



THE ORINDA NEWS

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School District Pondering New Tax

By KATHY BOHANAN ENZERINK
Assistant Editor

Expecting to be operating in a deficit next year, Orinda school district officials are exploring the possibility of a new parcel tax.

Orinda Union School District (OUSD) Board of Trustees raised the idea at a special funding workshop Feb. 3. Polling for the tax could begin in May, and if there is support, the tax could be placed on a

special-election ballot May 4, 2021. It would require two-thirds voter approval.

Orinda parcel owners already pay a school parcel tax of \$509 a year, which contributes to 39 percent of the school district's \$10 million local revenue. Considerations for the new tax include setting a flat rate versus a square-foot rate, expiration date and provisions for inflation/cost of living adjustments.

School district consultant Charles Heath, [SEE OUSD page 13]

Sales-Tax Survey Results Expected at Mid-March Council Meeting

By PAUL KILDUFF
Contributing Writer

The results of a survey of 400 Orindans asking if a half-cent sales tax should be extended and raised another half-cent to one cent are expected to be revealed at the City Council's March 17 meeting, if not sooner.

The survey though, doesn't just ask Orindans if they think the tax, in place since

2012, should be extended and increased. It also brings up what might be done with the extra cash, namely the long standing, hot button issue of whether the city should be responsible for maintaining 30 miles of private roads and storm drains which run off into public roadways.

After several rounds of public input, the survey was designed to "ask about issues as objectively as possible," said Orinda [SEE TAX page 4]



SALLY HOGARTY

Pete Hasselman



PHOTO BY TERRY RIGGINS PHOTOGRAPHY

Barbara M. Leitner

Four Who Define, Serve Orinda Will Be Honored With Awards March 22

By SALLY HOGARTY and
SIMAR KHANNA
Editors

An architect who helped shape Orinda's roads and downtown, a botanist who keeps locals creeks clean, the man behind the voice at local events and a soon-to-be 90-year-old longtime community organizer are receiving special recognition in March.

The Orinda Community Foundation (OCF) and The Orinda Association (OA) named Pete Hasseleman the 2019 Citizen of the Year and Barbara M. Leitner as the winner of the William Penn Mott Jr. Environmental Award. Joe Haughin and Bill Cosden will be recognized as 2019 Orinda Volunteers.

The four will be fêted at a dinner March 22 at the Orinda Country Club. (For more about the selection process, see the President's Message on page 3). Tickets, which include dinner, are \$80 per person and can be purchased at OrindaAssociation.org.

Citizen of the Year

Hasselmann, a world-renowned architect, is a long-time Orinda resident.

"Pete has been an outstanding Orinda volunteer and contributor to our community for a number of years," said Orinda Community Foundation Board Member Sue Severson. "He is a driver for Seniors Around Town, he helped with the Fix Orinda Roads campaigns and provides vision and architectural drawings for our downtown, just to name a few endeavors. Orinda is so fortunate to have him and his wife Helen living in our small town."

Born in Evanston, IL, in 1937 and raised in the Chicago area, Pete and Helen were living in Bethesda, Maryland, when they decided to move to Orinda in 1978. "Helen was raised in Orinda and her parents still lived in the area, and my parents had moved from the East Coast to the Bay Area," said Hasselmann. "We had two young daughters, and we wanted them to get to know their grandparents better. Fortunately, an opportunity arose where I could join an architectural firm in San Francisco, so we moved to the West Coast."

With an international background in architecture and urban planning and a history of volunteerism, Hasselmann quickly

[SEE AWARDS page 5]

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Summer Camp Guide



COURTESY SHERMAN SWIM SCHOOL

"A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away..." Wait a minute – this energetic young swimmer is approaching warp speed in the warm water at Sherman Swim School in Lafayette, one of the many options for kids summer camps this year. From outdoor fun to performing arts, check out our guide on pages 7-9.

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City to Conduct Survey for Off-Site Parking for BART Commuters

By KATHY BOHANAN ENZERINK
Assistant Editor

Hoping to offer some relief to BART commuters, the city is considering partnering with private entities and churches to use their empty parking lots.

It's one idea being proposed in an online survey of Orinda residents to gauge interest for offsite parking.

Finding a parking space at the Orinda BART station can be daunting. Of the 1,361 spaces, 340 are available at a monthly rate and the waiting list for these coveted spots exceeds 2,000.

The city has been working on parking issues since the Downtown Affected Neighborhoods Parking Study was completed in 2016. There is now time-limit parking on Brookwood Road, enforcement in all signed areas has been increased and a Pilot Employee Permit Parking Program has been implemented and is expanding

for commuters on Altarinda Road. The study includes recommendations for offsite BART station parking.

The survey will be available at the city's website later this month. It addresses walking distances, navigable terrain, monthly costs, a combined park/shuttle service and a section for comments. From the home page, scroll down to Popular Topics and click on "BART Commuter Survey."

Jason Chen, a city engineer, said if leased, offsite parking areas prove popular, they would be for weekdays only and by permit. Though there will be a cost, it will be designed to be a break-even proposition for the city.

"Depending on the level of support, we could consider operating shuttles from and to parking areas which are not walking distance to BART," said Chen.

Reach Kathy Enzerink at Kathy@theorindanews.com.

Donations at Work



SALLY HOGARTY

The Monument Crisis Center, which provides food and other resources to low-income families in need, and the Renaissance Scholar Program, which helps young adults exiting the foster care system realize their dream of attending college, were the major beneficiaries of the Orinda Woman's Club (OWC) 2019 Festival of Trees. The silent auction luncheon held in November raised more than \$41,000. L-R: Orinda Woman's Club's **Kathy Kerr-Schochet**, Monument Crisis Center Operations Manager **Yolanda Gonzalez**, OWC's **Sondra Cassenti**, Renaissance Scholars Director **Saleem Gilmore** and Program Coordinator **Lael Adediji**, and OWC's **Vera Maytun**.

EMBUD Pipeline Project Set to Begin

By KATHY BOHANAN ENZERINK
Assistant Editor

La Encinal Road is expected to be closed from early April to early June as the year-long Westside Pumping Plant and Pipeline Replacement Project begins.

In the following phase, East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) crews move to El Toyonal, where closures will occur between Alta Vista and Loma Vista. Through traffic will be restricted in the construction area weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. between May 30 to Aug. 13 and from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. outside of this timeline.

The stretch of El Toyonal between Loma Vista and La Encinal is the final phase of the project. Residents who live above the road closure will be required to detour around Hwy. 24 during the closure hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"Every effort will be made to maintain access to residents' homes, when possible," said Kathryn Horn, EBMUD Community Affairs Representative. "When direct vehicle access is not possible, a shuttle cart will provide access to residents living within the construction limits."

Residents will be provided with a direct phone number to the shuttle driver, who will take them to and from their car/home. Vehicles cannot be parked on Camino Pablo or other major roads to use the shuttle, she said. "The shuttle will very likely be a golf cart-like quad cab."

An EBMUD project team will meet with residents to discuss impacts prior to construction in their areas, beginning with La Encinal early this month. Residents will be contacted with exact construction dates when those dates are set.

Residents may be required to hold mail if the postal carrier cannot access their home. Horn advised packages should be delivered to an alternate location if a home is inaccessible. EBMUD is working with Republic Services, but garbage disposal has not yet been finalized. "We will be updating residents once our plan is final," said Horn.

Contact Horn at kathryn.horn@ebmud.com or visit www.ebmud.com/WestsidePP for more information.

Reach Kathy Enzerink at Kathy@theorindanews.com.

New Bill Targets Short-Term Rentals

On Feb. 17, in front of the Orinda Library, Sen. Steve Glazer unveiled new legislation allowing cities to impose fines of up to \$5,000 on short term rental (STR) hosts who violate local laws. The current maximum fine is \$1,000 per incident.

Prompted by the killing of five people in an Orinda STR on Halloween, the bill is intended to deter "party houses" which attract massive gatherings in otherwise quiet residential neighborhoods. Glazer and Assemblywoman Rebecca Bauer-Kahan are co-authors of the bill, which was introduced on the senate floor Feb. 18.



CINDY POWELL

Sen. Steve Glazer (center) surrounded by city officials. (L-R) Police Chief **David Cook** and City Council Member **Inga Miller**.

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THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA President
Our Heroes



Carlos Baltodano

In her acceptance speech at the Academy Awards for Best Actress for her role as Judy Garland in the movie *Judy*, Renée Zellweger said, "our heroes unite us."

"The best among us inspire us to find the best in ourselves," she went on to say, noting that our heroes are also our firefighters, our first responders and our teachers.

I found her words enlightening considering there are people who give so much of themselves to make the lives of others better and richer. We should reflect upon and recognize these people among us. Due to their generosity of spirit they elevate the well-being of our community.

Giving and commitment takes many forms. It could be a cartoon that conveys the need to fix our roads, a mapping survey of trees for creek restoration, announcing the Fourth of July parade over the years or dedicating years of service to improve our community. These are examples of the dedication of the four Orinda residents who will be honored March 22 at the Orinda Country Club.

These heroes are Pete Hasselman (Citizen of the Year 2019), Barbara M. Leitner (William Penn Mott Jr. Environmental award); Bill Cosden (volunteer award) and John Haughin (volunteer award).

For three years the awards have been jointly sponsored by The Orinda Association (OA) and the Orinda Community Foundation (OCF). The collaborative effort of these two nonprofits is an attempt to acknowledge and highlight in one evening exceptional people who contribute to making our city a great place to live.

Three different classes of awards are

acknowledged at a dinner gala attended by hundreds of local residents. In the past, these awards were bestowed by different organizations and at different times throughout the year. The Citizen of the Year award has been given to 71 recipients since 1948. The Orinda Volunteer Award has been given since 1986.

The William Penn Mott Jr. award has been bestowed to 26 recipients since 1993. It is named after the first president, in 1946, of The Orinda Association. Mott also was an Oakland park superintendent for 17 years and was instrumental in creating Children's Fairyland, the Oakland Zoo and the Rotary Nature Center. He was the executive director of the National Parks Service. He was by all accounts the most influential professional in the parks field in the last half century.

Combining the three award programs into one grand event created a central focus and has proven to be more effective and meaningful.

The awards night is a wonderful event to congratulate and honor the people who help shape our city. It's not only our excellent schools and our idyllic location, but it's also our volunteers who quietly and forcefully make our city one of the best in the United States. To make a reservation for awards night, go to the OA website, www.OrindaAssociation.org.

I hope you will join us March 22 at the Orinda Country Club to say thank you to our heroes.

Reach Carlos Baltodano at cbalt.ldc@comcast.net.

The Orinda Association

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

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

Visit our office at 26 Orinda Way
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Go to www.OrindaAssociation.org to support these programs and more!

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Letters to the Editor

Why Private Roads are Private

In the February issue of *The Orinda News*, Gary Johnson continues the discussion, started by him in December, as to “Why Were These Roads Made Private in the First Place?”

Virtually all, maybe literally all, roads in Orinda were initially private. For them to become public, Contra Costa County had to “accept an offer of dedication” from the developer. The county was legally allowed to refuse this offer for any reason whatsoever, including inadequate funds to maintain the road. Over time, the county accepted some roads into the public network, but excluded others with currently unknown criteria. Since Orinda incorporated, no private road has become public.

Mr. Johnson’s latest query was: “I would assume that the decision to designate Wilder’s roads as private was not an arbitrary one but resulted from very thorough negotiations between the city and Wilder’s developers.”

Indeed it was, just like the city “negotiated” the construction of five public playing fields, an Arts and Garden Center, and the purchase of a new fire engine in return for granting the developer development rights. The reason is very clear why the

city wanted this: They wanted the revenue from the property taxes on a half billion dollars of new homes, more sales tax revenue and more garbage franchise fees; and they didn’t want to pay any future expenses.

This is a time-honored tradition of taxing people who are not yet voters. The county, before Orinda was incorporated, realized that they did not have to accept the roads as public and they would still be built and still generate just as much revenue. Orinda has carried on the tradition.

But you can only play that game for so long before you have a critical mass of discontented voters. And Orinda may now be at that point. More than 20 percent of Orinda residents live on private roads. These residents pay the same taxes as those living on public roads. And now the city is asking us to extend and possibly double the sales tax for road maintenance.

The last road bond barely passed with a 67 percent majority. The roads were in bad shape then. Now they are in great shape and 20 percent of the voters are realizing that they have been taken for a ride. So can the city find even a simple majority to endorse a new road maintenance tax if more than 20 percent are still excluded?

– Steve Cohn

◆ TAX from page 1

Mayor Darlene Gee. Two hundred residents were interviewed by phone and an equal number online.

But some say the survey is flawed. Among them is Steve Cohn, a member of a group that has been advocating turning the maintenance of all publicly accessible roads, whether they are designated private or public, over to the city.

Cohn disputes the survey’s assertion that it would cost up to \$25 million for Orinda to take on the job. According to Cohn, that hefty price tag means all the private roads would have to be rebuilt. He said that figure is “a scare tactic.”

“We know that of the 30 miles of private streets, five are brand new and two or more are well-maintained by well-funded HOAs (Home Owner Associations). I have surveyed nine of the remaining 23 miles and believe that 85 percent are in good repair, requiring nothing more than routine maintenance. The remaining 15 percent would cost no more than \$5 million to bring up to standards,” he said.

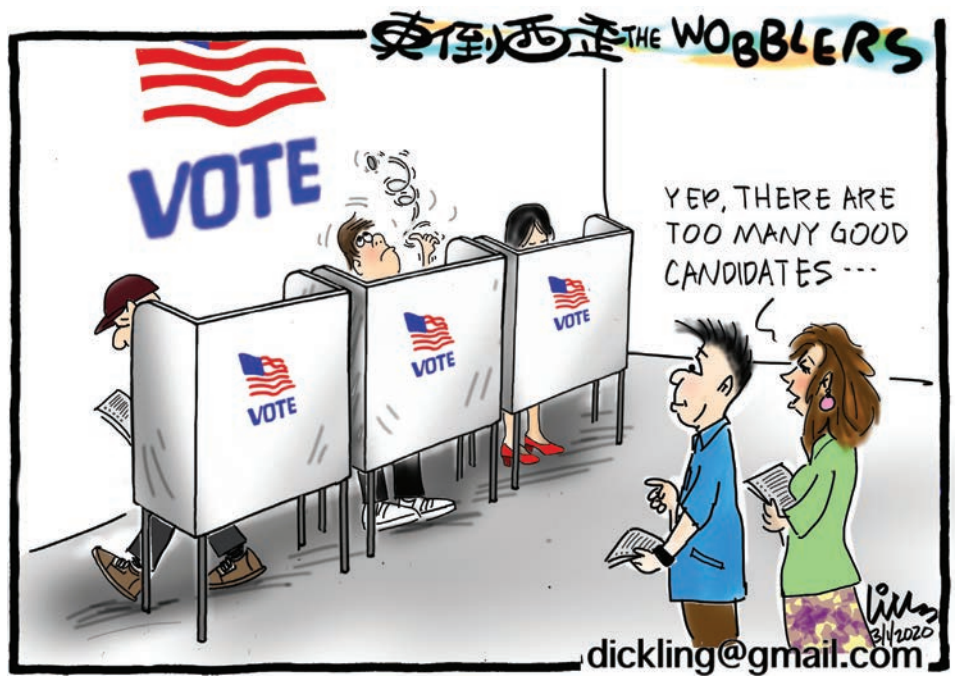
Cohn adds the survey doesn’t mention the city has just spent more than \$50 million to repair 64 miles of streets – a cost that all residents pay whether they live on a public or private road. “So even paying \$25 million for the last 30 miles would not be unfair. None of this is divulged” in the survey, he said.

What increasing the sales tax would cost Orindans is also not brought up, according to Cohn. The only mention of the cost “is the statement that a 1 percent tax will generate \$2.4 million. For 99 percent of the respondents that is as relevant as telling them what the U.S. military budget is. But when you divide it by 7,000 households and come up with \$350 per household per year, they can grasp that. And they will know that number when it comes time to vote so why not throw it out now when asking them how they would vote?”

Debate over the survey and roads generated a lot of chatter on Nextdoor.

Resident Yoni Mayer pointed out on Nextdoor that “private roads are not at all private. They are used the same as every other road in town. Anyone can access them, and you would have no idea you were on a so-called private road in almost all 30 miles of these roads. We all have used them to access other roads, get around Orinda, visit friends, turn around at dead ends, etc. The city does not maintain those roads, the owners must do so, as well as contribute to the cost of maintaining the public roads.”

In response Gary Gallaher wrote: “What you say may be true for some private roads, but definitely not all. They should be made public only if they are brought up to the standard of public roads. Most of us do not use the ‘private roads’ anywhere near as much as ‘private road’



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owners use the public roads we all pay for.”

Mary Gilles, who lives in the Oak Springs neighborhood, wrote she would like clarity on where all the city’s private roads actually are. “Is there an easily accessible map of private roads? That would allow me to actually check some of them out and get a sense of how private they generally are,” she wrote.

JK Kim of the Heather/Valley Glorietta area noted some of the private roads in the city are nothing more than long driveways to a home.

No matter how the survey results shake out, residents will make the final decision on a sales tax extension/increase at the ballot box.

Gee said the survey results are vital in

crafting the ballot measure. “The funds generated from this local sales tax have been a key component in our road repair efforts. The continuation of this revenue for the city will be an important element of maintaining our infrastructure going forward.”

Reach Paul Kilduff at editor@theorindanews.com.

Correction

A photo caption in February’s Business Buzz column incorrectly stated the work history of Orinda Motors General Manager Ray Kunz. He was a consultant for the company for 13 years before taking on his new position.

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PEOPLE

◆ AWARDS from page 1

became ensconced in local projects. One of his first involved volunteering for the Fix Orinda Roads Committee. The volunteers dedicated themselves to repairing Orinda's roads and associated storm drains and assuring their maintenance. The group supported the passage of Measure L 2012 Sales Tax, Measure J 2015 Bond and the Measure L 2016 Bond.

"Pete has been incredible in contributing his talents including his wonderful cartoon skills to convey to the public the terrible condition of our roads in a humorous fashion," said OA President Carlos Baltodano.

The Citizen of the Year also uses his considerable architectural skills as part of the Orinda Vision team. Hasselman and Tom Trowbridge founded the group in 2010 to

provide expertise on revitalizing Orinda's downtown. The team of volunteer experts in law, development, management, landscape and transportation produced more than 200 renderings which envisioned what Orinda's downtown could be and how both sides of Orinda could be more connected.

"It was my job to interpret the team's ideas into architecture and urban designs," said Hasselman, whose varied career includes creating a new town in Reston, VA, restoring historic train stations between Washington and Boston and redesigning the Armenian city of Spitak after a devastating earthquake in 1989 left it in ruins.

Currently, Hasselman's primary volunteer activity involves driving for Seniors Around Town (SAT). Sponsored by the OA, the program uses volunteer drivers to provide door-to-door transportation to Orinda

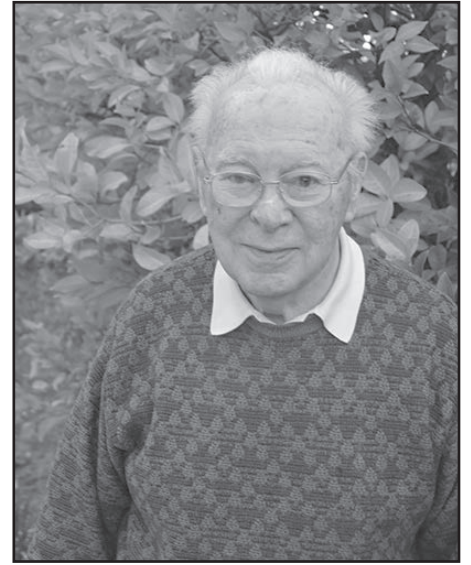
residents who are no longer able to drive.

"Driving for SAT has been a great experience for me. I've made so many good friends with both the riders and the other drivers," Hasselman said. "You really get to know the people you drive as well as their families. One rider I regularly take to doctor's appointments knows I love chocolate, so she always brings me chocolate candy when I pick her up."

Environmental Award

A native plant expert, environmental consultant and longtime community volunteer, Leitner is this year's winner of the William Penn Mott Jr. Environmental Award.

The botanist is a past president of the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and a board member of Friends of Orinda Creeks. She can be



SALLY HOGARTY

Joe Haughin

spotted frequently volunteering at the non-profit Natives Here Nursery in Tilden Park, offering guidance on backyard projector, or rallying Orindans to help keep its creeks clean and healthy.

Leitner was nominated by Cinda Mac- [SEE AWARDS page 12]

Orinda Community Foundation Marks Decade of Service



SALLY HOGARTY

Orinda Community Foundation (OCF) celebrated its 10th anniversary surrounded by donors and recipients. The philanthropic organization gave \$42,150 to 40 organizations in 2019. Board members estimated approximately \$500,000 has been given to local nonprofit groups over the OCF's 10 years in existence.

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Galleries: Student Arts Ambassadors Showcases, Celestials

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Perhaps you've noticed a bright blue banner on the BART bridge entitled "14th Arts Ambassadors Exhibit." It's about the Educational Foundation of Orinda's (EFO) showcase of more than 150 artworks from Orinda students from elementary to high school.

The exhibit runs through March 11 in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. An artist reception, open to the public, takes place March 4 and begins at 4:30 p.m. when "Mr. Maz" (Greg Mazmanian) strikes up the OIS Jazz Band in the outdoor Upper Plaza/Richard Heggie Plaza just outside the Gallery doors.

At 5 p.m. in the auditorium, the event will be opened by David Schrag, OUSD director of curriculum and instruction; David Wilson, OUSD art teacher coordinator and a Del Rey and Wagner Ranch art teacher. Next there will be vocal performances by

the Miramonte Choir, led by Meredith Hawkins and the OIS Chorus, led by Christina Hollins, a Del Rey and Sleepy Hollow music teacher. Finally the Glorietta Ensemble Choral Group performs, led by Ron Pickett, Glorietta and Wagner Ranch music teacher.

"The team I work with is amazing; everyone pitches in to make this event a success," said Bene Streubel, EFO Arts Ambassadors coordinator. Streubel adds kudos are due to EFO volunteers Lori Brooks, OUSD art teacher coordinator David Wilson and his aid, Emma Taylor who, "take this huge event and break it down so that it works."

Orinda visual and performing arts instructors to be recognized include: Erica Amundson, Miramonte Art Teacher; Stacy Churchill, Miramonte Photo and Digital Design Teacher; Meredith Hawkins, Miramonte Choir Teacher; Christine Holling, Orinda Intermediate School (OIS), Del Rey and Sleepy Hollow Music Teacher; Gavin Kermodé, Miramonte 3D Art Teacher;

Greg Mazmanian, OIS Instrumental Music Teacher; Ron Pickett, Glorietta and Wagner Ranch Music Teacher; Janet Robinson, Glorietta and Sleepy Hollow Visual Art Teacher; Susan Weiss, OIS visual Arts Teacher; and Cody Wilson, OIS Woodshop Teacher.

To learn more about the EFO, go to www.orindaefo.org. Information about the LAC can be found at www.lamorindaarts.org.

More student artwork in partnership with LAC and the Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE) and instructors from Moraga schools will be on display in Lafayette and Moraga March 12-26 in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library.

Join students, district officials, teachers, families and friends at the artist reception 4-6 p.m. March 17.

Student artists from Lafayette, Burton Valley, Springhill and Happy Valley Elementary Schools created 27 artworks for the exhibit. Myrna Kimmelman, executive director of LPIE, explains: "Each year, a student's name in each grade level at each school is randomly drawn to be part of our 'The Stroke of Luck' event. The lucky winners have their work featured in the Arts Ambassadors exhibit."

Larysa Larson and Moose Wesler, Moraga visual arts teachers and Moraga Education Foundation (MEF) volunteers have gathered 30 pieces of artwork from students in grades one through five at Camino Pablo, Rheem and Los Perales Elementary Schools. Moraga School District officials and members of the Art in Public Spaces Committee have also been invited to the reception.

The Art Gallery at the Orinda Library is at 26 Orinda Way and open Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Call 925-254-2184 for more information or visit <http://ccclib.org/>.

Art Gallery at Wilder: "Celestials"

The paintings of Joel Tesch are on display this month in the Art Gallery at Wilder. Tesch, who lives in Orinda, said he enjoys the speed and versatility of acrylics and watercolors. He works fast and doesn't have time to wait for oil paints to dry. Often he finishes two paintings each week; this helps to keep his work fresh as he is always trying new techniques, subjects and styles, he said.

"Celestials" is the theme for his solo show of nine paintings. Tesch widens the viewpoint of space with *Space Time Continuum III*, a 48" x 24" acrylic on canvas. The composition presents a vantage point of



COURTESY OF JOEL TESCH

Orinda resident **Joel Tesch** uses acrylics and watercolors in "Celestials," the theme for his solo show of nine paintings at the Art Gallery at Wilder.

the multiverse as if we are looking out the viewport from the lounge of the Enterprise.

Science lovers will not be surprised that Tesch is a fan of John Boswell's digital mashup video known as "Symphony of Science." Here is an apt excerpt from Boswell's *A Glorious Dawn* which celebrates the 75th birthday of the late scientist Carl Sagan: "A still more glorious dawn awaits / Not a sunrise, but a galaxy rise / A morning filled with four hundred billion suns / The rising of the milky way."

It is apt because Tesch's focus in "Celestials" explores with paint and canvas the possibilities of an expansive multiverse. Go to <http://bit.ly/2UNTQqJ> to view the video.

For those familiar with Tesch's work, bold and colorful are words always entwined with his art, no matter his theme. He also loves contrasts and only paints what interests him visually or subjectively. Meet the artist at his opening reception 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. March 7. To see more of Tesch's work go to www.joeltesch.com.

As the Wilder Art and Garden Center, 20 Orinda Fields Lane, is new, the Art Gallery is open to the public only when classes or events are scheduled. For now that is the first Saturday of every month for an artist reception 2:30 - 4:30 p.m., Wednesday 4 to 7:30 p.m. or by appointment with co-curators Denise Nomura or Aniston Breslin at wildergallery@lamorindaarts.org.

Reach Elana O'Loskey at business.orinda@gmail.com.

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CAMP GUIDE

Sign-ups Open for Summer Fun

By ELANA O'LOSKEY
Staff Writer

Summertime fun is right around the corner. Use this camp guide to help kids in grades K-12 explore the possibilities. Review what's offered online and sign up early; many sessions have limited openings and fill up fast. Some camps offer scholarships, discounts for early registration and siblings, and internships for teens.

GENERAL CAMPS

Orinda Parks & Recreation

There are more than 125 options from June 1 to Aug. 7 for camps including visual/performing arts, science and sports. Access and/or download the Orinda Summer Camps Guide at www.OrindaParksandRec.org. Camps are M-F, \$210 residents (R)/\$241.50 nonresidents (NR) for morning (9 a.m. – noon) or afternoon (1 – 4 p.m.) sessions. Both morning and afternoon sessions are \$420 R/\$483 NR. If you choose the All Day Camp Orinda held at Orinda Community Center (only), the cost is \$365 R/\$419.75 NR for one week (M – F) including two all-expense paid field trips. Some camps have a materials fee collected at registration.

Camp Brainy Bunch

Located on the Orinda Academy campus, weeklong camps serve children in first to sixth grade June 8 – Aug. 7. All Camps Summer Pass available. Sign up for eight different camps including Exciting Explorers, Extraordinary Engineers and Daring Detectives. Sibling and multiple week discounts. Extended care available 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Call and/or check website for details and registration. For more information: 510-548-4800, www.campbrainybunch.com.

Camp Galileo and Galilo Summer Quest

Galileo combines a mindset-shaping, innovation-based approach with wacky, summertime fun. All camps run June 8 – July 24 at Lafayette Elementary School. Pre-K to fifth graders experience Camp Galileo, three fun themes exploring art, science, and outdoors through new themes like Toy Makers, Olympics, and

National Parks. Fifth- to eighth-graders dive into a specialty through Galileo Summer Quest, including Go-Karts, YouTube Producers, Decadent Desserts, 3D Modeling and Printing and Drone Innovators. Seventh- to tenth-graders can join a Counselor-In-Training program to build leadership and teaching skills. Optional extended care and lunch available. Camps held at 10 East Bay locations. For more information: 800-854-3684, www.galileo-camps.com.

VISUAL, PERFORMING AND DIGITAL ARTS CAMPS

Academy of Language & Music Arts (ALMA)

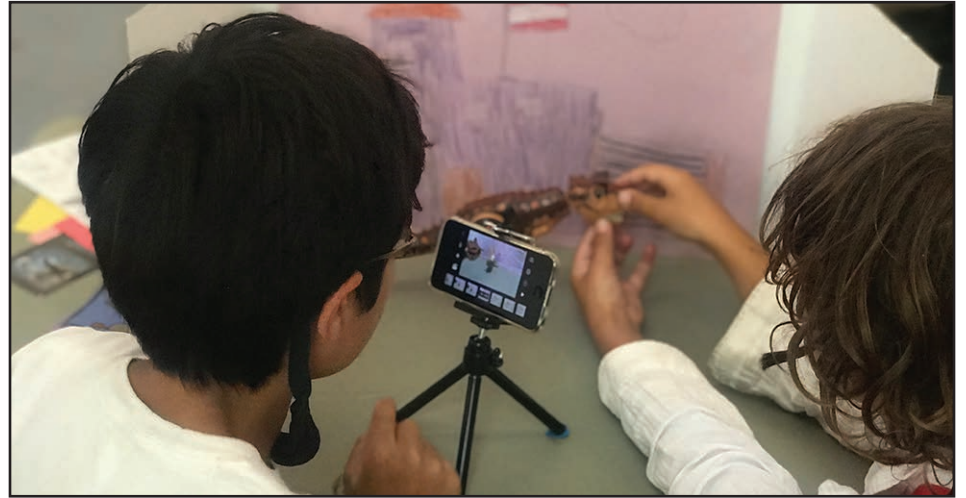
This camp offers a create-your-own program featuring private lessons in music, including guitar, piano, voice, strings, wind instruments, and percussion. Also available are private and small-group lessons in many foreign languages and English as a second language.

Special summer group classes include Guitar Ensemble, Rock Guitar Combo, Band Ensemble, Jazz Combo, Theory and Musicianship (all instruments), Strings Ensemble, Percussion/Drum Clinic, and Vocal Ensemble/ALMA Glee Club. Other classes include: Acting up at ALMA, theater, acting and presentation skills, and Music Technology Class, basic studio recording techniques, creating and recording songs. For details, call 925-254-5056 or 925-254-5053, email office@almaleap.com or visit www.almaleap.com.

Camp Community Arts

Campers explore a range of mediums such as visual (painting, drawing, clay, mixed media, fiber arts), digital media (animation, digital music, graphic arts), and performing arts (theatre, dance, music, voice). Professional teaching artists bring their expertise and innovative ideas to camp experiences. All camps take place in Walnut Creek and include half-day, full-day, morning care and afternoon care options. Four 2-week sessions from June 15- Aug. 7. Open to campers ages 5-14.

Campers spend the morning exploring a mix of mediums. Full-day campers choose an afternoon discipline-focused track (visual, performing, or mixed). They also go on field trips



COURTESY PARKS AND REC

At Orinda Parks and Rec.'s Incrediflix class, campers bring Lego worlds to life. Working together in groups, they create a "Lego set" with Lego characters, designing storyboards, filming and adding voice-overs. Voila! A stop-motion movie is the result.

and participate in special activities twice a week. New intensives added for ages 11-14 in digital media, painting and drawing, and performance. Early-bird rates if registered before April 1. For more information: 925-943-5846, www.communityarts.org.

iD Tech

This is the 22nd season St. Mary's College has hosted week-long tech camps that run M - F, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. June 15 to July 24. Choose from 25 different classes from four paths: coding, game development, robotics or creative. Camps are divided into co-ed age groups 7 – 9, 10 – 12

and 13 - 17.

Camps include Code and Design Games with Scratch; Create Videos and Shorts with Adobe; YouTube Gamecasting and Video Production; Coding and Engineering 101; Intro to Python Coding for Machine Learning and Java Coding and Game Development. Project oriented camps give a taste of independence and glimpse into collegiate life. See website for dates, cost and registration. Scholarships available; applications must be submitted by noon April 15. For details, call 408-871-3700 or go to <http://idtech.com>.

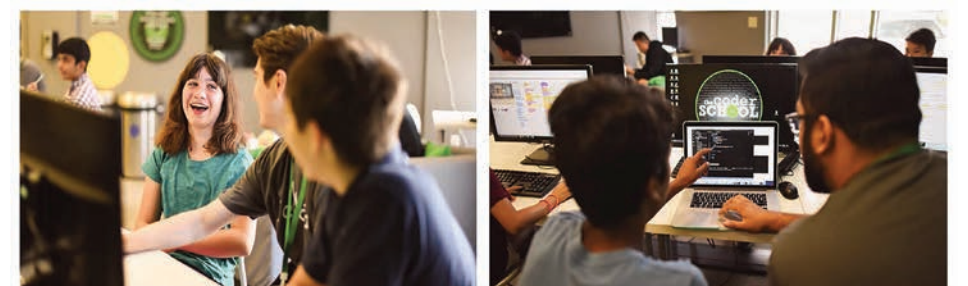
[SEE CAMPS page 8]



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CAMP GUIDE

◆ CAMPS from page 7

Joy In Motion

The summer session will be announced in April; check website for dates. They offer various dance classes for ages 3 to teenage including: 3-to-4-day classes for beginners and experienced dancers; 3-to-5-day fun theme camps with dance, games, and crafts; choreography workshops to learn the art-making of dance; boot camp classes; and technique intensives. Call 925-388-0668, go to www.joyinmotiondance.org or email joy@joyinmotiondance.org.

Orinda Ballet Academy

Led and taught by world-class professional ballet dancer Patricia Tomlinson, Orinda Ballet Academy offers a summer *Sleeping Beauty* themed ballet camp and/or intensive. Classes are Mon. - Fri. for beginning through advance level dancers at the Orinda Community Center, June 29 - July 31.

Camps/intensives are divided between divisions for students age 3 to 18. On July 31 students will demonstrate excerpts from *Sleeping Beauty*. Contemporary, private ballet lessons and Pilates reformer lessons are also available.

For more information: 925-254-2445, www.cityoforinda.org.

Orinda Parks & Recreation

Visual and performing arts camps are offered throughout the summer and are listed in the Orinda Summer Camps Guide which can be accessed at www.cityoforinda.org. Visual and performing arts camp descriptions are on pages 14-19. They run in 10 week-long sessions June 1 to Aug. 7. Call 925-254-2445 or go to www.cityoforinda.org.

SingOut! Musical Theatre

Rachael Pergamit offers award-winning youth musical theater programs for kids age 4-18 at Diablo Theatre Company. Rehearsals and performances are at the Starlight Dance Studios and Theater, 6648 Alhambra Ave. #B, Martinez.

Triple Threat Workshop, June 8-26, M-F, 9 a.m. to noon. This three-week intensive pushes incoming sixth graders to graduating seniors to hone acting, singing and dancing skills. At the end of the intensive, students receive a DVD of their performances.

Session 1: Alice in Wonderland Jr program is offered June 8-26, M-F 1 to 4 p.m. for kids



COURTESY LINDSAY WILDLIFE MUSEUM

Campers at Lindsay Wildlife Experience are mesmerized by the prospect of touching a live turtle.

age 8 - 14; Jr. Minis runs 2:30 - 4 p.m. for ages 4 - 7. Session 2: Wizard of Oz Main Cast (ages 8 - 14) is offered 1 to 4 p.m. and for Minis (age 4 - 7) from 2:30 to 4 p.m.

Session 1 performances are June 25-26 at 4 and 7 p.m. Session 2 performance are July 23-24 at 4 and 7 p.m. Cast members will learn songs, dances and scenes and receive a T-shirt. Visit website for details and high school intern options. Call 925-944-1565, email SingOutRachael@gmail.com or go to www.singouttheatre.org.

Town Hall Theatre Company

Youth in second grade through high school receive a mix of training and production-based classes in live theater. Theater camps run June 8-26 and July 13-3. Depending on the child's age, they could participate in several selections of live theater performances. Check website for classes, times, cost and production details. Aftercare available. For more information, call 925-283-6673, email madison@townhalltheatre.com or go to www.townhalltheatre.com.

SCHOOL-RELATED CAMPS

Bentley Summer Academy

First- through twelfth grade students can sign up for week-long camps in Lafayette June 15-Aug. 7, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; early drop off/late pickup options. More than 45 choices spread over three age groups are available such as: dance academy, photographer bootcamp, speech and debate, amped physics/rockets and basketball, high school prep and college essay options. Call 925-283-2101, email summer@bentleyschool.org or go to www.bentleysummeracademy.org.

Fountainhead Montessori School

Discovery Camp is an Orinda Montessori-based summer camp and summer school designed for children in two age groups: 18 mos. to kindergarten and ages 5 to 12. Camps run June

14 to Aug. 11. Before and aftercare available. For more information, call 925-820-1343 or go to www.fms.org.

Seedlings Summer Program

Seedlings offers a six-week summer program at Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church for children age 15 months (and walking by June 29) to five year olds (by 6/29) for currently enrolled families. Activities include magic and puppet shows, music, animal visitors, science experiments and water slides. Session One runs June 8 - June 25 and Session Two runs July 6 - July 23. Community registration day is 10 a.m. March 19. For questions, contact Kathy LaPlante at kathylaplante@lopc.org or coleen@lopc.org or visit www.lopc.org/seedlings.

The Saklan School

Summer@Saklan provides culture, language and fun for ages in two groups: 3-5 and 6-11. From June 8 - Aug. 7 mornings are filled with language enrichment including Mandarin, French, Japanese or Spanish. Afternoons are packed with summer activities including field trips, swimming, art and music. Three one-week sessions 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., half days and extended care available. For more information or to register, call 925-376-7900 or go to www.saklan.org.


SPORTS-RELATED CAMPS

Orinda Parks & Recreation

Sports camps are offered throughout the summer and are listed in the Orinda Summer Camps Guide which can be accessed at www.cityoforinda.org. Descriptions of sports camps are on pages 20 - 21. They run in 10 week-long sessions June 1 to Aug. 7.

Oakland Strokes

Learn how to row and what real teamwork is all about. OS is a 19-time national champion. [SEE CAMPS page 9]



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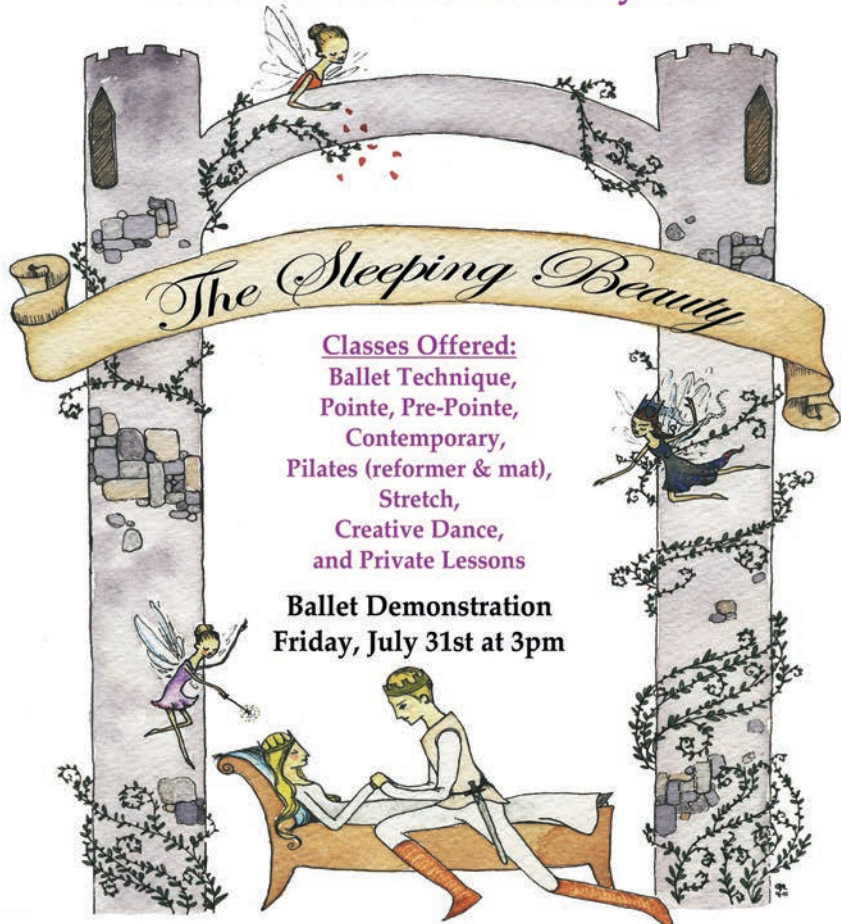
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Artistic Director, Patricia Tomlinson

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www.OrindaBalletAcademy.com



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and Private Lessons

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City of Orinda * Parks & Recreation * Recreation Programs * 28 Orinda Way
Orinda, CA 94563 * www.cityoforinda.org * (925) 254-2445 *

What's On Deck With Parks & Rec!

- March 10 - Senior Trip - San Francisco Movie Tour; 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; Activity Level: 2; \$80**
- March 11 - Wisdom Workshop - Your Kids Don't Want Your Stuff: Downsizing; OCC: 10:30 a.m.- noon; FREE; Registration Required!**
- March 15 - OYS Spring Soccer Registration Closes**
- March 15 - Early Bird 10% Online Camp Discount Ends**
- March 25 - Wisdom Workshop - Know the Ten Signs of Alzheimer's; OCC: 10:30 a.m.- noon; FREE; Registration Required!**
- March 30 - Adult Softball League Registration Opens**
- March 30 - OYS Fall Soccer Registration Opens**
- March 30- April 3 - Spring Break Camps, Register Today!**

Now Accepting Applications for Summer Camp Counselor Positions



Orinda Parks and Recreation Department
925-254-2445
www.OrindaParksandRec.org
OrindaParksandRec@CityofOrinda.org
28 Orinda Way - Orinda Community Center
Administrative Office Hours - Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

CAMP GUIDE / AROUND TOWN

◆ CAMPS from page 8

Learn to row camps are for middle school rowers of all abilities and for high school rowers who have never rowed before. Summer racing camps are for rowers with at least one year of high school rowing experience. Summer programs are open to athletes outside the OS school year programs. Camps are held at San Pablo Dam Reservoir in Orinda and Tidewater Aquatic Center in Oakland. Check website for dates, details, discounts and registration: www.oaklandstrokes.org, 510-926-4100, information@oaklandstrokes.org.

Saint Mary's Athletic Camps

Camps are for children 4-18 and run June 8 – Aug. 14. Overnight, day, half-day, team and specialty men's and women's camps include all sport, baseball, Randy Bennett basketball, running, soccer, tennis, strength and conditioning and volleyball. There are five co-ed camps.

Athletes can expect to participate in daily competitions, conditioning, skill development and other activities. Residential camps are for high school students only. See website for details regarding specific camps including dates, times, prices and descriptions. Early morning and extended care options available. Call 925-631-4386, email smccamps@stmarys-ca.edu or go to www.smcaathleticcamps.com.

Sherman Swim School

Celebrating 60 years in Lafayette, the school offers year-round swimming and diving lessons in a warm, protected environment for ages 9 mos. to adult. The instructors have received extensive in-water training. Spring and summer sessions run 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. April 20 – Sept. 4. Sessions are 3 or 4 weeks long, Mon. through Fri. for one, two or three days per week. Private swim lessons are 15 to 30 minutes; small group dive lessons are 30 or 60 minutes. The facility is



COURTESY PARKS & REC

Legos are a timeless joy for young children. This boy is busy constructing his own colorful Lego world at **Orinda Parks and Rec.'s** summer camp.

available for birthday parties. Check website for schedule and registration forms at www.shermanswim.com or call 925-283-2100.

Sleepy Hollow Swim & Tennis Club

Private recreational facility; inquire regarding membership. Legendland is a supervised drop-off day camp for kids aged 5-9 and runs for eight weeks. Summer Tennis Camp runs mid-June through early August. Call for details at 925-254-1126, email shstc@comcast.net or visit www.sleepyhollowclub.com.

OUTDOOR RECREATION AND NATURE CAMPS
Lindsay Wildlife Museum

Eight camp sessions for kids age 4 to 10 with a camper-to-counselor ratio of 4:1 and a maximum class size of 20. Kids experience wildlife adventures with live animals, songs, games, activities and art projects. They can explore exhibits, outdoor gardens and adjacent Larkey Park in Walnut Creek. Camps run Mon. – Fri. June 8 – Aug. 7. Nut-free and vegetarian-friendly snacks are included for all camps. Aftercare available. Call 925-935-1978 or go to www.lindsaywildlife.org.

Roughing It Day Camp

Roughing It Day Camp is at the Lafayette Reservoir where kids learn new outdoor skills. Campers aged 4-16 spend the summer from June 8 – Aug. 14 with the same age group to build camaraderie and community. Camp includes 50 activities with instruction for all ages and abilities in swimming, waterfront (fishing, rowing canoeing, kayaking), horseback riding, sports, crafts, nature exploration, outdoor living skills, cooking, and team building. Free extended care and free transportation included. Go to www.roughingit.com or call 925-283-3795.

Zoo Camp

The Oakland Zoo is renowned for creating age-appropriate options for campers in grades pre-K to high school. There is also a multi-grade nature exploration class. Camp sessions are one week each and run June 22 to Aug. 14. Campers learn about nature and animals through games and songs, creating and making, discovery hikes, science activities and up-close time learning about their more than 660 native and exotic animals.

Full summer camp schedule and registration are available on the website. Extended before and after care available. Half-day camps are 9 a.m.-noon; full-day camps are 9 a.m.-4 p.m. No camps July 4. See website for details. Discount pricing for zoo members. Three-week high school teen assistant camps for grades 9-12. Programs held rain or shine. Member registration opens March 10; non-member registration opens March 17. Call 510-632-9525 x280 (Zoo Camp hotline), email zoocamp@oaklandzoo.org or go to www.oaklandzoo.org.

Pads4Pets Founders Receive Award

By SIMAR KHANNA
Editor

Orinda residents Pam and Gary Schroeder who for seven years have been providing mats for homeless pets through their nonprofit Pads4Pets were recognized with a local Jefferson Award by KPIX.

They will be among 30 to 50 Bay Area award recipients who will be featured on the television station and receive medals at a ceremony in January. Stunned by the news, Pam Schroeder said the recognition will help expand the program and benefit more homeless pets.

Pads4Pets collects new and used yoga mats and repurposes them for the companion animals of people living without shelter in San Francisco. The mats are washed, cut and stenciled with the Pads4Pets log, then passed along to partner organization Veterinary Street Outreach Services (VET SOS) for distribution.

Schroeder said within a day of receiving the award on March 20, she was contacted by people who want to replicate the work



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pam and Gary Schroeder received a local Jefferson Award from KPIX.

in their own areas, offer mats and donate money. The Schroeders do not accept cash donations but are eager to teach others how to make the mats.

"This is not a proprietary program. It's so simple to do that people can do it everywhere," Schroeder said.

To learn more about Pads4Pets, including how to donate a new or used yoga mat, go to www.pads4pets.org.

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LAMORINDA arts COUNCIL

Auditions
May 7-9, 2020

The Lamorinda Idol singing program includes workshops, multiple performance opportunities, parties and the Finals at the Orinda Theatre Sunday, August 16, 2020.

At the Finals, cash prizes are awarded for winners in each category.

Register for auditions at www.LamorindaArts.org March 21 - April 22, 2020.

Registration is open to all Lamorinda students or residents. Groups can include members outside Lamorinda.

For inquiries, email us at idol@lamorindaarts.org

K - 2nd grade soloist - \$200
3rd - 5th grade soloists - \$300
6th - 8th grade soloists - \$500
9th - 12th grade soloists - \$750
K - 5th grade groups - \$200
6th - 8th grade groups - \$300
9th - 12th grade groups - \$500
Audience Award - \$300

MANY THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS:



CALENDAR

On the Calendar in March

- 1 **Orinda Starlight Village Players** Auditions for Agatha Christie's *Towards Zero* 4 p.m. at the outdoor Community Park Amphitheater. Also, March 3 at 7 p.m. in the Community Center Carpentry Room. Amy Cook, Director - AGCtheater@gmail.com - 781-454-8399. General auditions for all three shows in season March 29 and 31. ORSVP.org for details.
Open Mic Night at Cine Cuvée with pianist Patti Leidecker and friends; bring your favorite show tune to share in song. 6 p.m. 2 Orinda Theatre Square, www.cinecuvée.com.
- 2 **Stephanie Mann**, author reading *Empowerment Parenting: How to Raise Resilient Children who Become Happy, Self-reliant Adults*. 7 p.m. Orinda Books*.
- 4 **Educational Foundation of Orinda's Arts Ambassadors Reception and Awards Ceremony**. Art Gallery Orinda Library, 4:30 p.m. See article p. 6.
Comedy Night at Cine Cuvée, 2 Orinda Theatre Square, www.cinecuvée.com.
- 5 **Story Time with Cathy G.** An hour of books and fun for all ages. 10 a.m. Orinda Books*. Also, March, 12, 19 and 26.
Pat's Book Group will read and discuss *The Long Haul: A Trucker's Tale of Life on the Road* by Finn Murphy. 11 a.m. Orinda

- Books*.
Benefit for UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland. The Lombardy Branch and Trina Turk host you to an evening of shopping, eating, drinking and giving back. 6 p.m. at Orindawoods Woodhall (501 Orindawoods Drive). Tickets \$65. www.childrenshospitalbranches.org/events-1
- 6 **Evening of Wishes: Wishes in Bloom.** Make-A-Wish Greater Bay Area. Ritz Carlton in San Francisco. For tickets evening-of-wishes-2020.eventbrite.com.
 - 7 **"Celestials Take Us Out of This World."** Artist reception for the paintings of Joel Tesch, Art Gallery at Wilder, 2:30 p.m. 20 Orinda Fields Way. See article p. 6.
California Shakespeare Theater 2020 Annual Gala. Board member and philanthropist Jim Roethe will be honored along with additional community partners. 6 p.m. Jack London Square Yoshi's. Tickets may be purchased at calshakes.org/gala or at Yoshi's box office.
 - 10 **Orinda Park and Rec's Senior Trip** San Francisco Movie Tour 8 a.m. Fee: \$80. 925-254-2445 or seniors@cityoforinda.org; Orindaparksandrec.org.
 - 11 **Wisdom Workshop** Your Kids Don't Want Your Stuff: Downsizing Made Easy with Jean Goldman of Goldman Transitions;

- 10:30 a.m. 925-254-2445 or seniors@cityoforinda.org; Orindaparksandrec.org.
 - 12 **Classic Film Showcase** (Free Movie Night) presents *Giant* Rock Hudson and Elizabeth Taylor., 7 p.m. Orinda Theatre, lamorinda-theatres.com. See article p. 15.
 - 13 **Karaoke with DJ LMack.** Cine Cuvée, 2 Orinda Theatre Square, www.cinecuvée.com.
Annual Orinda Rotary Trivia Bee at the Orinda Masonic Lodge, 5 p.m. 16 teams of six will compete for \$500 grand prize on behalf of their favorite charity. Tickets \$360 per team of six at orindarotary.org.
 - 14 **St. Mary's College Guild St. Patrick's Day** Dinner/Auction/Fundraiser. St. Mary's College Soda Center 5:30 p.m. Featuring Rohan Murphy Academy Irish Dancers and The Frank O'Connor Band. Tickets \$50. 925-388-0437.
 - 15 **Live at Orinda** Versatile jazz/blues singer Natalie Douglas 5 p.m. Orinda Theatre, lamorindatheatres.com.
 - 17 **World Affairs Book Group** will discuss *DESTINED FOR WAR: Can America and China Escape Thucydides' Trap?* by Graham Allison. 3 p.m. New members welcome. Orinda Books*
Lafayette/Moraga Arts Ambassadors reception for elementary school student artwork, 4 - 6 p.m. Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. See article p. 6.
 - 21 **STEM Conference** for middle-school girls designed to create educational opportunities for girls in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Participants attend three hands-on interactive workshops led by professionals. Organized by the Orinda, Moraga and Lafayette branch of the American Association of University Women. St. Mary's College. Register at bit.ly/2ORfzO.
- Pacific Chamber Orchestra**, Conductor Lawrence Kohl, presents "The Glorious - Piazzolla's Four Seasons." 7:30 p.m. Performance Arts Center, Campolindo High School, 300 Moraga Road, Moraga. Tickets at www.pacificchamberorchestra.org.
- 22 **Citizen of the Year Award and Mott Award** dinner. Presented by The Orinda Association and the Orinda Community Foundation. Orinda Country Club. oa@orindaassociation.org or call 925-254-0800.
 - 25 **Wisdom Workshop** Know the Ten Signs of Alzheimer's with Jan Walker of the Alzheimer's Association; 10:30 a.m. 925-254-2445 or seniors@cityoforinda.org; Orindaparksandrec.org.
 - 27 **International Film Showcase** presents *Corpus Christie*, (see lamorindatheatres.com for show times), Orinda Theatre, www.internationalshowcase.org. Through April 2. See article p. 15.
- * Orinda Books is at 276 Village Square, info@orindabooks.com, 925-254-7606.

CITY/FIRE MEETING SCHEDULE
City Council. First and third Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way. www.cityoforinda.org.
Historic Landmarks Committee. Fourth Tuesday, 3 - 5 p.m., Library Garden Room, 26 Orinda Way. Call 925-788-7323.
Moraga-Orinda Fire District. Third Wednesday, 7 p.m. Sarge Littlehale Community Room 22 Orinda Way, Orinda. For agenda www.mofd.org/board/meetings.
Planning Commission. Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7 p.m., Orinda Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way. www.cityoforinda.org.

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



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School Events in March

- 1 **Miramonte High School**, Performing Arts presents *Mamma Mia!* 4 p.m. Also, March 5, 6 and 7 at 7 p.m. Tickets and reservations at www.showtix4u.com/events/16216.
 - 2 **Miramonte High School**, Boosters Meeting. 6 p.m.
 - 3 **Glorietta Elementary**, Executive Meeting. 10:30 a.m.
Miramonte High School, Freshman Parent Discussion Group. 7 p.m.
 - 4 **Art Ambassador**, Orinda Library (All School Choirs will be singing). 4 p.m.
AUHSD, Governing Board meeting. 7 p.m.
 - 5 **Glorietta Elementary**, Science and Makers Faire. 5:30 p.m.
 - 6 **Orinda Academy**, Wellness Day - half day for students.
 - 9 **Orinda Academy**, Teacher work day. No school.
 - 10 **Miramonte High School**, Parent Support Group. 6:30 p.m.
 - 11 **Miramonte High School**, Value Priced Colleges presentation. 7 p.m.
 - 12 **Holden High School**, Student Council hosts Pi(e) Day Pot Luck.
 - 13 **OUUSD Schools**, Staff development day. No school.
 - 14 **Miramonte High School**, SAT testing.
 - 15 **Miramonte High School**, Junior Parent Discussion Group, 7 p.m.
 - 16 **Miramonte High School**, Parents' Club Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- [SEE CALENDAR page 12]



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AROUND TOWN

Friday Forum: Cold War, Theater, Retirement

BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

This month's First Friday Forum with Dan McGovern offers the intriguing title, "From Reagan to Bush to Eugene O'Neill Festivals."

An explanation comes from McGovern's biography. He served in three presidential administrations in positions as diverse as the second-ranking lawyer at the U.S. State Department during Ronald Reagan's second term, and the head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the western United States in the George H. W. Bush presidency.

Supervising 800 employees responsible for EPA programs affecting the health and environment of 30 million people, McGovern said, provided him with his greatest career satisfactions.

"However, this part of my talk will focus on my service in the State Department at the height of the Cold War. Some of the incidents I'll talk about concluded in farce and another very nearly concluded with the end of the world," he said.

McGovern will tell his story and encourage attendees to think about how to use their talents and skills to enjoy doing what they do well—in retirement. "We bring talents to the work place and develop skills

there. Exercising those talents and skills, doing what we did can make us happy. Hopefully your job did that. So now what happens when you retire? Can you find ways of continuing to do what makes you happy?"

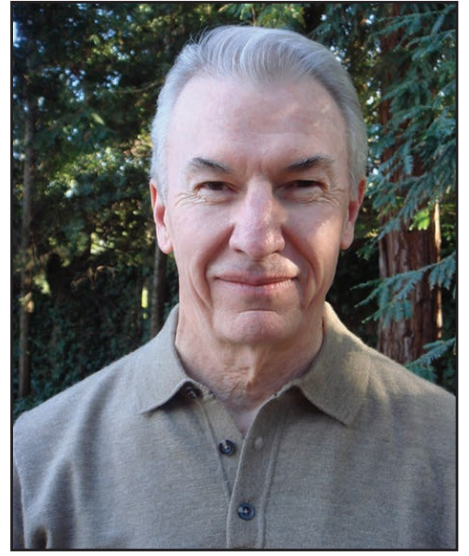
"Some of the incidents I'll talk about concluded in farce and another very nearly concluded with the end of the world."

"I will give examples from my own experience. For instance, I testified as an administration witness before Congress over a dozen times. Now, as president of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation in Danville, I frequently address the Danville Town Council in formal and informal settings."

McGovern also is a Visiting Scholar in the theater department at UC Berkeley.

Specifically, McGovern has found ways to use his talents and skills in pursuing his avocation, theater. He co-founded the Eugene O'Neill International Festival of Theatre in New Ross, Ireland, from where his father emigrated.

"Eugene O'Neill, the only American dramatist to win the Nobel Prize for Litera-



Dan McGovern

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ture, wrote his greatest plays while living in Danville," McGovern said. "So we of this area can claim him as one of our own."

McGovern's lecture takes place 1:30 p.m. March 6 in the Sanctuary of the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Admission is free and refreshments are served at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. For more information call 925-283-8722.

Bobbie Dodson can be reached at bobbie-dodson@comcast.net.

Beekeeper Steve Gentry Passes Away



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Steve Gentry

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

A familiar and friendly face at the Orinda Farmers' Market and the Wagner Valley Nature Area, Orinda resident and beekeeper Steve Gentry passed away in January at the age of 73.

Known as the "Beeman," Gentry educated thousands of people about the importance of these little creatures to the survival of our environment. "Without bees, the world would be a very different place," he said.

A descendent of many generations of local farmers (his family has lived in Orinda since 1870), Gentry saw first-hand the role of bees in agriculture. The recipient of The Orinda Association's William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award in 2008, Gentry sold products under the label Steve's Bees

in farmers' markets in San Ramon, Walnut Creek and Orinda.

He loved to educate people, particularly students, on the benefits of local honey and often spoke at garden and Rotary clubs, even taking live beehives to elementary schools.

Gentry began volunteering at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area in 1990 and supervised the planting of more than 34 trees, built drip irrigation systems, coordinated volunteers and helped start Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area. He could often be seen at the Orinda Farmers' Market and at the annual Olive Festival at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area rewarding children with honey sticks for various activities.

Sally Hogarty can be reached at sally@theorindanews.com.

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CLASSIFIEDS / LIBRARY CALENDAR

◆ AWARDS from page 5

Kinnon on behalf of Friends of Orinda Creeks.

“Using her wide knowledge of local native plants, Barbara has been dazzling as she assists customers in choosing appropriate plants all the while working on her true scheme, to draw them in deeper and deeper to increase their understanding and appreciation of native plants, especially in their native habitats,” she wrote in the nomination.

MacKinnon also praised Leitner’s ability to recruit and rally people around environmental causes, citing a training program Leitner instituted at the Tilden Nursery for volunteers to learn how to assist customers and make sales.

Among Leitner’s many accomplishments, MacKinnon noted a tree survey that tagged and mapped more than 218 trees along San Pablo Creek in Orinda Village as part of a creek restoration project.

Leitner said she is honored to be among the group of past award winners.

“I keep Orinda cleaned up,” she said.

“There’s always room for more and always room for company. It’s very rewarding and rejuvenating.”

Leitner, who has lived in Orinda for 26 years with her husband Steve Leitner, has worked for the city as a consultant for 20 years offering advice about creek restoration. “I spend a lot of time thinking about environment and how we interact with it,” said Leitner.

A key focus has been her effort to eradicate the invasive stinkwort, *Dittrichia graveolens*, along the Lamorinda Highway 24 corridor. Since 2012 Leitner has volunteered with Caltrans for the necessary permissions, developing the most effective methods, including timing, tracking populations, rounding up volunteers, and bagging and properly disposing of the noxious weed.

Leitner said Orindians are fortunate to have such an extraordinary wealth of natural resources, from nearby wildlands to beautiful creeks and a comfortable climate. “There is so much to enjoy and appreciate here and take care of,” she said.

True to her practice, the blessing comes

with advice.

“Times are changing and there’s so much more we need to do to even keep the resources we have for our future and the future of our children,” she said. Orinda is filled with intelligent, committed and powerful people capable of influencing the human carbon foot print not just in Orinda but beyond, according to Leitner.

“It’s so easy to feel overwhelmed and discouraged by environmental conditions ... if we decide to become knowledgeable in a small part of the environment and commit ourselves to do something, it opens the door to feel better about ourselves.”

Volunteer Award Winners

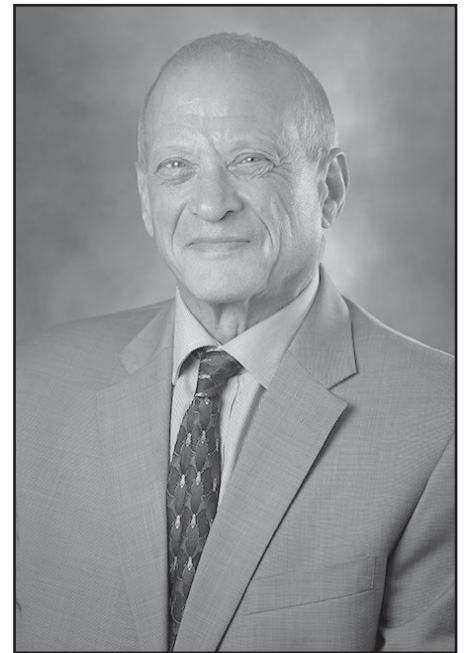
An Orinda resident since 1977, the British-born Haughin has been active in many local organizations over the years. He represented his neighborhood on the OA Board for many years prior to Orinda’s incorporation as a city in 1985. He returned to the board in 2011 and spent countless hours volunteering for the Fourth of July and Classic Car Show committees. Haughin is an emeritus member of the OA Board.

Haughin, who has been married to his wife June for 68 years, was also a very active volunteer with the Salvation Army, holding the office of treasurer for Central Contra Costa County for 22 years.

“I had a team of six to eight fellow volunteers who counted the kettle money. During that three to five hours every few days, we counted lots of pennies and nickels,” he recalls Haughin, who turns 90 March 11, said he looks forward to attending the awards ceremony on March 22.

Cosden, a former senior deputy district attorney, corporate counsel with PG&E and general counsel for several tech companies, is currently a consultant to GlassRatner, a national specialty financial advisory services firm.

But most of Orinda knows him by his voice, which is often heard over the loudspeakers announcing the Fourth of July parade, Miramonte women’s and men’s



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bill Cosden

basketball, baseball and track, wheelchair basketball, soccer, college rugby and the NorCal Kids Triathlon.

“This award was so totally unexpected. There are so many people in Orinda deserving of it and it was never on my radar,” said Cosden. “I have been involved with lots of different groups over the years, and I just have so much fun volunteering. I’m especially proud to be involved with Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP).”

The organization is the leading provider and promoter of adaptive sports and accessible recreation for children and adults with physical disabilities. First introduced to wheelchair basketball at one of Orinda Intermediate School’s annual Diverse Abilities Awareness weeks, Cosden has become an avid supporter of BORP.

His other community activities include serving on the Lamorinda Idol committee, the OA’s Fourth of July committee, and coaching various OBA, CYO and OYA youth sports teams.

Reach Sally Hogarty at sally@theorindanews.com. Reach Simar Khanna at editor@theorindanews.com.

The Orinda Library in March

The Orinda Library and all Contra County Libraries new website is: <https://ccclib.bibliocms.com>.

- 14 **Good News About the News**, Orinda Library Workshop lead by Orinda Library Manager Michael Beller, on using your library card to access the *NY Times*, *East Bay Times*, *The Atlantic*, *Consumer Reports* and more. Q and A on accessing library resources. 11 a.m. Garden Room.
 - 2 **Maker Monday**. Whether it’s Legos, crafts, or STEM, something is always happening on Mondays. Suitable for ages 5-10. 2:30-3:30 p.m. Also March 9, 16, 23 and 30. Sponsored by the Friends of Orinda Library.
 - 3 **Baby Storytime**. Rhymes, bounces, and other early literacy fun for infants to pre-walkers (approx. 18 months) and their caregivers only. Families with older children are welcome at Toddler Storytime. 11:30 a.m. in the Gallery Room. Also March 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25 and 31.
- Orinda Writers’ Group**. Get support and feedback with a friendly group of beginning writers. Be prepared to share two pages of your writing. 6:30 p.m. Also March 17 and 31.

- 5 **ESL Conversation Group**. Volunteer teachers lead group discussions for those learning English as a second language (ESL). Free drop-in, open to all. Come chat and learn English. 1 p.m. Also March 12, 19, and 26.
- 19 **Highlights of the Life and Legacy of Frances Perkins** celebrating Women’s History Month. The first woman appointed to the U.S. Cabinet who from 1933 to 1945 served as Secretary of Labor under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Speaker Fran Quittel, Ambassador for the Frances Perkins Center prior to the film. 6:30 p.m.
- 20 **Mystery Book Club**. Uncover and discuss the new mystery book of the month. 3 p.m.
- 26 **Contra Costa Tale Spinners**. Contra Costa Tale Spinners, a monthly story swap keeping the oral tradition alive. Every month features a guest speaker followed by openmic. Adults and teens. Storytellers with traditional, literary and personal tales. Share a story after the featured teller. 7 p.m.

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

◆ CALENDAR from page 10

- Miramonte High School**, Cultural Fair
- 20 **Orinda Intermediate School**, Choir attends California Music Educators Association festival, 6:30 p.m.
- 21 **Glorietta Elementary**, auction. 6 p.m.
- Holden High School**, Spring Friendraiser at Foreign Cinema. 2534 Mission St, San Francisco. 6 p.m.
- Orinda Academy**, Spring Fundraising Event. Lafayette Library. 925-254-7553
- 24 **Miramonte High School**, Rotary Career Night, 6:30 p.m.
- Senior Parent Discussion Group, 7 p.m.
- 25 **Glorietta Elementary**, Family Math Night, 6 p.m.
- 26 **Sleepy Hollow**, Spring Sing 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
- 27 **Glorietta Elementary and Del Rey schools**, Spring Sing 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
- Holden High School**, school dance.

- 30 **OUSD Schools**, Spring break through April 3.

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

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School Fundraising: A Pain in the Ask

MIMI BOMMARITO



A long time ago, in my mental galaxy far, far away, Orindan Mindy Becker and I boldly went where no comfort zone had gone before: We committed to a three-year term as co-presidents of the Glorietta Parents Club. That's where the sci-fi ends and the Laverne & Shirley begins.

Becker was the perfect mate, often using the words "I agree." And it made me realize how, with three young daughters, I so rarely (as in, never) heard those two harmonious words that can transform a harried, young-ish mother from feeling under appreciated to brilliant. We had a beautiful leadership marriage. And, like a lot of newlyweds, we were both scared of what we committed to, frequently questioning our wisdom in so doing.

The transformation of our local parents' clubs into financial lithium batteries can best be explained with Newton's Third Law of Motion: For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. As our public

school state funding rapidly deteriorated, the financial obligations of our six Orinda parents' clubs mushroomed.

At this point, we should all give a curtsy, a tip of the hat, or whatever that honorary yoga position is, when you bow and say "namaste" to each other, to acknowledge all the parents in this town who have stepped up – past, present and future – to the task of leading our parents' clubs and, of equal importance, EFO (Educational Foundation of Orinda, in case you've been living under a rock.) The endless fundraising, the motivation and creativity for said fundraising; the continuous effort to fill the bathtub without it's drain plug.

Given that leaky bathtub metaphor, I was not surprised to learn that the One Orinda campaign is on the table. For historical reference, the concept of joint fundraising has been entertained since before the Paleolithic era of my involvement.

[SEE EVERYDAY page 14]

◆ OUSD from page 1

a partner at TBWB Strategies, said nine-percent of California school districts derive revenue from parcel taxes. Orinda's current tax, he said, last increased in March 2009, does not have a sunset clause or provisions for inflation.

A new parcel tax, school officials said, could help offset gaps in funding from the state.

Gov. Gavin Newsom has a near record-breaking \$48 billion proposed for education in his 2020-21 state budget. It targets increased funding for grades K-12 and special-needs students. It also addresses teacher recruitment and shortages in the areas of science and math. As currently written, a minimal amount of these budget increases will reach Orinda schools, local officials said.

"This proposed budget is incredibly disappointing," said Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees President Cara Hoxie.

According to OUSD Superintendent Carolyn Seaton, "California has the fifth largest economy in the world yet we are ranked 37 out of 50 states in per-pupil funding." Within California, the OUSD is ranked 998 out of 1,000 school districts in per-pupil funding, she said.

John Nickerson, superintendent of the Acalanes Union High School District, said, "The governor's budget is somewhat deceiving. It is grossly inadequate to fund our basic needs."

Of Orinda's budget, 70 percent of revenue comes from federal and state governments. Local sources, including the parcel tax, contribute the balance. Employee salaries and benefits account for 80 percent of the budget. Other expenses include operating expenses, legal fees and books. Legal fees for special education, not including settlement amounts, cost \$404,383 in the 2018-19 school year. More than \$75,000 in legal fees were paid the first quarter of 2019-20.

State-mandated, unfunded and partially unfunded expenditures add to the deficit spending. In part, they include teacher and staff training, bullying prevention, special education, student testing and previously negotiated teacher salary increases.

California's Local Control Funding Formula, LCFF, a uniform grant base for every student, is the main source of revenue for schools. Teresa Sidrian, director of business services, said OUSD will receive less LCFF funding in each of the next three school years with small variances in spending.

Charles Shannon, president of the Orinda Education Association and a teacher at Glorietta Elementary School asked, "How do we change the structure of funding? We should be in the top 10."

Orinda trustees plan to form sub-committees with staff, parents and community members to advocate for increased state funding.

Reach Kathy Enzerink at Kathy@theorindanews.com.

Club Meetings in March

American Association of University Women - Orinda Moraga Lafayette Branch (AAUW-OML). General meeting third Tuesday, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way. March 17, 9:30 a.m. Panel discussion on U.S. immigration policy on For more information <https://oml-CA.aauw.net>

Diablo Star Chapter #214. Order of the Eastern Star. Second Monday, 7:30 p.m. 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda Masonic Lodge, Karen Seaborn, 925-689-0995.

Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe. Third Monday, 7:30 p.m., Garden Room, Orinda Library, www.moragaadobe.org.

Friends of the Orinda Creeks. Fourth Wednesday, 5 p.m., May Room, Orinda Library Plaza Level, 510-919-4765.

Guided Meditation. Wednesdays, 9 a.m. St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way, focuses on health, harmony and wholeness, 925-254-5965.

Lamorinda Alcohol Policy Coalition. Third Wednesday, 10 a.m., Orinda City Hall, Sarge Littlehale Room, 925-687-8844, ext. 227.

Lamorinda Drum Circle Mondays 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Enjoy learning to drum in a small-group environment. Drums are provided. Lamorinda Music, 81 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Suggested donation \$10-\$20.

Lamorinda Meditation Community. Mondays and Thursdays, 10:30 a.m., Career Wisdoms Institute, 1036 Country Club Drive, Moraga. All levels and philosophies welcome. \$5 donation. Contact Gaby for more details: gmozee@gmail.com.

Lamorinda Movers. Celebrate St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage and other entrees with McBride School of Irish dance. St. Mary's College Soda Center. Free parking passes at the gate. Reservations www.lam-

orindamovers.org or call Vicki Nakamura 925-708-1915.

Lamorinda Nature Walk and Bird Watching for seniors. Wednesdays, 9 a.m., free. Call 925-254-2445 for weekly information.

Lamorinda Republican Women Federated. Third Thursday. For more information, search Facebook for Lamorinda Republican Women Federated or go to www.lamorindarepublicanwomen.org. Contact Elsie Euing at ejewing@comcast.net or 925-254-8617.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary. Breakfast, Fridays, 7 a.m. at the Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa, 328 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, www.lamorindasunrise.com or lamorindasunrise@gmail.com. Meetings: March 6: John Eckstrom, Shelter, Inc. CEO; March 13: Professor Elena Songster, Panda Nation; March 20: Gokul Kanna, Ingenuity: Repurposing Drugs for \$Billions; March 27: Fred Steingraf, Member Presentation

Lamorinda Toastmasters. Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m., Temple Isaiah, 945 Risa Road, Lafayette. <http://lamorinda.toastmastersclubs.org>.

Montelindo Garden Club. Third Friday, Sept. through May. Lafayette Library and Learning Center's Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Meeting: March 20 Don't Snub the Shrubs with Rebecca Sweet, designer and author in Northern California. 9:30 a.m.

Orinda Association. Second Monday, 7 p.m., Orinda Library Plaza level, May Room, 925-254-0800.

Orinda Garden Club, 315 Camino Sobrante. 925-257-0668, www.orindagc.org. March 19 Brenda Coffee, will speak on the joys and perils of a full and ambitious life. 10 a.m. Orinda Library Auditorium.

[SEE CLUBS page 14]




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Orinda Starlight Village Players Announce 2020 Season and Auditions

By DAVID DIERKS
Assistant Editor

The Orinda Starlight Village Players (OrSVP) start their 37th season with Agatha Christie's *Towards Zero*, directed by Amy Cook, followed by George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* directed by Suzan Lorraine and finish the season with Malcolm Cowler's adaptation of *L. Frank Baum's The Marvelous Land of Oz*.

Toward Zero is a thriller focused around a house party at Gull's Point, the seaside home of Lady Tressilian. Party-goer Neville

Strange is caught between his ex-wife and new flame and all are overshadowed by a brutal and savage murder. Performances run Fridays and Saturdays, June 5 through July 4 with one Sunday performance June 28 and a Thursday performance July 2.

Shaw's *Pygmalion* is the classic tale of two linguists, Professor Higgins and Colonel Pickering, who place a bet on whether Higgins can transform a cockney flower seller into a proper English woman within six months. Lorraine is best known for directing Agatha Christie plays at OrSVP in recent years and this year she is breaking away from mysteries. Performances run Fridays and Saturdays, July 24 through Aug. 15, with a matinee Aug. 9 and a Thursday performance Aug. 13.

The season finishes with *L. Frank Baum's The Marvelous Land of Oz*, which takes us back to Oz. Not long after Dorothy returns to Kansas from Oz, a young boy named Tip is unhappily being raised by the wicked sorceress Mombi in the Land of the Gillikans.

Tip escapes from Mombi after creating Jack Pumpkinhead with a magic Powder of Life stolen from the sorceress. They go to the Emerald City, now ruled by the Scarecrow, but an army of girls capture the city. The Scarecrow, Tip, Jack and other oddball characters flee the city and head

west to the land of the Winkies, now ruled by the Scarecrow's old friend the Tinman. Together, they must recapture the Emerald City and defeat Mombi.

Cowler is a familiar face for OrSVP audiences, having been involved with more than 35 productions. Performances are Friday and Saturday nights Sept. 11 through Oct. 3, with matinees Sept. 20 and 27, and a Thursday performance Oct. 1.

Auditions for *Toward Zero* are 4 p.m. March 1 at the Community Center Park Amphitheater and 7 p.m. March 3 at the Community Center Carpentry Room.

Auditions for the remaining shows are 4 p.m. March 29 at the Community Center Park Amphitheater and 7 p.m. Mar. 31 at the Community Center Carpentry Room.

This all-volunteer group has been presenting live theater in Orinda for more than 30 years and are always looking for new volunteers, both on and off stage. Anyone interested in any aspect of theater may contact the group at www.orsvp.org/ or call 925-528-9225.

Reach David Dierks at david.dierks@theorindanews.com.



CHARLIE JARRETT

Claire Stevenson starred in the title role of last year's production of *The Woman in White*.

◆ EVERYDAY from page 13

Every year that concept is broached, tiptoed around, and somehow, conveniently ditched by the punch bowl, to be dealt with "in the future." Are we finally saying "The Future is Now?"

On one hand, One Orinda makes financial sense. Consolidate effort. Pool resources. On the other hand, the fundraising momentum at the elementary level, when, let's face it, our passion is at its peak, is an exquisite beast. Donors have an understandable desire to see their significant contributions fund issues that directly impact their child. Unfortunately, there exists a perception that instead it will fund some high school kid whose parents have concluded they are now on the home stretch and can quit donating.

I get it. I have lived it. There is a marked difference in attitude, dutifully forking over all that money the first few years, versus the finish line, when one can almost hear "Song of the Volga Boatmen" echoing sadly in the background. Despite this, I feel that most parents try to do the right thing.

What if we could install a couple of cameras at the downtown intersection of Camino Pablo and Brookwood Road, then photograph and ticket every license plate in the freaking constant stream of vehicles that insist upon completing an illegal left-hand turn, long after the turn arrow has disappeared, halting oncoming traffic from Moraga Way.

Seriously, is this small area some sort of hot spot where the laws governing traffic are suspended and I just don't know about it? Is it a portal to an alternate universe? Yes, turn lanes are annoying, but since when does that give anyone the right to just do whatever they want? We'll provide the means to document and ticket these folks, in exchange for a share of the revenue.

Plus, nothing would bring me more joy than to imagine these constant offenders having to pay me and my school district a fat fine. Mere coincidence that the EFO fundraising thermometer is located right at this very spot?

Reach Mimi Bomarrito at mimi.bomarrito@theorindanews.com.

◆ CLUBS from page 13

Orinda Hiking Club. Every weekend and first Wednesday, www.orindahiking.org or Ian at 925-254-1465.

Orinda Historical Society. Call 925-254-1353 for times and location of meetings. Open to public on Wednesdays, 1-4 p.m.

Orinda Job's Daughters. First and third Mondays, 7 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, 925-283-7176.

Orinda Junior Women's Club. First Tuesday, 7 p.m., September through June. Orinda residents socializing and giving back to the community. www.orindajuniors.org.

Orinda Masonic Lodge #122 F&AM. First Thursday, except holidays. Family dinner at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 8 p.m., 9 Altarinda Road, Orinda Masonic Center. 925-254-5211, www.orindalodge.org.

Orinda Rotary. Wednesdays, noon, Orinda Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, 925-254-2222, www.orindarotary.org. March 4, 11:30 a.m. The annual State of the City. Vice-Mayor Amy Worth will discuss projects and issues facing the Orinda community. The event is open to the public and tickets for the lunch are \$20 per person. Go to orindarotary.org for tickets.

Orinda Satellite Rotary Club. Second Wednesday. Call Sylvia at 510-224-8548.

Orinda/Tábor (Czech Republic) Sister City Foundation. Fourth Thursday, 7 p.m., social, 7:30 p.m. meeting. For more information, 925-254-8260.


Orinda Teen Advisory Council – First Tuesday at 4 p.m. Community Center, 28 Orinda Way, email Recreation Coordinator Matt Delmartini at mdelmartini@cityoforinda.org with questions.

Orinda Woman's Club. Second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m.. Call Jean Barnhart at 925-254-3881 or go to www.orindawomansclub.org.

Sons in Retirement Lamorinda Branch 174. Second Wednesday, 11 a.m. lunch. Holy Trinity Culture Center 1700 School St., Moraga. A social organization of retired and semi-retired men who enjoy leisure time with friends and activities. For info., call Tyler at 925-963-5741, www.branch174.sirinc2.org.

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

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ARTS

Jazz/Blues Vocalist Natalie Douglas Performs March 15

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

Known for her energy, playfulness and emotionally riveting vocals, Natalie Douglas brings her considerable talents to Orinda March 15 as part of the Live in Orinda concert series at the Orinda Theatre.

The award-winning singer, who just happens to have a four-octave vocal range, has appeared throughout the United States, South America and Europe, paying tribute to such diverse singers as Nina Simone, Lena Horne, Nat “King” Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, Elvis Presley, Stevie Nicks and Dolly Parton.

With a repertoire that includes the music of the ‘70s and ‘80s and gospel-influenced jazz and blues, it’s no wonder Douglas’ portrait is on the famed Birdland Jazz Club’s Wall of Fame.

For her Orinda concert, Douglas brings the vocal stylings of Nina Simone, Lena

Horne, Abbey Lincoln and Billie Holiday together in “Four Women.” While this combination of talented singers would give any performer pause, Douglas has the vocal range to easily go from jazz diva to blues icon to Broadway star with a bit of comedienne and historical perspective thrown in for good measure.

“I spend a lot of time researching the singers and the time, place where they lived,” Douglas said. “All four of these women are heroes of mine, and they all knew and admired each other. Abbey even dedicated one of her albums to Billie. Sometimes when Lena or Abbey were in a show, they would head over to a club afterwards to listen to Nina or Billie. I find so many interesting stories to share with my audience. I want people to feel entertained but also knowing something new about the artists.”

Douglas graduated Phi Beta Kappa from University of Southern California with a

Magna Cum Laude Bachelor of Arts in psychology and certificates in theater and women’s studies. Douglas also holds a master’s degree in psychology from University of California, Los Angeles. She teaches diversity workshops for public and private schools across the country as well as workshops for performers.

Although she lives on the East Coast with her husband Billy Joe Young, Douglas has strong ties to the Bay Area thanks to Ancestry.com. When her parents died, a cousin told Douglas that she was adopted. After her astonishment diminished, she began looking for her biological parents. A DNA test through Ancestry.com led her to her biological father, a San Francisco resident and long-time advocate for the city’s African American population, Rev. Arnold Townsend.

“It was a shock finding out I was adopted,” said Douglas. “At first, I was angry at my adoptive parents but what is past is past. Finding out I was adopted changed everything and changed nothing. My childhood is still my childhood and my cousins are still my cousins.”

Townsend had recently buried his 38-year-old daughter when he received a text from Douglas. He had no idea he had another child and quickly realized his high school girlfriend must have been pregnant when he left for college. Townsend was never told about the birth.

Douglas said meeting her birth father has been “almost 100 percent joy. We agree on almost everything. The sad part is learning I



BILL WESTMORELAND

Natalie Douglas’ repertoire includes the music of the ‘70s and ‘80s, various civil rights movements and gospel-influenced jazz and blues.

had a sister and not being able to know her.”

Live at the Orinda featuring Douglas takes place 5 p.m. at the Orinda Theatre, 2 Orinda Theatre Square. For tickets, go to www.orindamovies.com. For more information on Douglas, go to www.nataliedouglas.com.

Sally Hogarty can be reached at sally@theorindanews.com.



THE REEL LESS TRAVELED

Three for the Price of Two

Tom Westlake



Up until recently, I had an embarrassment of riches to write about. With the Classic Film Showcase, the International Film Showcase and the Moraga Movers, there was much to recommend.

But with the troubled history of the Rheem, the Moraga Movers had to curtail their cinematic pleasures leaving me with only two “extra-curricular” events to write about. The good news is that the Rheem is open for business. I would love for there to be some meeting between those two organizations.

This month offers a sort of compromise as one of the films I’m going to discuss almost counts as two.

I’m talking about *Giant*. Never has the Classic Film Showcase (that I know of) shown a film as epic as this one. Clocking in at nearly 3½ hours and featuring some of the biggest names in Hollywood at the time (1956), this aptly named film has it all. Starting with the stunning Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson (playing against type) and the legendary James Dean, whose untimely death during the production casts a slight pall over it.

Detailing the rising and fallings, as well

as the heated passions of the Benedict family, the film will help viewers forget about the intimidating run time and become fascinated by the family’s changing fortunes. It screens at the Orinda March 12 and admission is free. Go to www.orindamovies.com for details.

In looking over the premise behind this month’s offering from the International Film Showcase, I was struck how comical it sounded. But after viewing the trailer, I was quickly disavowed of the idea this was anything else than a deadly serious movie about faith and redemption.

Daniel is a troubled youth with a violent past who, though spiritually inclined, is precluded from pursuing that path – until he misrepresents himself and soon thereafter finds himself thrust into a position which is as unexpected as it is desired. Add to this a small town with secrets of its own and you have *Corpus Christi*, a 2019 Polish Oscar nominee. It starts its one-week run at the Orinda March 27. See the trailer at www.internationalshowcase.org.

Reach Tom Westlake at poppinjay@earthlink.net.

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Elana O’Loskey



MidMod Exchange

Would it surprise you to learn there is a women’s clothing store in Orinda where the price tops out at \$40?

MidMod Exchange in Theatre Square is just that. Described by owner Janell Lamela as offering “quality new and gently used clothing, unique home goods and accessories,” there is much to be said for a store focusing on a sustainable fashion model with a “recycle and reuse” concept. You’ll find women’s clothing in sizes 0 to 22-plus.

MidMod opened in late December and has caught on not only because of an ever-changing array of clothing, shoes, accessories and home goods but also because of Lamela’s daughter, Asia Lamela. Asia, an artist trained at the California College of the Arts, paints a themed selfie photo op on the store windows. “It’s a bit of fun and people love it,” said Asia.

No stranger to the world of retail, Lamela also owns Doll Face Permanent Cosmetics in Theatre Square at Suite 135.

“I’ve been a business owner in Lafayette and Orinda for eight years with a special interest in fashion. Opening a boutique-type store with quality new and ‘gently used’ clothing has been a good idea – especially because it is in the same location as my other business.”

Donations are accepted during normal business hours; she does not do consignment. Donated clothing is passed on to a variety of nonprofit organizations in the area.

“I employ local teenage girls, which gives them an opportunity to gain work

experience while learning about responsibility,” she said.

As far as supporting community events, she invites local organizations to contact her with ideas. Stop by to meet Janell and explore MidMod Exchange at 2 Theatre Square, Suite 143 (across from Tiara Hair Extensions). Hours are Mon. – Sat. 11:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., closed Sunday. She can be reached at 510-206-0233, or follow MidMod Exchange on Facebook and Instagram.

Vicki Nakamura, Realtor

An Orinda resident, Vicki Nakamura with JH Russell Real Estate Group/Rossmoor Realty has degrees in microbiology and molecular biology from UC Berkeley and past careers in diagnostic research and development. To say she pays attention to detail is an understatement.

Some of her time is spent as a board member developing programs for Lamorinda Movers, an organization serving local seniors. At Santa Maria Church, she works on the social justice committee and on Winter Nights. Youth Homes (YH), which deals with placement of youth whose parents cannot provide a safe homes or environment, is especially close to her heart, she said. YH finds a place for youth to live until such time as they can move on. They offer programs to teach high school youth marketable skills so they can seek jobs to support themselves. “Many of these children go on to college and develop happy and productive lives,” she said.



Janell Lamela, owner of MidMod Exchange, stands in front of “Cupid’s Wings” painted by her daughter, artist Asia Lamela.

Having been a broker for 40-plus years, Nakamura said she knows Lamorinda home values. “The largest value I add for my clients is that I am a high-touch, hands-on expert because I create an action proposal to ready any property for sale, indoors or out. I oversee the complete transaction seamlessly as though it were my own.”

At times, Lamorinda residents may consider downsizing when their children have grown and moved away. Or older residents find they do not want to maintain a large home. Rossmoor might be an attractive alternative with its long list of benefits enclosed in a secure gated community, Nakamura said.

The current average age of Rossmoor residents is 77, but it drops each year because younger residents at age 55 years move in; the current population is about 10,000. Options within Rossmoor’s 1,800 acre development includes more than 200 clubs, 27 holes of golf, a fitness center, films, lectures, swimming, tennis, new event center, restaurant and the ever-popular pickle ball.

Nakamura said she chose to work with JH Russell Real Estate group/Rossmoor Realty because the company has a 52-year relationship with Rossmoor Senior Devel-

opment. When not working or volunteering, Nakamura enjoys alpine skiing, ballroom dancing, and traveling. Contact her at 925-932-1162 ext. 3355 or Rossmooragent88@comcast.net.

To send items for consideration, email O’Loskey at business.orinda@gmail.com.



Realtor Vicki Nakamura said she enjoys giving back by volunteering with Youth Homes, Santa Maria Church’s social justice committee and One Warm Coat project.



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