want to work on," says Gordon. For more information, call Dr. Rochelle Gordon at 254-0708.

**Maya Mexican Grill**

Maya Mexican Grill has just celebrated its second anniversary at the Orinda Crossroads and owners Patricia Vasquez and Juan Carreno have expanded the popular taqueria to include a thriving catering component.

Featuring authentic Mexican recipes, many of the tasty dishes have been created by Vasquez and their cook Lalo Gallegos. "Lalo has such a great flare. He has been with us since 1994," says Carreno. Previous to opening Maya, we operated Fabulosa on

Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley and Lalo was our cook there as well. Carli Mansilla has been our manager here since we opened Maya in 2004.

The catering service is ideal for athletic banquets. "We can serve up to one hundred people. The perennial favorite is crispy tacos with either beef, chicken, shrimp or pork filling, lettuce, tomato, cheese and avocado," adds Carreno. Catering arrangements must be scheduled at least four days prior to the event.

When a customer noticed tostadas were not on the menu, Vasquez was quick to accommodate a request for a tostada with romaine lettuce, black beans, chicken, queso fresco, and topped with tomatillo dressing. It has been on the menu ever since.

The couple has lived in Orinda for the past 12 years and each works a separate full-time job in addition to operating Maya Mexican Grill. Vasquez is a corporate auditor at North American Title Company and Carreno works in the ramp services department at United Airlines. "Balancing several jobs is an ongoing thing for us, and we are fortunate to have our original staff managed by Carli," points out Vasquez.

The Kids' Menu continues to offer popular healthy choices such as Plato Chico, chicken with rice and beans, and Tacos Chico, two soft corn tortillas with chicken and chips. "I grew up in Texas and my mom made crispy dogs for a quick snack for my brother and I. It was my favorite snack as a kid, and I recreated it here for the kids who come in," adds Vasquez. Additions to the menu include combination specials such as Steak Ranchero at \$9, Tostados Maya at \$7.25 and Chicken Mole Plate (the recipe includes



VALERIE HOTZ  
Juan Carreno and Patricia Vasquez of Maya Mexican Grill.

fourteen ingredients and is made fresh daily) at \$8.75. Among the favorites are the Ensalada Maya, a delicious cabbage salad with chicken, jicama, tangerine slices, and chips topped with a spicy ranch dressing. Order ahead for takeout by calling Maya Mexican Grill at 258-9049.



VALERIE HOTZ  
Curves owner Pati McDonald (L) works with a client at the Curves facility in Theatre Square during the company's grand re-opening. For information on joining the flexible gym program, call 254-4199.

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## Business Buzz

### Putting a Personal Face on the Face of Business

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#### Carotte et Caviar

Over the past two years, native Orinda culinary talent EJ Keller has established his own small business, *Carotte et Caviar*, in Paris, France. Trained in the classical French tradition, Keller offers private in-home dining experiences, cooking classes and tours of the famous Les Halles open market in Paris to the tourists who prefer to rent an apartment in the City of Light instead of taking a hotel. Much to our benefit, Keller has taken a sabbatical of sorts by moving his family back to his hometown for the upcoming year.

"My wife and I wanted our sons to experience their American heritage, so we decided what better way to do that than to move back to the town where I grew up and where we have an existing community of friends," explains Keller. A 1985 Miramonte High School graduate (you might know him as Cowell), Keller went on to study electronic communications and earned his bachelor's degree at San Francisco State University in 1994. "I met my wife, Isabelle Doucq, through mutual friends on a river rafting trip on the American River. After our wedding, we spent six months traveling in France visiting her family and friends, and we ended up staying permanently," he adds.

"In France, every meal is a social event.

The food and wine pairings, table settings, wine and cheese and social etiquette, each detail is a very important element of building relationships in their culture. Food is so central in France. I found it all incredibly inspiring and went to work at excellent three-star Michelin restaurants in Paris. The work is extremely hard. At Le Grand Lefour, there are 20 chefs. We start everything from scratch every single day, such as the filleting of fish, the cutting and chopping," explains Keller with enthusiasm.

After spending several years learning his craft at three-star restaurants, Keller



**Chef EJ Keller** now offers private home dining experiences and cooking classes.

decided to turn his attention to becoming a personal chef. Half of his clients are private individuals who are celebrating special occasions, such as a birthday or a wedding rehearsal dinner, with 10-15 guests in their home. Keller does all the preparation and service himself. He tailors each event according to the individual client's preferences. The other half of his business involves working with cooking schools and teaching classes. Keller will be teaching two classes through the Lafayette-Moraga Recreation Department at the Hacienda de Las Flores this month. The October 5 class will focus on French hors d'oeuvres and the October 12 class is all about the ultimate chocolate cake. You can sign up for the classes on the website, [www.lafmor-recreation.org](http://www.lafmor-recreation.org). Keep an eye out for possible class offerings at the Orinda Community Center this spring.

"We arrived in Orinda in August just in time for our sons to start school at Glorietta. Emmanuel is in the second grade and Gabriel is a kindergartner. We are very happy to be here," says Keller. His wife, Isabelle, is a freelance journalist. She writes on the subjects of technology, the Internet, and small computer accessories for various publications.

Unlike a traditional catering concept, *Carotte et Caviar* is relationship-based cooking. Keller arrives several hours ahead to begin preparation. He uses the client's kitchen, pots and pans, and dishes. "I enjoy using local providers and cook with the seasons so I can always use fresh ingredients," he explains. Having a personal chef enables the host and hostess to spend all their time with their guests, since they are not bothered with what needs to be done in the kitchen. For more information, visit the website at [www.carotte-et-caviar.com](http://www.carotte-et-caviar.com). You can email EJ Keller at [chef@carotecaviar.com](mailto:chef@carotecaviar.com) or give him a call at (925) 876-4941.



**Dr. Rochelle Gordon** has been helping local residents for over 30 years.

#### Rochelle Gordon, M.D.

There is a running joke in the world of psychiatry that goes like this, "How many psychiatrists does it take to change a light bulb? One, but the light bulb has to want to change." One of the first female psychiatrists at John Muir, Rochelle Gordon, M.D., has been in private practice for over 30 years. Educated at State University of New York and Columbia University, Gordon went into psychiatry because she has great empathy for others.

"During my residency, I did a variety of things, including sewing people up. Helping others to develop their emotions and to see their history from their own point of view is what I do. We are going through the human passage together after all. We are all on the same journey," says Gordon.

Her style is to be quiet, listen closely, offer advice and give examples to her patients. "I am trained in all the modalities, and I customize the treatment to each individual patient. I always advise patients they should never stay with a therapist or

[SEE BUZZ page 27]

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