



THE ORINDA NEWS

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12 Issues Annually
October 2022

Voters Can Learn More About Candidates at a Series of Public Forums



Alex Drexel



Stuart House



Brandyn Iverson



Latika Malkani



Janet Riley



Sunil Rajaraman

The Orinda Association will hold three public forums: City Council candidates (pictured above) - Oct. 6 at 6 p.m.; MOFD - Oct. 13 at 6 p.m. and OUSD - Oct. 13 at 7:30 p.m. Preliminary questions were asked of all the candidates with their answers available in this issue. City Council candidate answers begin on Page 11, MOFD candidate answers on Page 13 and OUSD candidate answers on Page 15.

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

November may be election month, but October is the month of decisions as candidates express their views on a variety of topics in advertisements, speaking engagements and public forums.

On Oct. 6 and Oct. 13, The Orinda Association will sponsor three public forums where residents can ask candidates running for the Orinda City Council, the Moraga Orinda Fire Protection District (MOFD) and the Orinda Union School Board (OUSD) about their positions on issues concerning those governing bodies. Questions can be sent in advance to forums@orindaassociation.org or asked in person on the night of the forum.

Monitored by the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley, forums will be held at the Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way, and on Zoom. The meetings will also be recorded and available on LWV/DV YouTube, www.votersedge.org and CCTV Comcast 26.

The first forum features the six candidates vying for the three positions on the Orinda City Council and takes place Oct. 6 at 6 p.m. Candidates Alex Drexel, Stuart House, Brandyn Iverson, Latika Malkani, Sunil Rajaraman and Janet Riley will be in attendance. *The Orinda News* asked the candidates several preliminary questions. See page 11 for their answers.

On Oct. 13 at 6 p.m., the four candidates for two seats on the MOFD board will discuss their views on matters related to the fire department and protection of residents. Steve Danzinger (incumbent) and Vince Dell'Aquila will compete for the District 3 spot with Michael Donner (incumbent) and Michael Roemer vying for the open position in District 4. Answers to their preliminary questions are on page 13.

The OUSD forum is Oct. 13 at 7:30 p.m. Candidates Michelle Chang, Edda Collins Coleman, Linda Delehunt, Eve Phillips and Katie Shogan will share their opinions on a variety of school-related topics as they vie for the three positions available on the OUSD Board of Trustees. See page 15 for answers to their preliminary questions.

This forum is co-sponsored by ONE Orinda and Las Trampas Creek Council of PTAs.

Residents are encouraged to send questions in advance for the three forums by emailing forums@orindaassociation.org. Questions for the City Council forum are due Oct. 3, and questions for the MOFD and OUSD forums are due Oct. 10. Questions can also be voiced the nights of the forums.

On Oct. 12 at 7 p.m., candidates for the Acalanes Union High School District Governing Board will discuss their positions with voters. The seven candidates running for three open positions are Jennifer

Chen, Clayton Gardner, Nancy Kendzierski (incumbent), Gabe Ledeen, Renee Nowac, Christopher Severson (incumbent) and Mark Woolway.

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley, Las Trampas Creek Council of PTAs, Acalanes High School Parents' Club, Campolindo High School Parents' Club, Las Lomas High School PTSA and

Miramonte High School Parents' Club, the forum will be held at Del Valle Education Center, Room 401, 1963 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek.

For questions regarding the AUHSD forum, email voter.services@lwvdy.org.

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

Orinda's Citizen of the Year and Volunteer Award Winners for 2022 Announced

By CHARLEEN EARLEY
Editor-in-Chief

Orinda volunteers and community-minded folks are in no short supply and Orinda Community Foundation members are excited to announce this year's winners.

The awards dinner and celebration takes place Sunday, Oct. 23 at 6 p.m. in the Founders' Auditorium at the Orinda Community Center, located at 28 Orinda Way.

Winner of the Orinda Citizen of the Year (COY) 2022 award is Vince Dell'Aquila, for his decades of community service. A volunteer football coach at Miramonte for 32 years, Dell'Aquila moved to Orinda in 1989.

With his wife Kathie and two daughters and one son, volunteering is in his blood, but he was shocked when he got the call from Richard Westin that he won COY this year.

"He was calling me about something else," [SEE CITIZEN page 2]



KATHIE DELL'AQUILA

Vince Dell'Aquila was announced Citizen of the Year 2022 for his decades of community service by the Orinda Community Foundation and will be honored, among other volunteers, at a dinner and celebration on Oct. 23 at 6 p.m. at the Orinda Community Center at 28 Orinda Way.

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AROUND TOWN / ENTERTAINMENT

Art of Mixology Returns October 22



JEFF HEYMAN

Sponsored by the Lamorinda Arts Council, the 9th Annual Art of Mixology event at Orinda Theatre Square is their largest fundraiser of the year. Slated for Oct. 22 from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., the event includes both professional and amateur bartenders creating luscious craft cocktails as the audience and judges sample and vote for their favorites. Bartenders will mix their craft cocktails and the Mixologist of the Year will be announced live in Orinda Theatre Square. Participating bartenders could win one or more of the following: Mixologist of the Year - First Place is trophy and \$500, Second Place is certificate and \$300, Third Place is certificate and \$150, Audience Award is trophy and \$200, Home-Crafted Cocktail (Amateur) Award is trophy and \$100, Art of Table Staging is a trophy. COVID-19 precautions observed based on state and county guidelines on date of event. For more information, visit www.lamorindaarts.org or to become an event sponsor, visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/contact-art-of-mixology/>. Photo taken from last year's event.

Live at The Orinda! Concert Series Features Singer Eden Espinosa

By BOBBIE DODSON
Staff Writer

Considered one of Broadway's most exciting and versatile artists, Eden Espinosa will headline opening night of the "Live at The Orinda!" 2022-2023 concert series. Presented at the historic Orinda Theatre Oct. 16, the show begins at 5 p.m.

Broadway World writes, "Espinosa has the hallmark of all great singers. She can make you feel as if she is singing each lyric to you and you alone."

Espinosa is best known for her critically acclaimed portrayal of Elphaba in the Broadway San Francisco and Los Angeles productions of *Wicked*.

Producer of the series, Michael Williams, said music is the one thing that brings us together and unites us, regardless of age, political beliefs, race or religion.



COURTESY OF EDEN ESPINOSA

Eden Espinosa performs at the Orinda Theatre, Sunday, Oct. 16 at 6 p.m.

"In creating this concert series, our aim has been twofold – to bring world renowned artists who don't often perform in the Bay Area right here to the beautiful Orinda

[SEE ESPINOZA page 7]

◆ CITIZEN from page 1

and we were discussing MOFD strategies and then he laid that on me and I said 'say that again,'" said Dell' Aquila. "I was really humbled because I'm so aware of everyone who has won it before me, I didn't know I would be in that same breath. It's a really big honor."

Dell' Aquila might have been surprised, but he said his kids were not, since he's

modeled volunteering to them throughout their lives – which means the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

"One of my daughters volunteers at ARF (Animal Rescue Foundation) and works for Loaves and Fishes; my other daughter lives in southern California, and she's on the Board of Directors for the Boys & Girls Club of West San Gabriel Valley and also works with foster teenage girls where they model homemaking and business for them. My son coaches pretty much everything in Orinda – so if you can carve out the time to volunteer, do it," said Dell' Aquila.

The Orinda Volunteer Award recipients are Kent and Teresa Long, who, along with their core group, Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe, have led the successful efforts to purchase the Joaquin Moraga Adobe – the sale is currently pending.

"We are really honored and we both grew up in Orinda, so it means a lot to us," said Kent Long. "We think the adobe can be a real resource for the community, something we can be proud of."

At one point, the Joaquin Moraga Adobe was destined to become a clubhouse, however, Long and his group saw the need to maintain its original, historical identity. It's also how he feels about volunteering as well.

"It struck a chord with me and something that needed to happen," he said.

When it comes to volunteering, he said to "find something you connect to, because you'll have a personal reward later – and for me, it's paying back to a town I grew up in and it feels like the right thing to do."

Teresa Long is an Orinda Historical Society board member and is currently digitally archiving *The Orinda News* newspapers, dating back to its first issue in 1986.

Stated on their website, the Orinda Community Foundation, which began in 1948, was created to, "enhance the quality of life in Orinda by fostering community spirit and citizen engagement, build partnerships and provide financial assistance to support community activities, beautification and the arts."

Orinda Community Foundation President, Sue Severson, hopes many people will attend the Citizen of the Year awards.

"To honor the recipients and celebrate our great community," she said.

COY tickets cost \$75. Mix and mingle with cocktails starts at 6 p.m., dinner (buffet by Shelby's Restaurant) at 6:30 p.m. and awards at 7:15 p.m. Reservations can be made online at www.orindafoundation.org.

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

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THE ORINDA ASSOCIATION

A Message From the OA Board
Orinda Welcomes Autumn



Cindy Powell

In autumn we start to see hay bales and pumpkins around town and at **Del Rey's Boofest, Glorietta's Fun Fest and Creepy Hollow!** Thank you to the parents that create these lasting memories!

On Oct. 6, The Orinda Association presents a **City Council Candidate Forum** in the Library Auditorium (streams on Zoom). This is a chance to meet the candidates and hear their answers to questions you send to forums@orindaassociation.org. Deadline for questions is Oct. 3.

The final free **Movie in the Park** is Oct 7. Bring blankets, lawn chairs and popcorn!

National Fire Prevention Day is Oct. 9 to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. The largest fire in this state's history was the August Complex Fire in 2020, which scorched more than one million acres. The Camp Fire in 2018 was the costliest wildfire of all time, costing roughly \$400 billion in damages and economic losses. Since 2020, six of the seven largest wildfires took place in California's history. Check out **Orinda Wildfire Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Presentation** video streaming on the MOFD YouTube channel or visit www.MOFD.org and reduce fire risk.

On Oct. 13, The Orinda Association presents the **MOFD** (Moraga Orinda Fire District) and **OUSD** (Orinda Union School District) **Candidate Forums**. The MOFD candidates begin at 6 p.m., and the OUSD candidates start at 7:30 p.m. Please attend and get to know the candidates better. Send questions by Oct. 10 to forums@orindaassociation.org.

Art of Mixology Cocktail Competition on Oct. 22 invites attendees to sample 20 different cocktails (in safe and sane portions) to support the Lamorinda Arts Council while simultaneously supporting the arts in Lamorinda.

Oct. 22 is also **Make a Difference Day** to encourage people to highlight one day a year to try to make a difference in the world. Use the envelope enclosed in this newspaper and make a difference. Enjoy the satisfaction of helping and sponsoring local programs that build community, such as the 4th of July parade, Seniors Around Town ride program, informational forums, Orinda's Volunteer Center and *The Orinda News*. We can't do it without you!

Cindy Powell can be reached at cindy@orindaassociation.org.

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
(Library Plaza)
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www.OrindaAssociation.org

The Orinda Association
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ORINDA CAR SHOW

Dancing with the Cars and Classic Car Show Great Honking Success

By CHARLEEN EARLEY
Editor-in-Chief

“Successful,” according to Melissa Roeder, Kate Wiley and Bill Waterman, is the one word to sum up the back-to-back annual fundraising events, Dancing with the Cars and the Orinda Classic Car Show, held Sept. 9 and 10.

For starters, it was a Miami night in Orinda for the 140 attendees at the Orinda Rotary-sponsored Dancing with the Cars.

“Our guests dressed beautifully,” said Roeder, Rotary member. “It was great to see all those Miami-style tropical shirts, print dresses, Panama hats, tans and chic outfits. We also had four gorgeous cars on loan through Orinda Motors, and other friends of Rotary, beautifully up lit by Desired Effect and Steve Harwood.

“This event exemplifies Orinda Rotary’s goals to build strong community, to create good will and understanding and to promote ‘Service above Self’ to help others in need,” she added.

Members of Orinda Rotary raise funds for Meals on Wheels, Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties, scholarships, outings for the Boys and Girls Club, and many other local, regional and international projects.

Roeder said the event, with highlights such as dinner provided by Havana Catering, key lime, lemon and chocolate mini tarts provided by a Lamorinda grocery, dance music from the band Los Boleros and Salsa lessons for guests.

“It’s the ultimate Orinda block party – familiar, yet fresh and fun with a new theme every year and an enjoyable way to raise money for important causes,” Roeder said, before adding Orinda Rotary greatly appreciates everyone who participated.

“We want to thank all our sponsors, including Gold Level Davidson Homes, Mechanics Bank, Park Place Wealth Management and STE Global; Orinda Parks and Rec, all the guests, donors and contributors and especially the excellent group of volunteers who joined us from the Miramonte Interact Club, Lamorinda National Charity League (NCL) and Boys Team Charity (BTC),” said Roeder. “All students and parents involved contributed their time, creativity and energy to give our event a special polish.”

The following day, volunteers of the Orinda Classic Car Show saw over 155 classic cars and trucks – many with hoods popped -- on display, countless vendor booths and 2,000 to 3,000 attendees.

The Orinda Association (OA) Board Member Wiley credited the show’s success to many volunteers while even giving a shout out to Mother Nature.

“The weather was perfect, and every committee chair and volunteer did their jobs so well it appeared the event ran seamlessly,” she said.

Current OA Board member and past President, Waterman, said the Orinda Classic Car Show is a unique community favorite.

“This is also one of only a few car shows now going annually in the East Bay that



DAVID DIERKS

Crowds gathered to view the rolling exhibit of original Shelby Cobras led by **Drew** and **Janet Serb** in their 1966 Shelby Cobra 427 during the Car Show. After leaving the show, the Cobra drivers headed out on their annual 1000 mile drive.

is locally run and managed while raising funds for a local non-profit like the OA and our Seniors Around Town (SAT) ride program,” said Waterman. “Whether you love cars or just want to be a part of a great local community event, there is something for everyone at the show.”

Waterman had many to thank as well.

“We thank all the volunteers – including from the two youth charities, NCL and BTC – who pitched in to set up and take down the show, plus all sponsors and vendors that supported the show again this year,” he said.

Wiley said many people came to the OA’s booth.

“Several people came up to our booth just to say thank you for putting on this community event that was so friendly and happy, with something for everyone,” she said. “And they told us how important it was for the community to come together like this.”

She said the families who came with their little kids were “so much fun, and the kids especially were drawn to the children’s ride on the prized Jeep.”

One little boy, around 4 or 5-years-old, is someone Wiley will never forget.

“He said he had saved up his money to purchase a raffle ticket (\$5) for a chance to win the jeep. We asked his mother if

her sons would like to pick the winning raffle tickets from each of the seven raffle prizes,” said Wiley. “The winner of the jeep actually went to another young family with boys. The boy who picked the winner got to drive the jeep to the winners of the car, making him happy too!”

Wiley said she saw long lines of longtime residents, along with new transplants, “some in walkers, many in strollers,” at both Rosie’s Mexican food truck and Orinda’s Lord’s Ice Cream booth.

Networking and connections were made as well.

“One volunteer running a booth, anxious about finding a replacement for her insurance agent, talked to a booth neighbor,” said Wiley. “She got the local referral and actually met the agent hours later at the booth, a win-win for both of them!”

Wiley believes everyone should put the Classic Car Show on the calendar for next year.

“This is an event open to and enjoyed by all,” she said. “It features music, food, T-shirts, hats, free stuff, raffles, magnificent cars and lots of car stories while benefitting local charities.”

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

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CITY PLANNING

Orinda's 76 Station to Feature County's Second Hydrogen Fueling Pump

By ANDREA MADISON
Staff Writer

On Aug. 9, Orinda Planning Commission voted to approve a project proposing the addition of an above ground hydrogen-fueling tank to the city's Union 76 Station, located at 67 Moraga Way.

The new tank and equipment are set to replace eight parking spaces on the property. The update will also feature a new canopy with increased height to allow for hydrogen refueling trucks.

While the height of the new station canopy will be higher than the existing structure, its area will remain the same, according to a condition of approval named in the recent planning commission staff report. The canopy will also be free from illuminated signage and edges, with the new signage remaining the same size as the current one.

Fuel company FirstElement "have their big picture approval" for the placement of a hydrogen-fueling tank at the gas station, said Planning Director Drummond Buckley. The remaining details, including a building permit, will be handled through the building department and "maybe some state agencies," he explained.

"We consider it to be an expansion of the existing gas station. As such, it requires a commercial use permit," Buckley said.

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) approved the proposed facility in Nov. 2021, and the city building department will further review for compliance with the California Building Code.

Specific conditions for the project outlined by the planning commission include the requirement that onsite parking spaces only remain available to station customers and the specific mandate that a neutral color be assigned to the wall surrounding the hydrogen tank on the property. The planning commission, however, did not approve the applicant's proposal of an artificial boxwood mat application to the wall around the hydrogen tank.

Also included in the planning commission staff report is the applicant's proposal of street trees along the Moraga Way frontage, which would require approval from the city's public works department.

The City of Orinda received an application from the gas station owner and FirstElement for the addition in Dec. 2020, with the initial vent stack height exceeding the Downtown Commercial (DC) maximum building height of 35 feet and subsequently being reduced for compliance.

Existing setback exceptions for the new canopy and tank will remain in place, as only the height of the structure will be increased to allow for hydrogen fueling vehicles.

"We always look at the community first," said Dr. Shane Stephens, principal and chief development officer of FirstElement Fuel, Inc.

A founder of the True Zero fuel brand along with Joel Ewanick and Tim Brown, Stephens said the fuel company searches throughout the state for "good early adopter communities," noting that Orinda possesses that quality with its population size and growth. Orinda's status as a commuter city also factored into the decision to pursue a hydrogen-fueling station in the city, said Stephens.

FirstElement Fuel, Inc., owner of the True Zero hydrogen fuel brand, was

founded in 2013 and has partnered with the State of California and auto manufacturers Honda and Toyota to develop its fuel network. Its first station opened in late 2015. FirstElement's network includes 11 operating Bay Area hydrogen-fueling stations with two under construction in the South Bay.

While allowing people to gain access to True Zero hydrogen fuel across the state's metropolitan areas is the company's goal, another is "to build a statewide network that allows fuel cell vehicle customers to drive seamlessly throughout California," according to their website.

The State of California and automakers collaborate with state agencies to identify adopter communities, said FirstElement's Stephens. FirstElement, in the beginning of their development, targeted the Bay Area.

The by-product from hydrogen consumption in a fuel cell vehicle is water vapor, "with zero harmful emissions," as explained on the True Zero website. The fuel is also produced entirely from domestic resources.

According to Stephens, there are around 14,000 hydrogen-powered cars in California, with roughly 60% of them in Southern California and 40% in the Bay Area.



ANDREA MADISON

The Orinda Union 76 gas station, located at 67 Moraga Way, is set to join FirstElement Fuel, Inc.'s current operating network of 11 hydrogen-fueling stations in the Bay Area.

The overall process of the hydrogen tank project has been "smooth," Stephens said, while also acknowledging that it has taken a lot of work behind the scenes to get the project ready.

"The City of Orinda has been fantastic to work with," said Stephens.

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

2022 Year to Date | Laura Abrams

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COMMUNITY CONCERN

Alert Employee Thwarts Attempted Burglary at Siam Orchid Restaurant

By JEFF HEYMAN
Staff Writer

In the early hours of Tuesday morning, Aug. 30, a black car parked in front of Siam Orchid, a Thai restaurant in Orinda Village, causing James Bice to become suspicious.

Bice, an employee at Siam Orchid, said he noticed the car at about 1 a.m. in the usually deserted lot. He thought the situation odd since generally no one is parked at that hour in the small parking lot in front of Siam Orchid and the other shops in the small shopping center across the street from the Orinda Library.

Siam Orchid offers northern Thai cuisine and operates a full-service bar. The eatery, which serves both dine-in and dine-out

lunch and dinner, is located at 23 Orinda Way, along the Village’s main thoroughfare and not far from the Orinda Police Department and City Hall.

Staying late to clean up after a particularly busy day, Bice turned out the lights and used the restroom. At approximately 1:30 a.m., Bice heard a loud crash and saw a man trying to enter the restaurant through the now-broken glass front door.

“The burglar saw me,” said Bice, “and ran away.”

When Bice rushed to the front of the shop, he said the black car was already gone.

Bice immediately went to the home of the owner, Pepsi Phunmongkol, to inform him of what had happened. Bice called police and an Orinda officer responded



JEFF HEYMAN

James Bice, an employee at Siam Orchid, an Orinda Thai restaurant, thought a car parked outside the eatery in the middle of the night was suspicious. Shortly after noticing the car, Bice heard a loud crash and witnessed a man trying to enter the restaurant through the freshly broken front door. Bice was able to scare the burglar off.



dickling.blogspot.com

to the scene. Orinda Police detectives are actively working on the case, according to Phunmongkol, but have not yet issued a final report.

Phunmongkol told his employees at Siam Orchid to be strong, saying it was tough right now for staff after the break-in attempt.

“For myself, I think we must be strong, be prepared,” Phunmongkol said. “I’ve been in business for three decades and I wonder why we were targeted now.”

Bice added, “We’ve had no problems for 10 years, but a year ago, someone also tried to break in.”

That attempt was also unsuccessful.

Bice added he hopes this doesn’t signal a new trend facing local businesses in Orinda.

According to crime statistics posted on the Orinda Police Department’s website, there were 12 commercial burglaries from August 2021 through August 2022, which is down from 15 during the same period in 2020-21.

Orinda Police Chief Ryan Sullivan,

confirming the numbers, said he hasn’t seen an increase in commercial burglaries in the City.


Nonetheless, Sullivan, who began his appointment as the City’s most senior public safety official on Sept. 20, 2021, said it pays for businesses to be prepared.

“Businesses should have bright outdoor lighting, a security system with an audible alarm and good cameras that can pick up indoor and outdoor activity,” Sullivan said. “And don’t leave your daily sales in the till.”

“I wish I had a magic answer to what businesses can do to be safe, but it comes down to taking basic security precautions,” Sullivan added.

Sullivan stressed that not only do basic security measures, especially prominently placed video cameras, deter criminals, but they also aid the police should a crime take place by providing images of suspects and their vehicles.

“Smile, You’re on Camera” signs are also [SEE BURGLARY page 7]





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NEWS BRIEFS / POLICE

Around Town: Orinda News Briefs



BONNIE FEND

The American Association of University Women (AAUW), Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (OML) branch is collecting sneakers to raise money for local scholarships. Pictured above (L-R) Jill Eberhard, Mary Ann McLeod, Joan Foster, Laura Wittenberg, Linda Bochte and Jill Fernald.

SNEAKERS 4 SCHOLARSHIPS

If sneakers are taking up too much room in the closet, consider donating them to AAUW-OML (American Association of University Women, Orinda Moraga Lafayette branch). The AAUW-OML team reuses and recycles them to earn money for scholarships for local high school seniors at Miramonte, Campolindo, Acalanes and students in the Saint Mary's College High Potential Program. These scholarships are based on community engagement. Drop off outdated or new sneakers at one of the following locations: Moraga Hardware, Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building or Rossmoor Gym. For more information, call 925.963.4523.

AAUW-OML Paper Shredding Event

AAUW-OML's annual secure paper shredding event, rain or shine, is slated for Oct. 8, 9 a.m. to noon, located at 5A RentASpace, 455 Moraga Road, Moraga. This fundraiser is for Tech Trek STEM Camp, which helps send Lamorinda girls to Tech Trek STEM camp. Pulverize papers and destroy computer hard drives and DVDs on site. Drive up to shred. Cost is \$10/file box and \$10/HD or stack of CDs. Local AAUW-OML volunteers unload from cars, empty boxes and return boxes to each car. For more information, visit <https://m.facebook.com/299644040511456/>.

Compiled by Charleen Earley, who can be reached at editor@theorindanews.com.



POLICE BLOTTER

August 16 through September 15

Calls for Service

- Adult - Missing: 1 incident
- Armed Robbery: 1 incident: Orinda Way
- Assault: 1 incident
- Burglary, Auto: 3 incidents: Camino Sobrante, Brookwood Rd., Wilder Rd.
- Burglary, Commercial: 1 incident: Camino Sobrante
- Burglary, Residential: 3 incidents: Diablo View Dr., Via Orinda, Southpoint Rd.
- Civil Disturbance: 2 incidents
- Death - Non-Criminal: 2 incidents
- Failure to Obey Officer: 1 incident
- Fraud/Forgery: 2 incidents
- Grand Theft: 1 incident
- Hit & Run Felony: 1 incident: Moraga Way

- Hit & Run Misdemeanor: 1 incident
- Identity Theft: 1 incident
- Outside Assist: 1 incident
- Property Found: 4 incidents
- Service to Citizen: 1 incident
- Tow: 3 incidents
- Vandalism: 3 incidents
- Vehicle Theft: 4 incidents: Canon Dr., Bel Air Ct., Ardor Dr., Albo Ct.

Arrests

- Driving with Suspended/Revoked License: 1 arrest
- Drugs/Narcotics Violation: 2 arrests
- DUI Misdemeanor: 1 arrest
- Warrant Arrest: 4 arrests

– Compiled by David Dierks
Assistant Editor

◆ ESPINOZA from page 2

Theatre and to form a sense of community among music lovers.”

He added, “After these past two years, we’ve realized just how important this unity through music really is. Music provides a sense of nourishment for the soul and for the community.”

Seating is reserved, with tickets rang-

ing from \$55 - \$95, with no food or drink minimums. Subscribers enjoy substantial ticket discounts, such as first choice of reserved seats for the season, complimentary drinks and more. Information and tickets for the concert series are available at www.OrindaMovies.com.

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

◆ BURGLARY from page 6

a good deterrent, Sullivan said.

“Basically, you want to make it really uncomfortable for criminals to break-in,” said Sullivan.

Phunmongkol is taking a pragmatic outlook.

“I tell my employees to go back to work, be alert, look around,” Phunmongkol said. “What else can you do?”

Jeff Heyman can be reached at heyman.foto@gmail.com.

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EDITORIAL

Correction

The *Orinda News* sincerely regrets the omission of two candidates in the September article titled, "Orinda's Candidates for Contra Costa County Election Announced," written by Andrea Madison on page 1. Stuart House, running for Orinda City Council, and Linda Delahunt, running for the Orinda Union School District, were

both missing from the story. For unknown reasons, neither name was included in the list of final candidates posted by the Contra Costa County Elections Department by the deadline. Unfortunately, by the time the names were posted, the September issue had already gone to press.

Letters to the Editor

MOFD Board and City Council Need to Work for Orindans

Orinda taxpayers will fund MOFD with \$20.6 million this year; \$2.3 million per firefighter stationed in Orinda. This includes all overhead and 24/7 service, but it only costs MOFD \$1.8 million per firefighter to provide this service.

Where does the additional \$4 million (for "our" nine firefighters) go? To Moraga, which only pays \$1.3 million for each of their eight firefighters.

Our MOFD Board representatives, Steve Danziger and Michael Donner, who are up for election, had four years to remedy this, but have done nothing. They could have increased Moraga's parcel tax, which Moragans agreed to pay three decades ago or saved money by staffing the Moraga ambulance with paramedics instead of expensive firefighters. But they have not.

It is time to give someone else a chance by electing Vince Dell'Aquila and Mike Roemer to replace them.

We also need to elect a City Council – we have six new candidates to choose from – who will insist Orinda's tax dollars to MOFD are used for services in Orinda, as the 1997 City Council promised us they would do when they talked us into forming the MOFD.

Neither the MOFD Board, nor the City Council has ever kept track of how our millions of dollars going to MOFD (\$300 million since MOFD was formed) are spent. It is time to start. We need to use our tax dollars for wildfire prevention, not a subsidy to wealthy Moraga.

- Steve Cohn

Support for Roemer for MOFD

I support Mike Roemer for MOFD Director. I've known Mike for almost 20 years through my lifelong friendship with his son Conor. Mike is deeply knowledgeable about fire safety through his years of volunteer work and has a proven track record in community leadership from his years in the DA's office.

Even more important, Mike cares deeply about his neighbors and has a sense of integrity befitting a reputable community servant.

At a time when fire safety in Lamorinda

is more critical than ever before, we must elect leaders who will prioritize community safety and well-being above niche special interests.

I'm confident, as a MOFD Director, Mike would look after the safety and best interests of all Orinda and Moraga residents in the same way he does his immediate family, and would devote fair and analytical deliberation to every decision.

I hope to never see the day Orinda is seriously threatened by wildfires, but the reality is we face growing danger with the passing of each year.

We need protectors on the MOFD board to ensure our community is ready for all eventualities.

Based on my almost 20 years of being around Mike, I can confidently say if you value safety and integrity, and want a MOFD director who will make the same decisions for the community that he would for his own family, then voting for Mike is the easiest choice you'll make during this election cycle.

- Declan McManus

Support for Hasler, Dell'Aquila and Roemer for MOFD Board

We've had a sea change in awareness about living sustainably with wildfire. It turns out we are as vulnerable as any of the other towns and cities devastated by a wildfire. Our community has responded in many wonderful ways. We've started Firewise groups; voted in Measure R, to be used for mitigation and prevention education; cleared our roofs of leaves and created a defensible space around our homes.

There is one more piece to this prevention pie. We need the Moraga Orinda Fire Department (MOFD) Board of Directors to be behind the community's efforts to prevent a wildfire, too.

While MOFD does an outstanding job in so many ways, the board has not valued those prevention efforts as much as we need them to. I've been to many MOFD board meetings and the three board members currently up for re-election have been excellent about fire suppression issues, but efforts to prevent fire have mostly been achieved without their support.

This year, an election year, they have

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Garden/Landscaping		Coldwell Banker	
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shown a bit more openness to fire prevention goals. We need new blood. All three of the challengers have been deeply involved with Moraga and Orinda communities for years. They are independent, with no obligations to any single interest groups. I have met with and endorse all of them.

Please consider Greg Hasler (Division 1), Vince Dell'Aquila (Division 3) and Mike Roemer (Division 4) for the MOFD Board on Election Day.

- Melanie Light

Michael Roemer for MOFD Board

We have been residents of Orinda for the past 20 years, where we have raised our family. Our children attended Glorietta Elementary, OIS and Miramonte. We have enjoyed living in this great community, having developed many deep and long-lasting friendships. One of our dear friends is Michael Roemer, who is running for a seat on MOFD Board. We have known Michael and his beautiful family, his wife Julie, children Conor and Erin from the day our children attended Glorietta Elementary School – over a decade ago.

Michael has many strong qualities that make him an ideal candidate, to not only

serve, but also do an amazing job making our community an even safer place to live and raise a family. Michael's strong intellect, integrity, humbleness, desire to make our community and the world, a better place to live, truly sets him apart. Join the Akazawa family in supporting the Roemer family. Michael is a rare type of leader, which we strongly need more of. Please elect him to serve on the MOFD board.

- Dean and Catherine Akazawa

Sleepy Hollow Traffic Safety Concerned Parents for Stuart House

Stuart House has been exceptionally receptive to our concerns regarding traffic safety around our schools. He has been a wonderful sounding board and someone we would consider a mentor in navigating the intricacies of TSAC (Traffic Safety Advisory Committee). We support Stuart House for City Council.

- Dana Wentworth and Robert Schroeder

Stuart House for City Council

I'm proud to support Stuart House for City Council. His broad experience in facilities management and logistics will

[SEE LETTERS page 10]

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

Letters to the Editor for the November issue are due Oct. 8.

For advertising rates, contact Kathy Enzerink at 252-626-2109 (kathy@theorindanews.com), Jill Gelster at 925.528.9225 (jill@aspenconsult.net) or Trish Ward at 510.685.1437 (trish@theorindanews.com). The deadline for the November issue is October 8.

SCHOOLS

County Office of Education Reaches Agreement with School Association

By ANDREA MADISON
Staff Writer

A strike between the Contra Costa County School Education Association (CCCSEA) and the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) has been averted with an agreement to give certificated CCCSEA members a 5% raise in wages.

In the wake of this victory, the CCCSEA continues to advocate for smaller class sizes, adequate curriculum, mental health resources and safety of both students and instructors in county schools.

“We essentially would like smaller class sizes, not only for safety for the students, but safety for our staff,” former CCCSEA President Christina Morabe said, citing incidents in which students and staff have been injured in the classroom.

The CCCOE, which serves over 176,000 students in the ninth largest student population in the state, including the county juvenile hall, “work[s] with the most vulnerable students in the county,” added Morabe.

Schools are not being provided with the curriculum instructors want to teach, she said, and there is a lack of adequate supplies.

“We have to make sure we have the resources and the manpower to help these students,” Morabe said, noting students at the juvenile hall have asked for more mental health support. “We absolutely need more mental health resources.”

The pandemic created a two-year interruption to student learning, with students missing “a good portion” of their education as a result, Morabe said. She noted the need

to backtrack to get students where they need to be academically.

“We don’t have the curriculum to teach them,” she said.

In an Aug. 11 press release, a livable wage for educators was listed among the issues the school education association negotiated with the county office of education. The agreement between the two was reached Aug. 31 and gives a retroactive raise to CCCSEA members, dating back to July 1, 2021, according to the CCCOE.

The county office settled at a 5% salary increase for both bargaining units, said Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools Lynn Mackey. This includes CCCSEA and Public Employees Union, Local One.

Mackey echoed Morabe’s statement about working with a vulnerable student population, noting class sizes will be re-evaluated next year.

“We will relook at those issues again and bring those to the table,” said Mackey.

As for the recent negotiations, Mackey said, “I feel good that we settled, and I know we will continue to work together in the future.”

According to the Contra Costa County Office of Education’s website, its 700 COE educators and support staff, as well as the county superintendent, help support 18 school districts by providing “special and alternative education, supplemental programs, budgetary oversight, technical assistance and internet access.”

The CCCOE serves incarcerated and homeless students, foster youth and

[SEE SCHOOLS page 24]



AMELIA CASSAR

Orinda ONE welcomed Emily Allen to the team as executive director. Emily and Brad Allen have two daughters who attend Miramonte High School. Pictured (L-R) is **Vivi Leach, Emily Allen, Brad Allen** and **Gemma Leach**.

ONE Orinda Welcomes Emily Allen

By ANNABELLA BOOTH
Contributing Writer

The Orinda Network for Education (ONE), organized in Spring, 2020, welcomed Emily Allen to the team as executive director.

ONE works with the Orinda Union School District, Acalanes Union High School District and parents’ clubs to distribute donated funds to various programs at each school. These contribute toward electives, teachers, emphasis area programs, teacher aids, guidance and wellness, technology, field trips and more.

President of ONE, Brian Rogers, is happy to have Allen on the team.

“We are so excited that she is going to bring her talent and experience to ONE, to help create and sustain high quality Orinda public schools,” said Rogers.

Allen, who hails from Walnut Creek, said

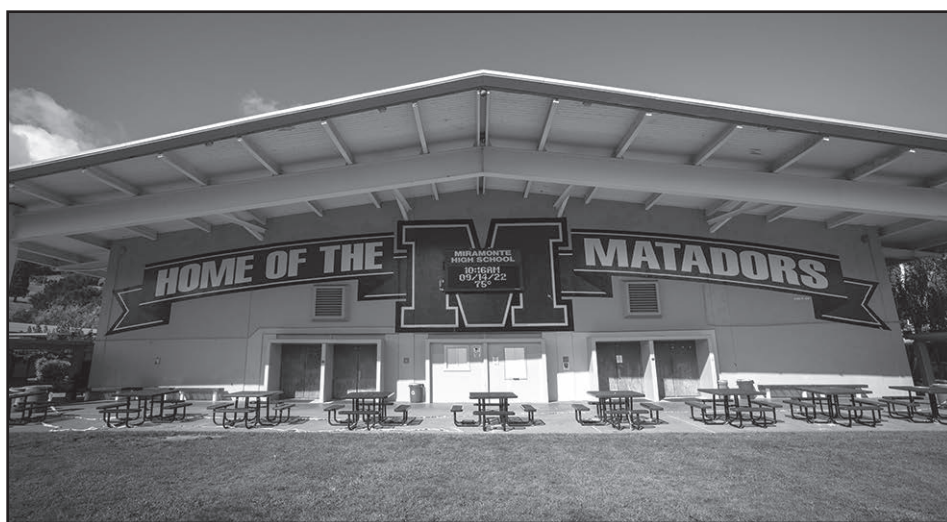
she’s always had her eyes on the schools in the area. She moved to Orinda to start a family with her husband and send their daughters to the local schools in order to receive quality education.

To date, ONE has collected \$4.6 million in donations from parents, businesses and community members.

“To have Emily leading this and being able to really provide support and get that message out into the community of how important these dollars are and how well they are used in our schools, will guarantee a high quality, equitable experience for all of our Orinda students going forward,” Rogers added.

Allen’s previous work includes fundraising, community leadership and non-profit management. She served as vice-president of development for Special Olympics Northern California. She related she’s

[SEE ALLEN page 27]



JEFF HEYMAN

Orinda’s **Miramonte High School**, which is part of the Acalanes Union High School District, is one of the schools operating under the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) and had an enrollment of 1,182 students for the 2020-’21 school year. CCCOE recently approved a 5% raise for teachers and classified employees.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR CONTINUED

◆ LETTERS from page 8

be important and helpful for the entire community.

- Carol Brown

Support House for City Council

In the time Stuart House has lived in our Glorietta neighborhood, he has helped make it a more friendly and safe place for local kids to walk to school. I believe the knowledge and experience he will bring to our City Council will make all of Orinda a better place to live.

- Tim O' Brien

Miramonte School Garden Demolition Completely Unnecessary

I was shocked and dismayed when I recently discovered that under the cover of COVID-19, the three student garden sites at Miramonte H.S. were razed. As a master gardener and parent volunteer, I installed a habitat garden the "Poppy Patch" in 2003 with the help of my Nature Club and Barbara Denny, who later became the school's first environmental science teacher. Already on site was a fenced, raised bed garden and shed installed years previously.

Over the years, with Barbara's support (she won Orinda's William Penn Mott, Jr. Environmental Award in 2011) amid multiple challenges, the gardens flourished. Her successor, Chrissy Orangio, with the backing of former principal Julia Parks, extended them. An organic garden with brightly painted fence posts and nine irrigated raised beds, a meditation garden with benches and flowers funded by the Lafayette Garden Club and a permaculture "food forest" with a new greenhouse donated by the Orinda Garden Club, multiple Eagle Scout projects and the aforementioned shed, repaired and painted Miramonte green by students – are now gone.

What remains is weeds and rubble.

These gardens were a resource for the life sciences, health, foods, art, journalism, photography and Special Education classes, and all served as outdoor class-

rooms and meeting places. Destroying this infrastructure was an expensive and impudent endeavor. Acalanes and Campolindo high schools retain their gardens.

Our students, their teachers, our community and Barbara's memory (sadly, she passed in July) deserve better.

- Linda Mizes

Support for Donner for MOFD

I'd like to recommend incumbent Michael Donner for Moraga Orinda Fire Protection District Director, District 4. His priority is keeping our district safe and he has been a great success. His decisions are based on firefighting experience – in other words – he knows what he is doing. He has made sound financial decisions so that even in a down turn, we won't face layoffs again. His endorsements are a list of people who know about fire safety, know about public policy and how to retain and recruit the best firefighters.

Michael has dedicated his life to public service, volunteering in countless ways as a coach, a mentor and helping our school districts with emergency preparedness. We have worked together on several non-profit boards and projects that include Random Acts of Kindness, MOCHA and countless food and clothing drives where Michael personally delivers assistance to fire victims around California.

He is out in the world making a difference, not in an office thinking about politics. Michael has the best interest of our community foremost on his mind, while also advocating for fair wages and a healthy morale amongst the brave folks who keep us safe.

- Lara Dutto

Defacing Signs Must Stop

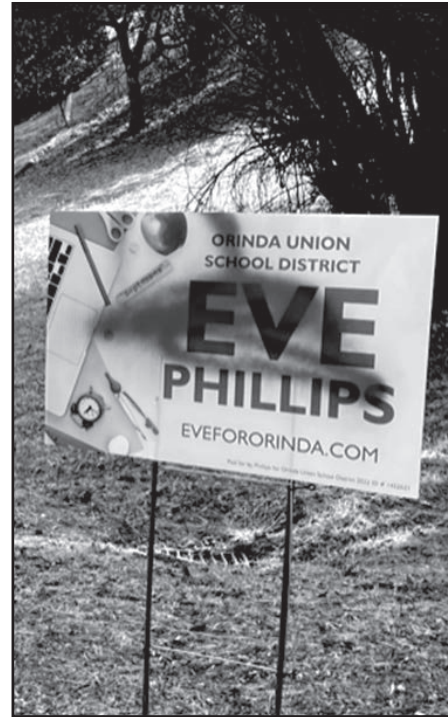
In violation of Designated Approved Locations in The Public Right of Way Resolution 24-14, Orinda Municipal Code section 17.18.6 (B), election signs were defaced with red paint.

The defaced signs are located at Saint

Stephens Drive at El Nido Ranch Road and Saint Stephen's at Hidden Valley Road, referring to Resolution 24-14, Orinda municipal code section 17.18.6 (B). The defacing appears to be at random.

I hope we can find out who is responsible and do something about this totally irresponsible and reprehensible behavior.

- Chris Kniel



CHRIS KNIEL

One of the election signs defaced by red paint.

Dell'Aquila and Roemer to MOFD

I personally know Vince Dell'Aquila and Mike Roemer to be highly qualified candidates for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Board. Their outstanding skills and passionate community volunteerism will be a great asset to the MOFD board, plus they have a solid commitment to protect our communities and families from wildfires.

- Sue Severson

New Members for MOFD

Orinda needs independent elected representatives to properly represent us. In 2018, when our current MOFD board members Michael Donner and Steve Danziger were elected, over 90% of their financial support, \$24,000, came from special interests outside the community.

Orinda's most urgent need is wildfire prevention, which "our" fire department, MOFD should be leading. But the MOFD Board has refused to spend any money on this, requiring the residents of Orinda to tax themselves an additional \$3 million a year (Measure R sales tax) to deal with this.

Meanwhile, the \$20 million we are paying MOFD is being misspent, with the service to Orinda only costing the district \$16 million. The other \$4 million a year should be spent for fire prevention in Orinda, not elsewhere in the district.

We need a change in leadership. Support Dell'Aquila and Roemer. Visit www.VinceForMOFD.com and www.MikeRoemer4MOFD.com.

- Mark Cutone

Support Dell'Aquila and Roemer

Orinda could benefit from new leadership on the MOFD Board. These candidates have no ties to outside interests and are committed to Orinda's best interests. I believe Dell'Aquila (www.VinceforMOFD.com) and Roemer (www.MikeRoemer4MOFD.com) could do the job.

Wildfires are a major concern to all in this community, yet not enough has been done to address the issue. New guidance from these long-standing community members to address supportive wildfire prevention strategies is needed. Orinda needs new advocates on the MOFD Board of Directors.

- Wendy Bradfield

Dell'Aquila and Roemer for MOFD

Orinda and Moraga residents were upset in May when there was an item on the MOFD agenda to consider dissolving the MOFD and consolidate with Contra Costa Fire. Due to public outcry, that agenda item was never discussed. Most of us prefer local control over our own fire department and our own tax dollars. In the last MOFD board election, incumbents were supported by \$22,000 in contributions from outside our district. Let's keep the MOFD board locally funded. For that reason, I urge voters to support Vince Dell'Aquila and Mike Roemer for the MOFD board, two candidates who have the best interests of Orinda and Moraga in mind.

- Kathleen Finch

Edda Coleman for OUSD Board

I have had the opportunity to spend some time with Edda in an effort to understand her positions on issues critical to the education of our children. She is smart, thoughtful and has done her homework. Please join me in voting for Edda Collins Coleman for one of the three open seats on the Orinda Union School District Board (OUSD).

As you decide on your vote for school board, here are some things I have learned about Edda:

As a parent of three children, Edda has been an active part of the OIS Parents' Club Board and a school volunteer.

Edda is committed to sustaining and enhancing the OUSD curriculum.

Edda's work experience has taught her how to build consensus and partnerships.

Edda understands that Orinda is changing and she is in a good position to represent those interests.

You may learn more about Edda's campaign at <https://www.electedda.com>. Please

[SEE LETTERS page 24]



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ORINDA CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

Candidates for City Council Discuss their Priorities for Orinda

Alex Drexel



Housing Policies

I value the semi-rural nature of our neighborhoods, along with the village feel of our downtown. We should preserve this [SEE DREXEL page 12]

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

The five members of Orinda's City Council are elected volunteers who set policy, give direction to City Staff and make budget decisions. Besides attending twice-monthly council meetings, each Council Member serves on several committees. They also interact with the various levels of government between the city and the state on issues such as transportation, housing and traffic.

This November, six candidates will vie for three available seats: Alex Drexel, Stuart House, Brandyn Iverson, Latika Malkani, Sunil Rajaraman and Janet Riley.

They were asked the following questions:

- 1) How would you reconcile state housing policies with Orinda's unique character and semi-rural setting? (200 words or less)
- 2) Revisions are currently taking place with the Downtown Precise Plan. What do you think of the plan and what strategies/incentives would you use to make Orinda's downtown more vibrant? (300 words or less)
- 3) How would you rank, in order of importance, three areas of need in Orinda? (200 words or less)
- 4) What leadership/management skills/experience do you possess that will make you an effective City Council Member? (150 words or less)

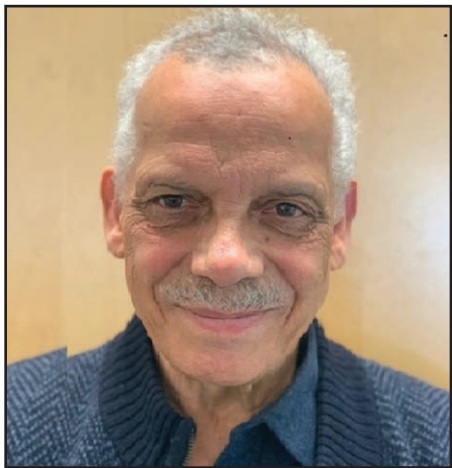
Janet Riley



Housing Policies

One of the biggest challenges that cities like Orinda face is enacting local zoning to maintain the character of the commu- [SEE RILEY page 19]

Stuart House



Housing Policies

We live on a creek, maintain riparian vegetation, have a vegetable garden, a fruit orchard, chickens, a Poodle, and appreciate [SEE HOUSE page 12]

Brandyn Iverson



Housing Policies

We're going to do our best to make lemonade out of lemons. The State demand for 1,359 units of [SEE IVERSON page 26]

Latika Malkani



Housing Policies

Recognizing California's housing shortage, state law requires each locality to plan for increased housing. Orinda must plan for [SEE MALKANI page 18]

Sunil Rajaraman



Housing Policies

The main issue I am focused on regarding residential real estate is affordable housing for teachers. Part of what makes Orinda [SEE RAJARAMAN page 26]

STUART HOUSE For City Council




Work with me to:

- 🏠 Blend our heritage with our future
- 🏠 Keep our Seniors safe and in Orinda
- 🏠 Support education for ALL students

Support our local businesses AND bring vitality to Orinda!

www.StuartHouseForOrindaCityCouncil2022.com
Email: stuarthouse4orinda@gmail.com



- Passionate* about placemaking and how the built environment can change the way people relate to their town and to each other.
- Proven*, with a JD/MBA and 20+ years experience in real estate development, oversight, entitlement, finance, and investment.
- Prepared* to continue the great work the City Council has already started. As a 3rd term Planning Commissioner (Chair '18-'20), I have the experience and context to keep up all of that momentum on downtown planning, fire safety, and housing policy.


Orinda City Council Candidate

BRANDYN IVERSON

endorsed by all five members of the Orinda City Council

Dennis Fay, Mayor Inga Miller, Vice Mayor

Darlene K. Gee, Councilmember Amy R. Worth, Councilmember Nick Kosla, Councilmember



www.voteiverson.com Brandyn@VoteIverson.com

Political advertisement paid for and approved by Brandyn Iverson for City Council 2022, FPPC #1451433

ORINDA CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

◆ DREXEL from page 11

along with protecting our need to stay safe from wildfire as we navigate well-intended state housing policies. Orinda is required to plan for an additional 1359 housing units in the next eight years. We must diligently lobby for a more realistic mandate so it's sensitive to Orinda's limitations.

A lot can be done if we demand good design from developers; slopes of parcels can be used to add scale to a building but not necessarily make that size apparent from the street. Upper stories can be set back, architectural styles can be softened and the materials used can make buildings blend into the natural environment. Landscaping around buildings and sidewalks are also important to preserve a natural feel.

Site identification is important. If development is concentrated in only a few sites, that development is likely to be out of scale with the town.

Using development to restore San Pablo Creek is a fantastic opportunity to enhance Orinda's semi-rural feel as well as reduce the chance of flooding, better connect the town with trails and make downtown more desirable for visitors.

Downtown Precise Plan

There are things to like in the DPP. Support for local businesses is essential in keeping Orinda friendly and unique. Developing attractive streetscapes, improving walkability and taking advantage of the creek's natural features is smart.

Encouraging a good mix of businesses as well as making sure the ones that generate foot traffic are on the ground floors is also key. Creating an anchor such as an additional grocery store will also help bring more foot traffic and give Safeway some competition.

Requiring developments to include public art and civic spaces such as plazas and pocket parks, as well as good screening and

planting are important.

Clarity provided by the objective design standards; higher density and a mixed-use approach, as well as helping coordinate developments that cross parcels will provide better outcomes for developers. Many in our community will want to downsize in the coming years. I think focusing on at-market senior housing, in addition to housing for our teachers, firefighters and city workers will "prime the pump" for our downtown economy.

Let's make sure we don't give up more than we must for a better downtown. It's a balance. In a city survey, almost 60% of respondents valued the small town feel of our downtown. People appreciate the hamlet Orinda is amongst the built-up areas around it. I worry the current approach to the Downtown Core zone is too intense. Five story buildings 60 feet high where Geppetto's is across from the golf course? Lafayette and Moraga don't have this scale and density. I wonder if our small town can even support this level of commercial activity; there aren't enough of us. We should plan for something that's more realistic and becoming of our town. The more moderate approach of the Downtown General Zone in the DPP is more like it.

Three Areas of Need

Fire safety is most important. All of Orinda is in a very high or high fire hazard safety zone. Fuel reduction, home hardening, and planning for a wildfire event with evacuation routes and strategies to keep us all safe, including our school children, seniors and other vulnerable groups.

Second, we need a downtown that better serves our residents. It's difficult for businesses to survive downtown. Allowing for some additional density and mixed use will be part of the solution to incentivize development. However, I don't think we have to sacrifice the character of our town

[SEE DREXEL page 26]

◆ HOUSE from page 11

our quiet semi-rural home.

Since I moved to California 20 years ago from New Mexico – where I built over 1300 houses for Indigenous people who lived in substandard housing – it was clear to me that one of most pressing problems for Californians was the lack of sufficient, affordable housing. My first endeavor was to support ballot Proposition 46 – The Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund Act of 2002.

For this community and political organizing, the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH) awarded me a Certificate of Appreciation for Local Advocacy and Leadership. I also received the East Bay Housing Organization Affordable Housing Leadership Award which states: "Because of your leadership, \$118 Million have been awarded to the East Bay from Proposition 46 Funds & Over 3,000 East Bay families have affordable homes."

I continue to advocate for affordable housing for senior citizens who live in our city, as well as teachers, police officers, fire fighters, city and school employees who work in Orinda. I believe we can bridge our differences with state housing policies with creativity and thoughtful planning.

Downtown Precise Plan

I am pleased with the progress of the Downtown Precise Plan and also happy to see goals to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and climate resiliency through the design of new development projects included.

I support OrindaVision's goals to preserve Orinda's history and sense of community; to generate vibrancy in downtown; to improve its commercial environment; and to realize the full potential of underutilized property.

I believe making Orinda a destination for fine dining would serve as an anchor

for other small businesses. Orinda sites for Alice Water's Chez Panisse and Danville's Esin would bring those who enjoy gourmet cooking to our city and anchor other businesses without taking away Orinda's charm.

Improving streetscape amenities such as quaint lighting and lush planting as well as pedestrian enhancements, like wider sidewalks, bike racks, attractive trash receptacles and brick inlays, would add to the charm of the downtown. I also understand the importance of having the buy-in of property owners to make any plan successful.

I also support the focus on improvements to San Pablo Creek, including walking paths with safe and convenient pedestrian access.

I was fortunate to attend the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom to study "Environmental and Social Planning" with a focus on the New Towns of England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. I learned valuable lessons about Town Centers, greenbelts and pedestrians within city centers.

When I lived in Detroit, MI, and worked for New Detroit, Inc. (the nation's first urban coalition), I had an important role in the drafting and successful passage of the federal legislation, the Local Public Works and Investment Act of 1976, which provided Public Works support to revitalizing the downtown area of Detroit. I would bring this experience to the revitalizing of downtown. Most importantly, I would listen to the input from stakeholders.

Three Areas of Need

1. Collaboration with the Orinda Union School District and the City of Orinda to help improve our schools with more frequent, joint meetings between two Council Members and two School Board Members, encourage greater communication between

[SEE HOUSE page 18]

VOTE ALEX DREXEL

For

ORINDA CITY COUNCIL

Safety - Revitalize Downtown - Preserve Town Charm



- ☒ Orinda public service: 4+ years working to improve our parks and recreation activities as former Chair and current member of the Parks and Recreation Commission
- ☒ "All In on Orinda": A 10-year resident with 3 young children, fully imbedded in the community - OBA, Cub Scouts, Wager Ranch, St Marks, OPP, OYS
- ☒ Endorsed by all 5 current City Council Members:
 - Dennis Fay, Mayor
 - Inga Miller, Vice Mayor
 - Amy Worth, Councilmember, Former Mayor
 - Nick Kosla, Councilmember, Former chair of the Planning Commission
 - Darlene Gee, Councilmember, Former Mayor
- ☒ Executive experience motivating, managing and driving change into large organizations

Safety - Revitalize Downtown - Preserve Town Charm

www.alex4orinda.com

MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT CANDIDATES

Candidates for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District Give Their Views

By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

The Moraga Orinda Fire District has a five-member board of directors representing five districts. Charged with providing strategic leadership, policy and direction and fiscal oversight, the directors are elected to a four-year term and represent a specific district.

District 1 has Greg Hasler and Christopher Young vying for one position with the District 2 representative not up for re-election. Since District 1 is only voted on by Moraga residents, we did not include those candidates in this article. In District 3, which comprises parts of Moraga and Orinda, there are two candidates for the one position: incumbent Steven Danziger and Vince Dell'Aquila. In District 4, incumbent Michael Donner and Mike Roemer will vie for the one position available.

The candidates were asked the following questions:

1. Rank in order of importance your three top priorities for MOFD. (300 words or less)
2. MOFD has been actively educating residents on fire prevention and "hardening" of homes. What additional efforts do you propose to keep Orindans safe? (350 words or less)
3. Fiscal accountability including pension obligations, has long been a hot topic for MOFD. How would you approach these on-going concerns? (200 words or less)
4. What expertise will you bring to the board? (150 words or less)

Steve Danziger



Top Priorities

Highest priority is enhancing our Fire Prevention programming. The accomplishments of this Board have resulted in a better prepared and more fire safe District. Major actions included: home hardening grants, hiring full-time Fuels Mitigation Specialists, completing the first of two fuel breaks, and implementing one of the most

[SEE DANZIGER page 14]

Vince Dell'Aquila



Top Priorities

1. Focusing on fire prevention while still providing state-of-the-art fire and emergency medical services.
2. Be a budget watchdog to ensure transparency and responsible use of Moraga-Orinda Fire District funds.
3. Utilize advanced technology to leverage Moraga-Orinda Fire District's

[SEE DELL'AQUILA page 20]

Mike Donner



Top Priorities

Fire prevention is my number one priority for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD). When I took office four years ago, the MOFD had three part-time aids and a fire marshal. We now have three full-time fuel mitigation specialists and a new fire marshal that has updated the fire

[SEE DONNER page 14]

Mike Roemer



Top Priorities

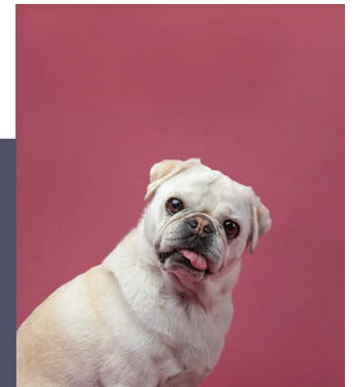
1. Fiscal responsibility. Building reserves to outlast future economic downturns and rebuilding our aging fire stations.
2. Fire Prevention. Spend a larger percentage of our budget on home hardening and fire prevention to make our community able to be defended from

[SEE ROEMER page 21]

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CANDIDATES FORUMS

ORINDA CITY COUNCIL FORUM

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 6 PM

Alex Drexel
Stuart House
Brandyn Iverson

Latika Malkani
Sunil Rajaraman
Janet Riley

MOFD & OUSD FORUMS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13

6:00 to 7:30 pm

MOFD (District 3)

Steve Danziger
Vince Dell'Aquila

MOFD (District 4)

Michael Donner
Michael Roemer

7:30 to 9:00 pm

OUSD

Michelle Chang
Edda Collins Coleman
Linda Delehunt
Eve Phillips
Katie Shogan

Send questions for Candidates to forum@orindaassociation.org by Oct. 3 (City Council) and Oct. 10 (MOFD and OUSD). The event will be live streamed on Zoom. Details on our website.



Links and more information:
www.orindaassociation.org/forums

925-254-0800

RE-ELECT

STEVEN DANZIGER

MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT
DIVISION 3



- 3+ Decades in Public Service
- 20 Yrs Oakland Fire Admin
- Masters Public Administration
- Chair Orinda Parks & Rec Commission
- CERT Volunteer
- MOFD Ambassador
- 100% Attendance Record

- Increase Fire Prevention Programs
- Restore Dedicated Ambulance Staff in Orinda
- Provide Strategic Leadership & Fire Expertise
- Continue Efficient Budget Management
- Construct New Station 41 in Moraga
- Responsive & Accessible

EXPERIENCED LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY

Paid for by Steven Danziger for MOFD Director District 3 2022. FPFC Pending

MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT CANDIDATES

◆ DANZIGER from page 13

comprehensive effective fire codes in the state. I support strengthening these ongoing efforts and remain focused on making our District safer.

From 2007-2013, MOFD staffed a dedicated ambulance crew at Station 45 in Orinda. Due to financial difficulties, this model was discontinued and reverted to the current cross staffing in which the fire crew staffs the ambulance when responding to EMS incidents. This requires taking the fire engine out of service for the length of the call and creates a fire coverage gap. In June 2019, I requested a special meeting to discuss increasing staffing to the former model. After several delays, the Board recently made progress and decided follow-up is needed to review/analyze the various staffing models. I received 250 emails supporting increased staffing and none opposed. I intend to continue discussing this issue with the goal of making it happen. There will be budget impacts, but it is a safer model for the District, for your firefighters and is the right thing to do.

As your director, I take my fiduciary responsibility seriously. Financial accountability, monitoring and transparency is a priority. Due largely to an increase in property tax revenue and prudent decisions by this Board, our District's finances are much stronger now than four years ago. Reserve funds are on track to reach our 50% goal by the end of the year, pension/benefit liabilities payment schedule is on track and the Board will be able to consider new programs and staffing options.

Keeping Orindans Safe

We are fortunate to have Chief Winnacker leading the charge to make our District as safe as possible from the threat of wildfire. With support from this Board the District looks different today than it did four years ago. With that said, there is still work to

be done. I would like MOFD to increase education/outreach efforts. With limited resources, the District is doing a great job, but more focus is needed. During the next budget cycle, I will present for discussion the possibility of adding a new position with wide ranging District education functions that will be geared toward getting more property owners to comply with our code and as a result, making us all safer.

Last year, work was completed on the North Orinda Shaded Fuel Break and the district has now received a state grant for a second fuel break along the East Bay hills from Highway 24 to Canyon and to the Lafayette border. However, the State does not provide funds for on-going maintenance. I would like the Board to use whatever means they can to get the public entity property owners to maintain those fuel breaks. Without continuing mitigation work, these areas will revert back to their former condition in a matter of years.

In 2023, we will have the opportunity to revise our fire code. The new code accounts for changes in technology, climate and building materials. I will work hard and represent you in all discussions on this important piece of legislation.

Fiscal Responsibility

The issue of pension liability is not unique to MOFD. The problem is nationwide to the tune of trillions of dollars. Compared to many jurisdictions, we are in better shape. During the four years I have been on the Board, we have continued to aggressively fund our pension and benefit liabilities. We have a sophisticated software program as well as consultants that guide us on payments. This Board has made great progress in paying these debts and one of my priorities when, re-elected, will be to continue in this manner. Our Long-Range Financial Plan now projects that the debts will be paid in approximately 12 years.

[SEE DANZIGER page 20]

◆ DONNER from page 13

code. The fire marshal created one of the strongest fire prevention models in the state of California and is currently presenting fire code to Contra Costa County to enhance fire protection county-wide. We need to continue our efforts in inspections, compliance, outreach, education, home hardening, Firewise communities, chipping and grant programs. I believe a robust fire prevention program will decrease fire insurance cancellations and prevent policy hikes. Additionally, I am currently working with the Orinda mayor and city council members on measure R tax revenue to effectively create a fire safe community.

Managing the MOFD finances is my second priority. The MOFD currently has an excellent financial standing after four hard years of work. The pension liabilities are 90% funded and the pension obligation fund has increased from several hundred thousand dollars to over 6.5 million dollars. The OPEB fund has increased from \$80,000 in 2018 to over 2.5 million dollars. The reserve funds have grown from 17% to approximately 48% of the annual operating budget. The MOFD is well positioned to maintain normal staffing without decreasing service should an economic downturn occur.

I would like to restore staffing at Station 45 in Orinda with a designated ambulance crew. In 2013, the Board voted to decrease staffing. Firefighters now cross-staff an ambulance and a fire engine in downtown Orinda. This is a complex issue that I am currently studying as an MOFD board member. I will make sound decisions for a safe and fiscally responsible staffing model for the MOFD.

Keeping Orindans Safe

Fire prevention is my top priority, and I will continue to support our fire chief with our shared vision of district safety. I will focus on home hardening grants, fire in-

spection, increased compliance, outreach, education, defensible space and supporting our Firewise communities. My 40 years of fire experience and deep knowledge of fire prevention will help guide our neighborhoods to be fire safe communities.

I am proud to have contributed with the expansion of our fire prevention community outreach. In 2018, we had zero Firewise households, we now have 30 Firewise groups with over 2,500 households in the program. Community outreach is a critical component to creating a fire safe community. My firefighting and volunteer experience provides for a natural fit in our current community outreach.

I will continue to support fire grants for fuel mitigation projects to make our community fire safe. I supported the North Orinda Shaded Fuel Break, a challenging project spanning 17 miles crossing boundaries with East Bay Regional Parks, East Bay Utility District, UC Berkeley, private owners and many more. I am now supporting the newly formed East Bay Tunnel Fuel Break spanning through the town of Moraga and the Community of Canyon. We received a \$6.5 million dollar grant for this project.

Fiscal Responsibility

Throughout my term as an MOFD board member, I have maintained a strong fiscal accountability. I helped increase our reserve fund from 17% to approximately 48% of our annual operating budget. Additionally, I helped increase the OPEB (other post-employment benefits) contributions. The irrevocable trust had a balance of 80,000 in 2018, which now has roughly \$2.4 million. The pension obligations are currently 90% funded. MOFD has contributed millions of dollars into our pension stabilization fund, and recently just paid off our pension bond. This has all been done while giving our MOFD firefighters,

[SEE DONNER page 20]

MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT



- I have fully supported our fire chief in his fire prevention efforts. The chief and I have a shared vision for district safety
- 4 decades of public Service
- Safety of the District is my number one priority
- Continue our increased efforts in Fire Prevention
- Restore Dedicated Ambulance Staffing in Orinda

Endorsed By:

State of California Democratic Party, Democratic Party of Contra Costa County, Lamorinda Democratic Club, Moraga Orinda Professional Firefighters Association, Orinda Teachers Association, California Professional Firefighters, International Association Of Firefighters, Matt Moran former Orinda Union School District President, Sarah Butler Contra Costa Board of Education President, Eve Phillips former Mayor of Orinda, Brian Offtedal Contra Costa County Fire Commissioner, San Ramon Firefighters, Alameda County Firefighters, Oakland Firefighters, Retired Assistant Chief Richmond Emon Usher, Contra Costa Firefighters, Retired Chief Vallejo current San Ramon Board Director Don Parker, Contra Costa Labor Council AFL-CIO, Diane Dwyer, Lecturer UC Berkeley Retired News Reporter, Local Business Leaders and many more.

ORINDA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT CANDIDATES

Candidates for OUSD Board Discuss Challenges for Schools

Michelle Chang



By SALLY HOGARTY
Executive Editor

The Orinda Union School District's Board of Trustees functions as the legislative body of the district and establishes policies and goals by which the school district is operated. Five citizens are elected to serve overlapping terms of four years each. They are elected at-large by the registered voters of the district and generally meet on the second Monday of each month.

Currently, three of the five board positions are up for election. Five non-incumbent candidates will vie for the available seats: Michelle Chang, Edda Collins Coleman, Linda Delahunt, Eve Phillips and Mary Kateri Shogan.

The Orinda News asked the candidates the following questions:

- 1) What are the major challenges for our public schools in the next five years? (250 words or less)
- 2) Enrollment at OUSD schools differs widely with Sleepy Hollow experiencing a downturn in enrollment while Wagner Ranch is at or slightly beyond capacity. What suggestions do you have to ensure enrollment at each campus gives students the best opportunity and resources to learn? (200 words or less)
- 3) Despite repairs using bond funds, many OUSD campuses need additional repairs/ updating. How would you maintain campus facilities with the limited funds available? (200 words or less)
- 4) What strengths, skills or special qualities do you bring to the position? (150 words or less)

Katie Shogan



Challenges

The major challenges for OUSD in the next five years are:

- Maintaining high academic standards
- School funding
- Teacher shortages
- Learning loss
- Mental health challenges

[SEE CHANG page 16]

Challenges

The major challenges likely facing our schools in the next five years include teacher shortages, funding shortfalls and facility maintenance. The national teacher shortage impacts all districts across the country, including OUSD. Teachers are the most critical component of a student's educational experience, and educators directly impact academic outcomes. As such, it is imperative our schools are able to retain and attract highly qualified and talented teachers and staff.

Secondly, our public schools are likely to continue to face funding challenges. OUSD receives less state funding per pupil than most districts in the state of California. The annual resource gap is closed through substantial local funding. We are very fortunate to have the support of our community, however, the inadequate state funding will continue to be a challenge for our schools.

Lastly, facility maintenance and upgrades are critical for both safety and student learning. Modernized schools allow students access to relevant technology and are most conducive to current teaching methodologies. Maintenance work and

[SEE SHOGAN page 23]

Edda Collins Coleman



Linda Delahunt



Eve Phillips



Challenges

There are numerous challenges ahead for public schools in the next five years. The top five are: keeping our children safe,

[SEE COLEMAN page 22]

Challenges

I think the major challenges for our public schools over the next five years are as follows: decreasing enrollment

[SEE DELAHUNT page 16]

Challenges

I will focus on three key interconnected issues: academic excellence, finances, and student mental health.

[SEE PHILLIPS page 22]

VOTE KATIE SHOGAN
ORINDA SCHOOL BOARD



- ✓ OUSD Parent
- ✓ Experienced Leader
- ✓ Former Teacher
- ✓ School & Community Volunteer

Vote Eve Phillips for Orinda Union School District!

- * Lamorinda native, Miramonte alum (valedictorian)
- * Elected Orinda City Councilmember 2014-2018 (Mayor 2017)
- * Mom of 4 ages 1 to 6
- * Technology executive
- * MIT EECS & Stanford MBA
- * Endorsed by current & former elected officials from OUSD, Orinda City Council, MOFD, BART, etc
- * Focused on educational excellence, responsible finances and student mental health

Learn more at evefororinda.com

STATE AND LOCAL LEADERSHIP ENDORSEMENTS*

Carol Brown Orinda School Board President	Pat Rudebusch Former Orinda School Board Member
Hillary Weiner Orinda School Board V.P.	Linda Landau Former Orinda School Board Member
Liz Daoust Orinda School Board Member	Inga Miller Vice Mayor of Orinda
Cara Hoxie Orinda School Board Member	Sue Severson Former Orinda City Council & School Board Member
Jason Kaune Orinda School Board Member	
Rebecca Bauer-Kahan CA Assemblymember	

*Partial list - see website for full list of endorsements.

ShoganForSchoolBoard.com

Paid for by Mary Kateri Shogan for Orinda School Board 2022, FPPC # - pending

ORINDA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT CANDIDATES

◆ **CHANG** from page 15

We need to continue to supplement our school funding to maintain our high academic standards. Our schools are funded below the level needed to fully fund the needs in our schools so we must rely on our families to supplement our limited budget. We should partner with businesses and look for other funding opportunities, such as grants, to relieve some of the financial burden on our families.

We have been able to recruit and retain teachers in Orinda because of our reputation of excellence and teacher support. We will need to continue to provide support and other innovative ways to recruit highly skilled teachers from the ever-shrinking pool of teachers in California.

We need to work to make sure all students and all staff feel safe, comfortable, included and thrive in our schools. Due to the pandemic and other events in our world, such as school violence, students have suffered learning loss as well as mental health challenges. It is imperative we work to evaluate individual needs of each student to address learning loss as well as mental health needs and provide support they need to be successful. We must also work to address the mental health and wellness needs of our school staff so they can continue to provide an excellent education at our schools.

Enrollment

It is important to find out why we are seeing a downturn in the enrollment at schools through careful examination of enrollment data, trends at neighboring districts and survey data. This data will allow us to look at trends, make enrollment predictions and plan accordingly. Once we discover the root causes of this shift in enrollment, the board can work with the superintendent to address the root causes, equalize enrollment across our schools and support schools that have changing enrollment patterns.

Making our schools more visible to our community may help with enrollment. Some ways to support this are:

- Schools as community hubs
- Consistent sharing of all the great things happening in our schools through social media and other platforms
- Welcoming our community to participate in our schools through volunteerism and events
- Partnering with community organizations to hold meetings/events

When schools have a strong presence in communities this encourages participation and may impact enrollment as great schools make great communities. Having our schools highlighted will help those in our community to champion our schools to recruit families who send their children

to schools outside of OUSD to join our wonderful school communities.

Campus Facilities

In order to maintain campus facilities, it is imperative to follow a Facilities Master Plan. This plan should prioritize the highest needs first. It should also establish a contingency fund, which could use other sources of funding besides bond funds, for emergencies.

As a board, we should work with our superintendent to ensure projects run on budget and within the specified time. We should consistently survey staff and families about what they think needs to be done to maintain our facilities. Community input is very important and we must make informed decisions from what we hear. We are the stewards for the community's funds so as a board member, I will scrutinize facilities contracts to ensure proper work is done and Orinda's dollars are well spent.

As a board, we should work to continually support our bond measures with our superintendent, consider future finance measures if necessary and keep our community apprised of how their money

is spent to maintain our facilities. It is important to be completely transparent so our community has faith in our work and will be supportive of upcoming bond measures that we set forth to support our schools.

Your Strengths

My 24 years of experience as a teacher, principal and central office leader allows me to be a reality check on policies at the board and in the district. I know how things really work in classrooms and in schools. I have current experience and relevant skills. I want to bring my knowledge and skills to support Orinda schools in any way our schools and community feels is needed.

I am a mom, school volunteer and educator. I was a teacher; founded an afterschool program; was a founding school principal (received a California Distinguished Schools Award); now support principals and their school sites. In my current role, I also collaborate with all departments in our district to strategize, create policies, and make decisions. I believe I am the only candidate who is currently working in public education and am best situated to discover the answers to our educational needs.

◆ **DELAHUNT** from page 15

and a shift of more families choosing private school options in our area, facilities that are in an ongoing state of disrepair, staff recruitment and retention, retaining funding for STEAM programming, art, library, maximizing instruction time while ensuring that staff has adequate opportunities for collaboration and professional development, keeping class sizes small for K-3 and providing expanded educational curriculum for our students who will be entering a job market that will have significant more reliance on automation/technology. In particular, the evolving job market requires an emphasis of teaching critical thinking/analysis, how to trust information sources, learning how to code/build apps, online citizenship/safety.

Enrollment

I think we should re-evaluate the way we have districted the schools and determine whether some of the overflow of students at Wagner Ranch could be re-allocated to Sleepy Hollow. I think we should also allow transfers for students permissively if schools have additional capacity to accept new students.

Campus Facilities

I think there are many untapped opportunities for fundraising from the community we could utilize for some of these facility repairs/updates. A lot of community members are happy to donate when they know where their funds are directed – for example the HEPA air filter fundraising during the pandemic and some of the fund-a-need projects that have taken place at individual campuses. I also think we can increase communication to voters about the site repairs that additional bond funds would support; I feel voters would be supportive of additional bond funding if they knew the funds were earmarked for specific site repairs that are delineated in advance of bond fund voting.

Your Strengths

I will provide leadership to sustain OUSD as an exemplary school district. I was awarded my Doctorate in Education [SEE DELAHUNT page 27]

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Check for Chang by November 8!
for
Orinda Union School Board


- 25th year as a public school educator (teacher, principal, central office administrator)
- Dedicated to quality public education, school safety, and community engagement
- Longtime Orinda resident with a daughter attending Orinda schools and a husband who attended Orinda schools starting in the late 1960's



It is my goal to build on the **greatness** we have in Orinda Schools, to **protect** what we love about them, and to make sure that **all students and staff thrive** in our schools. I would be **honored** to have your vote!

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COMMUNITY / EVERYDAY ORINDA

Day of Czech Culture Free Event

By DENISA FEDDERSEN
Contributing Writer

Sokol SF will host a free event for the entire family with a festival style “Day of Czech Culture” at Orinda’s Community Center and Park, Saturday, Oct. 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sokol SF has organized a rich community program highlighted with Moravian dancing by the Karička Dance Group from San Diego in their beautiful traditional costumes. Czech School of California students will entertain through song and historical presentations, followed by musical Sokol members engaging the audience in sing-

alongs of Czech songs.

In addition to vendors selling traditional Czech crafts (Easter eggs, small puppets, Christmas ornaments, jewelry and more), kids will have opportunities to enjoy Easter egg decorating and craft classes.

Restaurants La Trattoria Bohemia from Sacramento and DJ’s Bistro from Concord will offer Czech food.

Renowned children’s book author, Martina Skala, will read and sign her publication, *My name is Čičák* which will also be for sale.

For more information and updates about this event, visit www.sokolsf.org.



COURTESY OF SOKOL SF

Karička & Podkovička performing traditional Slavic dance.

Everyday 🥰 Orinda

SOFIE FLASKOVA IS LIVIN’ THE DREAM



MIMI BOMMARITO

Miramonte High School’s stellar collection of students just got a little brighter. Sofie Flaskova, a charming Czech exchange student with the Orinda-Tabor Sister City program, has embraced California culture with a passion that makes college football superfans appear comatose. Her delight and enthusiasm for her American semester abroad is positively contagious, a word we don’t like to use too much these days, yet fully accurate.

Although Sofie has traveled to other countries in Europe, when arriving in the United States for the first time on Aug. 2, the almost 17-year-old got swept away by the wow-factor and magnetism of California. No stranger to social media and pop culture, “I had seen American movies, but living the American Dream is even better,” she shared. A natural born athlete, after her first day of surfing at Stinson Beach, she thought, “This is too good to be true.”

With her optimistic, outgoing personality and keen sense of adventure, Sofie had long harbored a desire to study abroad in the United States. Countless other Czech students shared her same ambitions, and initially she felt discouraged, thinking the odds of her application being selected from among thousands were not in her favor.

Quite by accident, she learned of the Orinda Tabor Sister City connection and through this, her dream became a reality. It should be noted, however, that dreams don’t come true without effort. During quarantine, rather than playing video games or squandering her time, Sofie stayed focused on her studies, watched tutorial videos and routinely polished her command of the

English language. During this bleak and confusing time, she had no promise that any of her efforts would yield rewards, but she never lost focus.

“Focused” is an excellent adjective to describe Sofie. A gymnast since age four, she also plays tennis and has dabbled in pole-vaulting. She lives in Planá nad Lužnicí, a town in Tábor District in the South Bohemian Region of the Czech Republic, so riding the four horses her family keeps nearby is also a favored pastime. Back in Czechia, she divides her time between her mother’s home and her father’s, and has an adoring three-year-old brother named Marcus, who has grown noticeably in between every FaceTime call home! Even though technology makes it easy to stay in touch and ward away homesickness, Sofie thoughtfully procured traditional postcards of San Francisco scenes to mail to her family.

Sofie’s host parents are Petra Tang and LJ D’Iorio of Moraga, and she is thriving in Miramonte’s demanding academic environment. She enjoys all of her classes, but if pressed for a favorite, she loves reading and discussing the American classic novels in her English II class.

She also enjoys the way American classrooms often work together in groups to complete assignments. “The learning style here is completely different,” she observed, “and I love it!” She is in awe of all the “extras” that Miramonte provides, like the student wellness center and academic counseling. And don’t even get her started on the sports and the school spirit. “The first week I thought, wow, all the rallies,

[SEE EVERYDAY page 23]



MIMI BOMMARITO

Sofie Flaskova, the Orinda-Tabor Sister City Exchange Student from the Czech Republic decided immediately that California living was “a dream come true.”

Enjoy a lovely harvest season and a safe and Happy Halloween!!

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As Seen On



CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

◆ **MALKANI** from page 11

an additional 1,359 housing units by 2031.

This is not an easy task. Orinda has a limited number of sites on which to build, a unique geography and is vulnerable to wildfires with limited evacuation routes. We are car-dependent with heavy commuter traffic, few major road arteries and limited parking. As we plan, solving for these issues must be front and center.

Ultimately, this challenge is an opportunity for Orinda to attract residents and amenities that build a more vibrant, connected community and enhance Orinda's charm. This may allow long-time residents to remain in place while transitioning to senior living communities. Planning for affordable housing may entice young working people (including our own adult children) to live here, adding vitality. Providing local preferences in housing could help Orinda retain and recruit the very best talent in our school teachers, firefighters, and city personnel. Locating housing near transit or in mixed-use downtown sites could help alleviate congestion and provide a much-needed boost to local small businesses that otherwise struggle to stay afloat with their limited walkability to housing.

Downtown Precise Plan

I know many Orinda residents join me in their excitement to see our downtown

transform into a walkable, connected, lively area.

Orinda has struggled to attract and retain quality retail. Most developers and planners will tell you that the key to retail development is housing with sufficient density that supports the spacing of desired stores. So, if Orinda wants to lure more desirable dining, shopping and entertainment, we need to revitalize the entire downtown, with a comprehensive plan that promotes mixed-use development that balances retail and other commercial use with housing appropriate to our downtown landscape and city charm. The Downtown Precise Plan's vision of creating a vibrant, welcoming, and accessible community, is a substantial step in the right direction. I would continue to support these efforts, responsibly but promptly, as we embark on long-term revitalization.

As we move forward, I would be attentive to the needs of small businesses, seeking out resource programs and funding to encourage retention and growth. I would encourage the development of arts and cultural centers, including exploring joint partnerships with existing arts and charitable organizations to promote speakers, entertainers, and functions that benefit our residents while supporting our local business community. I would continue and expand the city's present efforts to integrate more pro-environment amenities to downtown, such as additional EV charging

stations, and better preservation of the creek and natural habitats. I would encourage beautification, both by making sure that objective design standards promote an attractive aesthetic, and by continuing to encourage art in public places. I would continue with a vision of an intergenerational, dynamic community that encourages residents to shop, dine and enjoy being local. Finally, we must continue to engage all stakeholders in the DPP process because considering varied input often produces better results.

Three Areas of Need

Orinda can and should be California's model for wildfire resilience. As we continue to support infrastructure improvements, we must also prioritize wildfire preparedness. Our beautiful environment and homes are Orinda's most valuable asset, and we must do everything we can to be prepared. That means not only working with our local fire protection experts on preventive actions that will keep us safe but pressing state and federal leaders for broader solutions. I have been very involved in drafting Orinda's SS-TOC recommendations and best practices,

and I hope to continue this important work on the Council.

Revitalizing the downtown and attracting more retail development is also essential. We can do better than what we currently have and doing so will raise revenue that will help fund all of our priorities and goals.

Celebration of diversity and inclusion is priceless. When San Francisco and the Bay Area emerged as one of the most welcoming and inclusive communities in the world, the impact was stunning. The Area grew to become the world leader in technology and innovations, its commerce, arts and culture blossomed, and it became one of the most visited and sought out places on Earth. Inclusion is dynamic and uplifting.

Leadership Skills

As a mother of three raised in Orinda, a practicing lawyer, and a city commissioner, I spend my days engaged in rigorous legal analysis, interacting with persons across the commercial spectrum, conflict resolution and negotiation, and collaborate with leaders on the most effective policies to

[SEE MALKANI page 26]

◆ **HOUSE** from page 12

the city manager and school superintendent, and advocacy for the schools in council decision-making. Continue the practice of Joint Resolutions on matters of mutual concern such as Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) to present a united stance which supports our democracy under threat and resists hate of every sort.

2. Teacher housing and senior housing as part of the affordable housing plans for the city's Housing Element. The first steps have been taken recently by the city council to advance housing for senior citizens with the Vista Verde Community Housing Project. Teacher housing can be advanced by pursuing property owned by the Acalanes Union High School District suitable for such housing. I would urge members of the Council to reach out to the Acalanes School Board and begin feasibility study

of the recommended site.

3. Downtown and San Pablo Creek Revitalization – Improving downtown to retain the city's charm while making it more vibrant and pedestrian-friendly will attract small businesses and improve the city's tax base.

Leadership Skills

I have worked for government at all levels. In Detroit, I was deputy director of Detroit Council of the Arts, director of summer youth employment, principal for the employment and training department running the CETA Program, and commission member of the Consumer Affairs Department.

In Lansing, MI, I was administrative assistant to president pro tem of the Michigan Senate; in Washington and Detroit, I was Assistant to the congressman, legislative aide to the U.S. House of Representatives.

I was also Southeastern Michigan campaign director for President Jimmy Carter; campaign director for the congressional campaigns of George Crockett, Jr. (Detroit) and Richard Vanderveen (Grand Rapids).

In New Mexico, I was twice assistant sgt-at-arms for the New Mexico Senate. In California, I have been a licensed general contractor since 2002; director of facilities for the Walnut Creek School District and director of facilities, management and operations for the Orinda Union School District.



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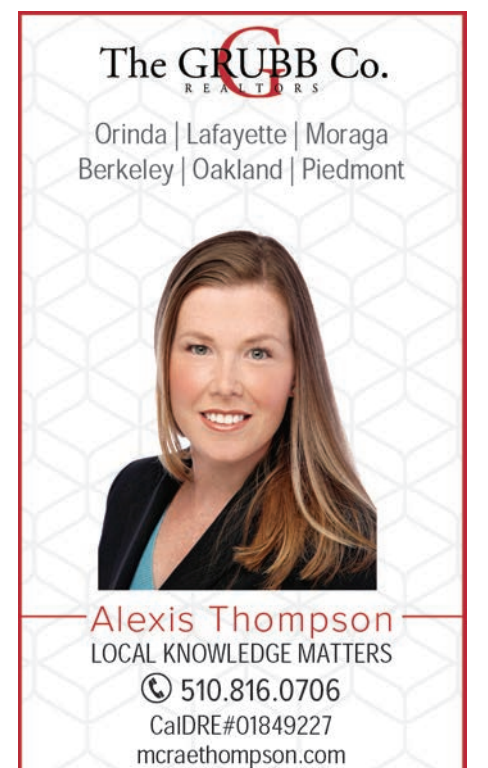
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ART IN PUBLIC PLACES

Latest Artworks Make a New Home Outside the Orinda Library



JEFF HEYMAN

The crew poses with sculpture titled *Ascending Dancers* by Robert Holmes after their task of installing new art at the Orinda Library Plaza. (L-R, back) **Justin Dale, Jessica Jordao, Colin Hurley, Alex Nolan, Tom Franco, Steven Danziger** and (L-R, front) **John Toki, Rich Thompson and Ted Urban.**

By DAVID FONSECA
Contributing Writer

Intense heatwave temperatures barreled down in downtown Orinda on the morning of Sept. 8, but that didn't deter the crew tasked with taking down the existing public art installation and then prepping for a new one.

Art students, local artists and supporters combined efforts with the Orinda APPC (Art in Public Places Committee), the recently founded VIVA (Volunteers for the Arts) and LAB (Local Artists Berkeley), a non-profit that installs public art with participating cities.

Three works were removed and later some new pieces made their new home for the next year outside of the Orinda Library. These included the bronze sculpture *Ascending Dancers* by Robert Holmes and *Shift* by Pamela Stefl Toki, whose other abstract clay monoprints are among the pieces featured at the library in October.

Anna Lijphart, a former resident who recently moved to the Oakland area, donated *Ascending Dancers* to the City of Orinda.

Local artist Tom Franco, founder of the Firehouse Art Collective in Berkeley, helped coordinate efforts that day.

"Art needs to be shared with as many

people as possible, and this is a great experiential way to uplift the community," he said.

Franco said his collective is working with many visual artists and sculptors who are fresh out of college and older, established artists as well.

"We're emphasizing the youths involved because it really takes the community to do this art installation," Franco said regarding VIVA's mission. "As a group, we want to expand this and use this as a model that other cities can look at. It's a fabulous model. They've done dozens of large art installations where other cities haven't done any yet."

Franco emphasized the need for younger people to continue the work.

"It's important to keep this going through the next generations," he said.

As one who considers himself a folk artist, Franco said he, "represents images of the Bay Area California where I live, our shared global culture, as well as scenes of my inner life in the subtler realms of reality."

His wife and film producer, Iris Torres, filmed the event in the plaza.

For more information about Franco's art and the Firehouse Art Collective mission,

[SEE ARTWORK page 31]

◆ RILEY from page 11

community while following state mandates. I'm deeply committed to working together to set planning the way the community wants downtown Orinda and our neighborhoods to look. We've had tremendous input from the community for the Downtown Precise Plan. Orinda is a family town, and I want to continue to attract young families. With the Downtown Precise Plan in place, I support a vibrant downtown while minimizing negative effects on traffic and parking. Senior housing such as Orinda Community Church's buildings is much needed here and is the type of housing that meets the housing mandates and adds very little traffic to our streets, and I believe is a welcome addition to Orinda. In addition to working closely with staff, I will actively support advocacy efforts to incorporate the City of Orinda's perspective in state legislation.

Downtown Precise Plan

Orinda has been exploring ways to revitalize the downtown for many years. In recent years, the community has been actively engaged in a community process to discern the key elements and features of what would make our town vibrant. Connect Orinda was an effective supplemental planning process that identified ways to connect the south and north side of downtown. The Downtown Precise Plan provides for revitalization of the downtown restaurants, housing, library, park, and community center. Having grown up here, I know how vital the library, community center and park are to children, adults and seniors.

At the core of downtown revitalization is bringing people to downtown to support businesses. Once they are downtown, we have good pedestrian access and signage between the two areas. We need to have people living in the downtown and need to promote the activities of the community center especially as we reemerge from COVID. The Concerts in the Park and the food trucks draw people to the community center and give them an opportunity to connect with their friends and neighbors.

As a family friendly place with our warmer climate, we need restaurants with an open feel accommodating indoor and outdoor seating. Some restaurants need to have kid-friendly atmospheres and other restaurants need to provide environments for adults. With the increase of pet adoption during the pandemic, we also need restaurants where we can take our pets with us. COVID taught us how much we want to be with each other, how we want to be in relaxed settings and how we want new experiences with our friends and neighbors.

[SEE RILEY page 23]

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Janet Riley
For Orinda City Council

Orinda Experience Makes a Difference

As a child growing up here, as a parent who raised two children here and as a 40 year resident of Orinda, I have a unique understanding of Orinda community issues and history.

I chose to serve for 30 years as a volunteer and leader in Orinda schools and community organizations. I am ready to serve Orinda as a City Councilmember.

I was raised here by chance; I returned by choice. Orinda is my hometown.

I will draw on my lifelong understanding and experience to help make thoughtful, informed decisions to enhance our city's safety and vibrance.

Service ~ Leadership ~ Stewardship

"Janet's deep roots in Orinda and love of our community have been reflected in her decades of volunteer service to Orinda and its schools. Her extensive leadership experience, professional training and dedication to our community will make her an excellent City Councilmember."

Amy Worth
Orinda City Councilmember

www.JanetRileyforOrinda.com
For more information and a full list of endorsers - please visit my website.

PAID FOR BY JANET RILEY FOR ORINDA CITY COUNCIL 2022 COMMITTEE, CAMPAIGN ID #: 1453079

MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT CANDIDATES

◆ DELL' AQUILA from page 13

physical assets and well-trained personnel.

Keeping Orindans Safe

Beyond education about fire prevention and strengthening our defenses around our homes, the MOFD has a huge responsibility for stressing the immediate dangers of a "Big Event." The residents of Moraga and Orinda must be ready for evacuation plans. Paradise, California station KVIE (10/29/19) states that the Paradise Fire destroyed 153,335 acres in just four hours; that's 38,333 acres per hour! Moraga and Orinda have approximately 14,300 acres.

We are three decades removed from the Oakland Hills fire, and we need to know how many Moraga and Orinda residents are registered for Community Warning Alerts (CWA) and know their evacuation Zones; how many have a household evacuation plan and practice it; how many are prepared with Go-bags packed for each resident.

Our city websites include guides for this preparation, but MOFD can play a huge part in pushing this information and

stressing the importance of coordination by zone so as not to block rescue services. The department has to work with citizens to prepare them for the curveballs that they will encounter in emergency situations. We must think out of the box when it comes to fire preparedness; it's not a matter of if, but when we will face such an event. We can't hope we are lucky; the definition of luck is when preparation meets opportunity.

Fiscal Responsibility

I am committed to finding a balance between maintaining a dedicated, experienced staff, and improving the community resources needed to provide services. This can't be an either or situation, budgeting has to address both with a focus on services and protecting our residents and homes. Outdated equipment and lack of services serves no one.

Orinda/Moraga Equity

The discussion about fire protection cost equity has been a hot topic for residents of Moraga and Orinda. Clearly both communities have benefited from the formation of

MOFD. If I am elected, I will review this issue based on a data informed decision making process with the intent of ensuring that all property owners in MOFD pay their fair share of the services provided. Each city has approximately the same percentage of property tax already.

◆ DANZIGER from page 14

Despite philosophical differences among Board members, I am proud of how focused and united we have been when it comes to strengthening the District's financial position for the present as well as the future. This has been done by enacting policies that ensure accountability, transparency and strategic planning. In 2018, the District's Reserve Fund (to be used in case of financial downturns...) was approximately 17%, today we are about to achieve our stated goal of 50%. We recently paid off a pension obligation bond resulting in an increase to our general fund.

Orinda/Moraga Equity

The question of equity has been a topic of discussion since 2011 when a Board subcommittee first examined the issue. Their analysis concluded that Orinda does not unfairly pay more for fire protection than Moraga. Following that, a comprehensive report authored by concerned citizens and elected officials prepared a report dated June 15, 2016, entitled "Analysis of Funding Equity Between Taxpayers of Orinda and Moraga." That report reached the same conclusion. The services provided by the District are not defined by geographical locations. We are one District and our model is that when needed, there is no limitation

Your Experience

As an educator, coach, community volunteer and former contractor, I attribute my success with students, parents, staff and the public to my communication skills, being able to listen with empathy and my ability [SEE DELL' AQUILA page 21]

on where a responding company can go. The ambulance staffed in Moraga regularly responds to Orinda and crews stationed in Orinda may respond to Moraga or Canyon. After being on the Board for almost four years, I see no reason why this should continue to be a topic of conversation.

Your Experience

As incumbent Director, I have almost four years on the Board, served two years as president, currently serving as vice president and member of the Audit Committee. I am a Fire Adapted Community-Ambassador and proud CERT team member.

I have 35 years of experience in the public sector including 20 years as administrative manager with Oakland Fire Department. I also worked three years in the Finance Office and three years in the City Manager's Office. I have a Master's Degree in Public Administration, and worked for the National Park Service, including several years in Yosemite National Park. I am currently Chair of the Orinda Parks & Recreation Commission, member of the Art in Public Places Committee, volunteer at the Orinda Library, Orinda Nature Area, and with Friends of Orinda Creeks. I am a UC Master Gardener and have presented "Home Hardening & Firescaping" to a total of over 1500 attendees.

◆ DONNER from page 14

Chief, officers and staff, fair wage and benefit contracts.

Orinda/Moraga Equity

Several independent panels have investigated this issue. These independent boards and panels have not determined any need for further action. All Contra Costa County homeowners pay a 1% property tax. The distribution of Contra Costa County assessed taxes is not the responsibility of the MOFD Board of Directors. MOFD follows the Government Accounting Standards Board and Government Finance Officers Association guidelines and recommendations to provide accountability and transparency in the accounting of district finances.

Your Experience

I bring four decades of fire experience to

the board. I am passionately dedicated to both the fire service and my community. I have been involved in community service since I moved to Orinda in 2005. I have served on the emergency preparedness committee with the Orinda School District for over 15 years. I have organized seminars on emergency preparedness emphasizing our community warning system. As current MOFD Board President, I have a deep understanding of fire prevention, equipment, facilities, the recruiting process and maintaining fair wages/benefits. I helped bring our Fire District to a substantially higher financial level during my term on the board. I believe that my experience in the fire service and community involvement will provide for a safer community. I will continue to build and focus on a robust fire prevention program. I would be honored to receive for your vote.

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Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board

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 - Teacher MHS, retired; still Coaching MHS football & golf
 - Firewise Neighborhood Leader, Lost Valley, actively working to prevent wildfires & protect our families
 - Passionate Community Volunteer
- Commitment to:**
- Maintain excellent fire and medical services
 - Focus on fire prevention
 - Use technologies to improve operations
 - Prudently manage budget
 - Be responsive to community concerns
 - Supports full staffing of an Orinda ambulance



"Vince Dell'Aquila has been deeply connected to our community in Orinda for many years. Vince will support fire prevention efforts by Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) to bring all of Orinda closer to wildfire sustainability and work collaboratively with our Firewise Neighborhoods. I enthusiastically endorse Coach Dell'Aquila for MOFD Board Member, division 3."

Melanie Light, Orinda Firewise Council, Founder and Firewise Leader*

"Vince Dell'Aquila has served our communities admirably as a professional and a volunteer for decades and he would be a superb Moraga-Orinda Fire District Director."

Amy Worth, Orinda City Council, former mayor

*Titles listed for identification only.



Paid for by Vince Dell'Aquila for Moraga Orinda Fire District 2022, FPPC pending

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Seasoned Shopper
Fall offerings at the Farmer's Market

BARBARA KOBSAR



Farmers' markets are in a constant state of flux. Seasons with their entire splendor come and go offering the best selection of fruits and vegetables, but the Orinda Farmers' Market has expanded and welcomed more growers and vendors since my Fall Favorites list in 2011.

Let's have a look and an update.



BARBARA KOBSAR
Apples are at the top of the list of fall favorites at the Orinda Farmers' Market.

Look for fall grapes, citrus, nuts and dried fruits at J & J Ramos and Ponce Farm stands. Fall brings hardier grape varieties, such as Muscat and Tokay and the first sightings of fresh juicy tangerines.

Smit Farms is synonymous with apples, and apple and pomegranate juices. I enjoy eating any apple fresh out-of-hand with flavors from sweet to spicy to tart. Granny Smith are good baking apples since they hold their shape, and Golden Delicious are excellent for applesauce, since they do not discolor as quickly as other varieties.

Strawberries enjoy a long season here in California. Source your certified organic berries at Chay's Farms. Pick up a basket or a flat to enjoy fresh or to make a delicious smoothie. Strawberries freeze well for later. Rinse, hull and drain. Place in a single layer on a baking sheet and freeze. When frozen, transfer to freezer bags to store for up to six months.

Look for organic greens, vegetables and herbs at the J & M Ibarra stand, one of the markets' longest running farm stands.

The beautiful Royal Greens' stand is bursting with fall produce; lots of root vegetables, greens, beets, persimmons, peppers and squash to fill a shopping bag. Be on the look out for some of the last pickings of tomatoes!

Specialty products are popular attractions

◆ DELL' AQUILA from page 20

to think outside the box when it comes to resolving issues or making decisions that have a huge impact on others. I have a reputation for being a fair, problem solving teacher, coach and athletic director. My recent experience as a member of the Community Foundation has renewed my belief that these skills are essential in community based decision making and that I have a great deal to offer. My experience in contracting prior to education gave me considerable experience in bidding, contract negotiation and project completion with communications again playing a vital role. Finally, I will bring the same passion to the MOFD board that I have while serving our community the past 34 years.

with market shoppers. Choose from hummus, local honey and preserves, tamales and yogurt.

Fish, pork and beef are some of the newest additions to the market. All fresh! Be sure to ask the person behind the stand any questions about cuts, varieties or cooking ideas.

Cheese and eggs are staples at the market. Brown, white, free range – by the dozen or half dozen – the eggs are a must-have.

The information table is conveniently located in the middle of the market. Stop by with any questions or comments or to get your fresh cup of morning coffee from Zolo coffee. Whole beans are also available.

Enjoy crepes, smoothies, dumplings, acai bowls and more at the newly expanded Food Court and Epidemic Ales offers tasty brews to take home.

There's something for the entire family at the bakeries with fresh baked pastries and breads. Take something home to enjoy during the week!

The event of the season at the market – Harvest Fest – is Saturday, Oct. 29. Bring the family in costume for more fun at the pumpkin patch and enjoy a little trick-or-treating at the market stands. A few new fun activities will also take place.

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

Barbara Kobsar sells her Cottage Kitchen jams and jellies at the Jam Stand at the Saturday Orinda market and the Sunday Walnut Creek market. She is also president of Contra Costa Certified Farmers' Market (CCCFM) Association Board of Directors.

◆ ROEMER from page 13

- wildfires.
- 3. Implementation of advanced technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness of our fire detection, emergency warning and evacuation systems.

Keeping Orindans Safe

Work more closely with the City of Orinda and Town of Moraga to implement grant programs to encourage actual fuel reduction and home hardening in a systematic manner.

- 1. We must start education programs in our schools to make children aware of the situation and solutions and encourage them to take home the topic and implement the plans.

Fiscal Responsibility

- 1. Continue to fund the Pension and Medical expense Trust funds to make up for the shortfalls that systematically occur at the County Pension Plan we use.
- 2. Wisely invest our trust money to ensure safe, predictable long-term returns.
- 3. Manage our future obligations to match our surrounding communities' salaries and benefits.

Orinda/Moraga Equity

- 1. Moraga and Orinda pay the same

percentage tax to the county. They also receive the same level of service and protection from MOFD. I will ensure that we continue to provide the best fire and medical services to both communities.

Your Experience

- 1. I am an experienced trial lawyer. MOFD has ongoing legal challenges that can utilize my years of experience and knowledge.
- 2. Serving on the board of a bank has honed my financial skills and given me a perspective on banking relationships
- 3. My CERT training as well as my Ham Radio Operator's License have let me participate significantly in the day-to-day emergency operations of MOFD and build relationships with it's fine personnel, facilities and equipment. I look forward to adding a management perspective to the that business.
- 4. I am a long time Orinda Resident with children who have gone all the way through its fine schools and athletic programs. I believe I am very in tune with the feelings and priorities of the community and will only represent the best interest of our community not other outside interests.

Mike Roemer

Fire Support Volunteer Attorney

Moraga-Orinda Fire District

"Greg, Vince and Mike have been deeply connected to our communities in Moraga and Orinda for many years. They support fire prevention efforts by Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) to bring our communities closer to wildfire sustainability and work collaboratively within our Firewise Neighborhoods. I enthusiastically endorse Greg Hasler, Vince Dell'Aquila and Mike Roemer for the MOFD Board, divisions 1, 3 & 4, respectively."

Melanie Light, Orinda Firewise Council, Founder and Former Chair; Orinda Citizen of the Year 2021*

"I personally know Mike Roemer to be a highly qualified candidate for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Board. His excellent skills and passionate community volunteerism will be a great asset to the MOFD board, plus he has a solid commitment to protect our communities and families from wildfires."

Sue Severson, Former Mayor, City of Orinda, Citizen of the Year 2004*

*Titles listed for identification only.



I'm Mike Roemer and I'd appreciate your vote to represent Central Orinda on the Fire District Board. As a retired prosecutor and community bank board member and 30 year Orinda resident, I would be honored to offer my skills to the community where my wife Julie McCormack and I raised our son Conor and daughter Erin.

– Mike

- ★ BA in Politics and Economics/ JD in Law
- ★ Fire Support Volunteer for 12 Orinda and Moraga prescribed burns
- ★ Data Collections Lead for 3 Practice Evacuation Exercises in Orinda and Moraga
- ★ CERT Volunteer and HAM/GMRS Radio license holder trained for emergency communications
- ★ Supports full staffing of an Orinda ambulance




www.mikeroemer4mofd.com

Paid for by Campaign Fund for Mike Roemer FPPC# Pending

ORINDA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT CANDIDATES

◆ COLEMAN from page 15

teacher shortages, funding, competition and technology.

- **Safety:** Our children are facing crisis after crisis, whether it's participating in intruder drills to protect themselves from gun violence, isolation from the pandemic challenging their mental health, or other stressors like peer pressure, fire and earthquake drills.

- **Teacher shortage:** The pandemic has increased burnout and early retirement among teachers across the country and Orinda is no different. Teachers are critical in ensuring our student's education and future success -- we must continue growing, recruiting and retaining qualified educators.

- **Funding:** The funding allows us to have the resources needed to provide a world class education - from quality books to technology to safe schools and excellent teachers.

- **Competition:** Students need to be competitive on a global level which requires us to create an environment to do so. When students enter the workforce, they'll work for a range of companies with global reach that will expose them to different cultures. It's critically important that students of today are trained and equipped to encounter what they will face on a global scale.

- **Technology:** Access to technology is critical to STEM; it prepares students for higher education and for the workforce. Technology provides access to information, increases student engagement, fosters connection, collaboration and helps teachers improve their lesson plans to facilitate personalized learning.

The challenges are interrelated and require a collective will and leadership.

Enrollment

We must understand the data of the demographics, neighborhood boundary needs, historic enrollment v. enrollment projections and the demographics of where

families live. In maintaining OUSD's academic excellence, we'd need to examine class size, the campus, technology, other educational infrastructure as well as parent surveys to understand why families choose one neighborhood or school over another.

We must keep in mind that smaller class sizes contribute to the betterment of learning. Studies show that smaller class sizes allow for greater individualized instruction, teachers are able to get to know their students better which lends itself to more personalized feedback and improves learning opportunities. When class sizes are too large, student achievement can be negatively impacted with distractions, difficulties of managing students and reduced participation. Smaller environments contribute to positive student-teacher relationships and an overall positive experience.

Once possible reasons for over/under subscription are understood, we'd work to create resources ensuring each school has what it needs to provide the best opportunity for each student by conveying a common vision, language and shared understanding of what every OUSD elementary school offers so that parents have confidence and see validation of better resources and opportunities at each campus in Orinda.

Campus Facilities

I'd recommend restructuring existing agreements and negotiating maintenance contracts to better address proactive maintenance of campus facilities. I'd then institute a robust contract management process and procedures to monitor, measure and record the maintenance suppliers' performance and hold regular performance meetings to drive accountability. And, lastly, I would seek out federal funds in various agencies to augment the necessary repairs and update our aging infrastructure. There are a number of federal agencies ready to partner with local school districts to ensure our aging infrastructure can handle enroll-

ment projections and prepare our students for academic success. With the right infrastructure, our schools serve as a shared foundation for economic, environmental, and public health success for Orinda's various neighborhoods and city government. By ensuring the highest quality education and environment for our district's students through our public schools, we in turn benefit all Orinda residents.

Your Strengths

As a mother of daughters (8th, 4th, and pre-school grades), I've volunteered as a field trip driver at Del Rey, a Girl Scout Troop Leader, in the Wagner Ranch library and as an OIS Parents' Club Board member.

I've served on an interview panel for

principal at an OUSD elementary school, and I'm on the District's Parent Equity Committee where I worked to retool OUSD's mission and strategic directions.

A graduate of Georgetown University with a Master's in Communications and Hampton University with a Bachelor's in Political Science, my 20+ years in policy and communications will provide significant value in building consensus and promoting collaborative engagement for OUSD. As managing director, I advise organizations during pivotal moments and as they communicate with Congress, the Executive Branch of government and navigate the regulatory landscape. I have a vested interest in the success of all of our children in Orinda.

◆ PHILLIPS from page 15

First, academic excellence. Many of us moved to Orinda for its excellent public schools, and we all benefit from our community's focus on education. However, maintaining that excellence requires supporting students in their learning whether they need extra assistance or opportunities to excel. And that student support requires providing administrators and teachers with the flexibility, training and resources to deliver those learning experiences.

Second, finances. OUSD's per-pupil funding is among the lowest in the state. Most of our funds come through a per-pupil formula from the state, funded by income, sales and property taxes (and thus impacted by the long-term ramifications of Proposition 13), with most of the remaining (~25%) of the funding from local parcel taxes and ONE Orinda (parents clubs). Altogether, this district must work within a tight budget which impacts everything from classroom updates to teacher salaries. Finding ways both to spend money wisely and locate additional funding will be critical.

Finally, student mental health. While of concern pre-COVID, the pandemic resulted in serious impacts to student social-emotional growth and behavior. To its strong credit, the district is hiring more counselors to support students. However, these issues will continue beyond recent events. We need to recognize that every student's mental health impacts their ability to learn and grow, and schools can play a very important supporting role.

Enrollment


I believe it is critical that we offer comparably great academic experiences at each of the four elementary schools, but recognize each campus has various differences (including in student capacity) and should be allowed to excel in their respective ways. I see three steps in driving equity, all of which are already ongoing: align initiatives where possible among the schools; find ways to share in unique campus resources; and sensibly reassign students as a last resort.

For alignment, the creation of ONE [SEE PHILLIPS page 24]

ELECT EDDA

COLLINS COLEMAN

FOR ORINDA SCHOOL BOARD



“My goal is to bolster OUSD’s fiscal responsibility, student wellness, & academic excellence.”

VIP ENDORSEMENTS & DISTINCTIONS

<p>Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, <i>Assemblymember</i></p> <p>Dennis Fay, <i>Orinda Mayor</i></p> <p>Darlene K. Gee, <i>Orinda City Council</i></p> <p>Carol Brown, <i>President, OUSD Governing Board</i></p>	<p>Hillary Weiner, <i>Vice President, OUSD Governing Board</i></p> <p>Liz Daoust, <i>OUSD Governing Board Trustee</i></p> <p>Cara Hoxie, <i>OUSD Governing Board Trustee</i></p> <p>Jason Kaune, <i>OUSD Governing Board Trustee</i></p>	<p>Pat Rudebusch, <i>former OUSD Governing Board Trustee</i></p> <p>Moms Demand Action Gun Sense Candidate Distinction</p> <p>Marcie and Mark Tuttle</p> <p>The Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC)</p>
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* Titles and affiliations of each individual are provided for identification only

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PAID FOR by EDDA COLLINS-COLEMAN for ORINDA SCHOOL BOARD 2022, FFPC# #3449458

CALENDAR

On the Calendar in October

- Orinda Library** is open to the public. Story-times are on Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.. Open hours are Mon. through Thu., 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Fri. and Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 6 Orinda Way, Call 925.254.2184 or visit <http://ccclib.org>.
- The International Film Showcase** presents *Take It or Leave It* in October. Construction worker Erik learns his ex-girlfriend is about to go into labor. Tickets and show times at www.OrindaMovies.com.
- 1 **Orinda Farmers' Market**, 9 a.m. Orinda Way in front of Rite Aid and the Community Park. www.cccfm.org or market hotline at 925.431.8361. Also Oct. 8, 15, 22 and Harvest Fest Oct. 29. See article p. 21.
- Orinda Academy** Open House. Families can register at www.orindaacademy.org.
- Lamorinda Arts Council** presents David Choi's woodcut relief designs at their virtual Art Gallery at Wilder, through Nov. 5 at www.lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries/. Call 925.359.9940. See article p. 30.
- Orinda Starlight Village Players** presents George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* 8:30 p.m. Orinda Community Center Park Amphitheater. www.orsvp.org, info@orsvp.org or 925.528.9225.
- Cal Shakes** presents a new adaptation of Williams Shakespeare's *King Lear* through Oct. 2. Call 510.548.9666, email boxoffice@calshakes.org or go to www.calshakes.org.
- 5 **Lamorinda Village** with Contra Costa County Health and LOPC COVID Booster Clinic with updated COVID-19 boosters at Fellowship Hall 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. No appointment necessary but you will need to reserve a booster by letting us know which vaccine (updated Moderna or updated Pfizer) you would like. Please email info@lamorindavillage.org or call 925 283-3500.
- 6 **Orinda Books Pat's Book Club** will read and discuss *Voices In The Dead House* by Norman Lock. 11 a.m. Email info@orinda-books.com for reservations.
- Taste of the World Market** food trucks
- Orinda Community Center parking lot 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Also, Oct. 13, 20 and 27.
- Miramonte High School** Fall Sing, 7 p.m. Orinda schools come together for one fall singing event. MHS Theater. www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte.
- 7 **Movies-In-the-Park**, *E.T.* begins at dusk. Orinda Community Center Park.
- 8 **Sokol SF** Day of Czech Culture. Community Center and Park, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. See article p. 17.
- American Association of University Women-Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch** (AAUW-OML) Paper Shredding Event 9 a.m. See article p. 5
- Art Gallery at the Orinda Library** artist reception 3 - 5 p.m. See article p. 30.
- 15 **Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra** "Passports and Postcards" 3 p.m. St. Stephens Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Dr., Orinda. Tickets \$20 Adult, \$15 Seniors, \$7 Students. 925.254.3770.
- 16 **Live at the Orinda!** presents Eden Espinosa 6 p.m. see article pg. 2
- 18 **American Association of University Women-Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch** Annual Taste of Walnut Creek Restaurant Walk. Tickets \$36. Supports AAUW OML Tech Trek program for 7th grade girls.
- 22 **Del Rey Boofest**, 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- Lamorinda Arts Council Mixology**, 4:30 - 7 p.m., see article pg. 2.
- 23 **Glorietta FunFest**, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Orinda Community Foundation** Citizen of the Year 2022 ceremony, 6:30 p.m. Orinda Community Center Founders Auditorium. See article p. 1.
- 27 **Miramonte High School** presents William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. 7 p.m. Also, Oct. 28, 7 p.m. and Oct. 29 1 p.m.
- 29 **Sleepy Hollow School** Creepy Hollow event. <https://shpc.membershiptoolkit.com/home>.

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

Club Meetings online at www.theorindanews.com.

◆ EVERYDAY from page 17

everything was just for the beginning of school, but no, there is something new every week!"

Sports in Czechia are not tied to schools, so to Sofie the Matador experience is yet

another dream come true. She immediately joined the cheer squad and has already "wowed the crowd" with her impressive tumbling abilities. Her classmates have been very welcoming. She joined four new student organizations during Club Week. "I'm not sure if one is really a club, but I'm

◆ RILEY from page 19

Three Areas of Need

#1. Orinda is a family friendly place and, in order to retain that character, we need activities and services for everyone in the downtown. We need places that bring us together and allow us to connect with each other. We need to attract businesses that will bring people downtown.

#2. Wildfire prevention and disaster preparedness are vital efforts to continue in Orinda. As part of the effort to mitigate wildfire, the City needs to continue to work closely with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District and encourage residents to undertake the important work of vegetation management and home hardening at their homes. Additionally, securing evacuation routes and clearing vegetation from these essential safety corridors is essential.

#3. We need to continue to build our partnership between the community and the schools. School age families move to Orinda for the suburban family-oriented community and the excellent public schools. The City of Orinda and the OUSD have an excellent working relationship and I will continue to foster that partnership.

Orinda's schools are a foundation of Orinda and by increasing community support we can ensure their continued financial stability and educational excellence.

Leadership Skills

I have served Orinda in many leadership positions for over 30 years – President of Sleepy Hollow Parents' Club, President of Orinda Intermediate School Parents' Club, President of the Educational Foundation of Orinda, President of the Orinda Garden Club, Co-Chair of the Orinda Fourth of July Celebration, and Co-Chair of the Santa Maria Social Justice Committee. I have also served on the USTA Nor Cal board and as general counsel. I chose these organizations to help Orinda students, protect our environment, put on our hometown parade, feed the hungry in our greater area and improve league tennis. Before I had my two children, I practiced business and tax law in local private law firms for small businesses and non-profits. In all my pursuits, I have and will identify and research the issues, listen to all sides, work collaboratively, and help reach quality and common-sense decisions. Please visit www.janetrileyfororinda.com.

◆ SHOGAN from page 15

improvements must be made with limited funding. In addition, conducting construction projects during the school year poses operational and logistical challenges. If elected, I will work with OUSD and fellow board members to address these challenges, as well as other priorities that may arise.

Enrollment

It is important that our elementary campuses serve a similar number of students so that resources are shared equitably, and students benefit from similar learning environments. OUSD administrators and the Board of Trustees have been discussing and researching the impacts of redistricting, particularly to increase enrollment at Sleepy Hollow and decrease the number of students attending Wagner Ranch. This was discussed at length at the Board of Trustees meeting on September 12.

I am supportive of thoughtful redistricting. It is important to do adequate analysis of housing trends, and to consider policies that allow families who are already enrolled in a particular elementary school to stay at that site if they prefer. Any boundary adjustments should be made with sufficient advance notice and thorough communication to families. Redistricting has been addressed in the past and will surely continue to be necessary from time to time. I do not think boundaries should be changed frequently, as it can be disruptive to students, families and staff. However, if enrollment is especially unequal, as is currently the case at Sleepy Hollow and Wagner Ranch, the issue should be addressed.

Campus Facilities

Facility maintenance and updates are essential for student safety and important to student learning. Limited funding makes necessary campus improvements very challenging. At the September 12

Board of Trustees meeting, the administrators and board discussed the development of a comprehensive deferred maintenance plan to carefully prioritize needed work. Capital improvements will be organized by need, with safety issues addressed first. I very much agree with this approach.

With long-term planning, smaller improvements can be made over time with existing annual capital improvement funds. Bond funds are supporting larger projects and significant improvements are underway. However, both minor maintenance and large construction projects require funding beyond the current budget. It is necessary to identify additional, one-time sources of revenue, which was mentioned at the September board meeting. The conversation and work will continue at the district level, with a quarterly report scheduled for November. As a Trustee, I will join this ongoing discussion, working to prioritize facility needs and identify possible funding sources.

Your Strengths

I have the experience, perspective and skillset to be an effective board member and successfully guide the district in its work of providing all students with an excellent education. My professional background is in the education sector. I hold an M.Ed. in Education Policy and Management, and I have experience as a California public school teacher, administrator and school board member. Through this work, I have gained insight and expertise that makes me prepared to assume a position on the board. I have also been deeply involved in our schools and community as an active volunteer and OUSD parent. I understand the many facets of our unique education system and am committed to our town and its families. I am a diplomatic and impartial leader, and value data-driven decision-making, collaboration and strong communication with all stakeholders. If given the opportunity, I look forward to serving the Orinda community.

still interested," she laughed. "It's called the Costco Club."

Yes, Sofie, you'll need to experience many things while in California and Costco should definitely be one of them.

Mimi Bommarito has lived in Orinda for 15 years, yet never knew how super

cool Orinda's sister city, Tabor, south of Prague in the Czech Republic, actually is until she Googled it preparing for this interview.

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



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CLASSIFIEDS

◆ **LETTERS** from page 10

consider a yard sign or other volunteer opportunity.

She has my endorsement and my full support.

- Dennis Fay

Re-Elect Steven Danziger

In November, voters in MOFD District 3 will have the opportunity to re-elect Director Steven Danziger. For many others, and myself, it is no contest! Steven has demonstrated he is an effective leader, consistently taking actions to make our district safer. As a two-term president and current vice president, he's been at the forefront of efforts to increase fire prevention programming, strengthen the district's finances, ensure firefighters have the training and equipment they need and led the board during the pandemic turmoil.

Steven has 30 years of government experience and 20 as administrative manager with Oakland Fire. He knows local government – particularly the operations, finances and programs of the Fire Service.

He cares about our community and making us safe from wildfires. As Fire Adapted Community Ambassador and trained CERT volunteer, Steven volunteers with numerous local organizations, is presently Chair of Orinda Parks & Recreation Commission, was scoutmaster, swim club board member and he is a UC Master Gardener, making dozens of presentations on home hardening/firescaping – reach-

ing thousands. I understand his opponent has no background in government or fire and very little record of community volunteering.

Our "heroes," the men and women who serve MOFD, endorse Steven. They know what it takes and if you support our firefighters, you should vote for Steven. It is clear we need to re-elect Steven Danziger to the MOFD Board, so he may continue to represent District 3 and help make our community as safe as possible.

- John "Bob" Heath

Michelle Chang for OUSD Board

OUSD will have an election of new members in November, and we are lucky to have so many willing to serve. After reviewing the qualifications of all of the candidates, one stands head and shoulders above the others. Michelle Chang was a teacher and administrator in another District and now is a mom in ours. She brings a wealth of experience to the position that is unmatched by the other candidates. Please join me and vote for the best candidate for the position – Michelle Chang. We need her!

- Terry J. Murphy

Elect Vince for MOFD

I am writing in support of the candidacy of Vince Dell'Aquila for the MOFD Board of Directors, Division 3. I have known Vince for 25 years and have worked closely with him in his roles as Athletic Director of Miramonte High School and coach of Miramonte and Solano College teams. Vince is hard working, conscientious, works well with others and is a man of integrity. I am confident he would make a positive contribution as a member of the MOFD Board of Directors.

- Steve Harwood

◆ **PHILLIPS** from page 22

Orinda to merge district fundraising and allocation was key to address inequities at the different campuses, such as on types of technology used. Other resourcing topics to align by the board and parents clubs can include teacher aids and after school programs. For celebrating unique aspects of campus, special resources like the Nature Area at Wagner Ranch should be accessible by all students.

Changing lines used to assign students can be a possibility, with a focus on new Kindergarten students without siblings already attending an elementary school, and these discussions are ongoing. Notably, however, changing assignments can impact neighborhood camaraderie in addition to the logistics of family and bus schedules, and should be considered carefully.

Campus Facilities

As noted above, OUSD does not have extensive financial resources. To address needed repairs in campus facilities, we must look at both opportunities to prioritize and potentially push out less critical repairs and investigate new funding sources beyond those currently available. Significant amount of physical construction is happening on our campuses as we speak; for new projects and repairs, I would expect to work with the board and staff on necessary requirements and priorities, with a focus on those that impact student safety and learning.

With limited financial resources, we also

must look elsewhere. We can explore additional grants which can potentially support certain types of one-off expenditures and look to staff for continuing to find funding sources that match our needs. We can also look to the community for additional bonds but need to make sure we are clear in what that funding would support, and are listening to the community in their priorities for our schools as well.

Your Strengths

I believe I can uniquely represent students and parents to maintain our district excellence, as evidenced by:

My experience as an elected member of the Orinda City Council, evidencing both leadership (such as the prompt resolution of the Miner Road sinkhole) and a reputation for listening to citizen input and driving transparency of decision making.

My endorsements from a broad range of elected local officials, including all five of the current OUSD Board plus representatives from the Orinda City Council, MOFD, BART, and Contra Costa County, who can help me navigate cross-agency issues from fire safety to teacher housing.

My personal commitment to education, from Miramonte High School valedictorian through to my degrees from MIT and Stanford.

My profession as a tech executive, with specific experiences in educational technology and digital mental health, that are highly relevant to issues faced by the District today.

◆ **SCHOOLS** from page 9

students with physical or emotional challenges. The Mt. McKinley School at John A. Davis Juvenile Hall and the Contra Costa Adult School – which operates in three jails – are also run by the county office of education.

In its 2020-21 annual report to the community, CCCOE states that it served just over 200 students at its eight special education sites, as well as more than 6,500 students in 22 high schools, including court and community schools, with its Regional Occupation Program (ROP). The

ROP program "focuses on providing high-quality [career and technical education] pathways."

Acalanes Union High School District and Orinda Union School District (OUSD) are among those served by the CCCOE, with the 2020-'21 school year seeing 5,535 students enrolled in the high school district and 2,478 students enrolled in OUSD.

Acalanes offers various resources for students with disabilities, such as an adult transition program and Workability I, which offers students the opportunity to shadow at jobs as well as paid and non-paid work experience.

OUSD's four elementary schools and one intermediate school each have a resource specialist program to help students, with services such as speech-language therapy, occupational therapy and psychological services.

Morabe noted common ground exists in wanting the best for the students.

"Our focus is making sure students get the best education they can get," she said. "And the best resources they can get."

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

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 - Donate Your Vehicle** to The Orinda Association. Very easy! Call 925.326.5868.
 - Orinda Volunteer drivers needed** for one ride per month. Call SAT at 925.402.4506 to set up an appointment.
 - Unwanted Eye Glasses** are collected for Lions Club at The Orinda Association office, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda.

STUDENTS

My One-Month in the Ukraine War

By OGEI ANTON
Contributing Writer

Have you ever heard a whistle of shells hover your head? Have you ever seen the death of ordinary people from bombs? Unfortunately, I have. I have lived one month in the fire of war in Ukraine. I want people of America and Europe to learn what this nightmare looks like in my hometown, called Chernihiv, a small town in northern Ukraine.

I woke up early in the morning because I heard explosions. Immediately it became clear the war had begun. We had expected it for a long time, but found it no less shocking.

I'm a 17-year-old student, and since I can't take part in the hostilities, all I could do was observe what was happening around me. Observe and write down, then convey my memories to others.

After two weeks of war, Russian soldiers approached. They tried to break into Chernihiv, but our troops repelled the attack. Realizing that it would not be possible to capture Chernihiv quickly, the Russians proceeded to lay siege to the city

and began indiscriminate shelling, attacks and air bombing.

Our troops could only help delivering ammunition and food along one road. We held this road, but our attackers stood in front of it, constantly laying siege. The Russians fired at everything they saw. That's why the city had problems with food all month. Some people were starving, and some people were killed.

Light, heating, gas, water – all this was gone as soon as the Russians took the city into a semicircle. They purposefully hit communications sights, hoping that in this way they could undermine the spirit of the city's defenders.

All month long, a bloody confrontation took place on the outskirts of the city. The invaders landed bombs from planes on us. I remember a 10-day period when Russian bombers flew in every night. At that time, we didn't have a good anti-aircraft system in the city.

I cannot describe in words the feelings I had when lying in complete darkness, without any light or water, hearing the rumble of an enemy aircraft. Only one thought was spinning in my head – “maybe a bomb will



OGEI ANTON

Ogei Anton captured this image from the outskirts of where he lived in Chernihiv, a small town in Northern Ukraine. The 17-year-old recounts his experiences living with a war around him.

Top Awards to Volunteers at boys team charity Orinda TeamMates

By MICHELLE BEA
Contributing Writer

Once again, boys team charity (btc) Orinda TeamMates logged 1,849 volunteer hours in and around the community during the 2021-22 membership year.

Orinda TeamMates volunteered at a wide range of organizations: White Pony Express, 10,000 Lunches, Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center, Wagner Ranch Nature Center, Monument Crisis Center and the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano County.

At the annual year-end meeting in May, many of the boys were recognized for their outstanding commitment serving their community.

Class of 2024's Casey Scheiner was commended for logging the most philanthropic hours among all btc Orinda TeamMates. In Scheiner's first year volunteering, he registered 100 service hours. Some of his favorite projects included the Trinity Center, Grateful Gatherings and White Pony Express.

Along with others from the Class of 2024, Scheiner worked at the Trinity Center to hand out blankets and other necessities at the daytime homeless shelter.



COURTESY OF BOYS TEAM CHARITY ORINDA TEAMMATES

Casey Scheiner (Class of 2024) was honored for the most philanthropy hours, earning 100 hours, among his btc Orinda TeamMates.

He talked about his experience at the shelter.

“I really appreciated getting to talk with people in the shelter and see the direct impact the shelter had on their lives,” said Scheiner.

At White Pony Express, Scheiner worked in the food rescue service, sorting good produce from bad and assembling bags of groceries for individuals and families.

Scheiner also worked with TeamMates [SEE BTC page 32]



COURTESY OF BOYS TEAM CHARITY ORINDA TEAMMATES

Luke Lamison (Class of 2022) achieved the highest cumulative philanthropic service hours earned across six years, earning over 140 cumulative hours.


hit me now.”

Our defenders had some Stingers, not an ideal weapon versus Russian night air attacks. Still, they must have scared Russian pilots since they dropped bombs anywhere dodging any possible response from the ground. Bombs often hit residential buildings, killing and maiming old people and children. After some time, we got more anti-aircraft systems, and Russian airplanes stopped regularly flying and bombing my city.

In late March, the Russians, realizing their attacks had completely failed, and they could not occupy my city. They decided to retreat. I remember this day clearly, April 1.

I then stood in line for humanitarian [SEE UKRAINE page 32]

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ORINDA CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

◆ IVERSON from page 11

housing in the next eight years is way out of proportion to Orinda's growth rate and is a mismatch with our city profile. In the last eight years, we created 346 new dwellings (beating the 227 required), and we have fewer than 10% renters vs. the 44% Bay Area average. This is the proverbial hammer where a scalpel is called for, and the City planners have been downright heroic in delivering a plan to meet this new hurdle. We can't afford to lose local control over approvals.

Our semi-rural charm and multi-decade resident tenure is at odds with the kind of small, dense apartments that would most easily fit the bill to meet our State numbers. It's up to us to meet our housing numbers in a way that: 1) makes downtown improvements happen, and/or 2) creates housing for Orinda's workforce, and where possible with ownership or family-sized units that match the greatest need. Priority for below market rate units to go to Orinda employed families first is in our existing plan, but more people need to benefit from it.

Downtown Precise Plan

The current draft of the plan is a roadmap for Orinda's downtown revitalization, and it's ready to be put in place this December.

It's hard to overstate the importance of the DPP and how, combined with the need to create new housing, it is a critical step to unlocking the potential of our older, under-utilized downtown sites.

Prior to the State SB35 housing laws, the debate was over what price we were willing to pay to get financially viable projects downtown. Were we willing to have taller buildings or apartments downtown if that brought more retail? Would residential units over retail even work in a small town? SB35 changed the question from if to how we should create more housing, and it compelled us to make a bolder plan for what we'll allow in the commercial district. Until now, a potential project had to ask for a variance on an allowed density of only 10 units per acre, and in a town with an anti-growth reputation. The one, truly important thing these downtown zoning changes bring is certainty. That certainty doesn't just bring projects forward, it makes parcels more valuable for landowners who might consider selling. The DPP should be in place before this group starts – we will be a success when projects actually get done.

We should also go beyond the state's playbook of density for affordable housing and add retail and parking incentives of our own. Other cities have had success offering

things like extra height or expedited permitting for including retail or excess parking capacity, and we should include models that work here. More ways to make projects feasible is a win-win. Finally, the Connect Orinda studies had some great suggestions for the public spaces that I would like to help make happen.

Three Areas of Need

Downtown Revitalization: Voters resoundingly cite our tired, nothing-ever-changes downtown as their top issue for this election. They want to know why we're losing retail tenants, why Theatre Square seems to struggle, and what that means for attracting new projects. It's time to start making things actually happen.

Safety: One of the main reasons people move to Orinda are its schools and the feeling of safety. The Measure R wildfire programs have been a big success for evacuation protocols, creating fire breaks, and grassroots awareness. Here, we just need to make sure resources are spent to keep safety front and center, as always.

Response to State Housing Policies: One thing we can all agree on is that we don't want to lose local control over the entitlement of large housing projects, so meeting our housing numbers is a priority. Recent laws making ADUs, lot splits, and

second units automatically allowed are still new, and the consequences remain to be seen. Will we get infill duplexes jammed on small lots or family compounds better using existing land resources? It could be the best kind of inclusionary zoning, or it may detract from neighborhood charm and beauty.

Leadership Skills

My most relevant experience was chairing the Planning Commission from 2018-2020, a time when the elements of the Downtown Precise Plan were coming together. Serving in a leadership capacity on a public commission gives me years of experience in the kind of consensus decision-making we will need for the City Council. Also, with three seats open, having the continuity of someone who has worked on implementing State housing policies, permits for parcels downtown, and Wilder matters will be a big help. I am now in my 7th year on the Planning Commission and am proud of the way the group makes decisions in terms of both the process and the results. I have also been a senior executive in several companies, where consensus decision-making is just as important. I can contribute skills in law, finance, and negotiations and a strong background in real estate and land use.

◆ RAJARAMAN from page 11

amazing is our schools - as the father of two students who attend Orinda public schools, I want to make sure we keep our best teachers from turning away from our district.

To the point above, I am focused on the inclusionary zoning ordinance. I have not yet formed a strong opinion on what the City should do, but I am aware that some of our neighboring cities have inclusionary zoning ordinances (including Lafayette).

Daly City, Santa Clara and other cities have figured out ways to keep teachers from churning through finding ways to slot affordable housing for teachers. Daly City had 25% churn in its teacher population in one high school alone before they focused on this problem.

I want to work with the School Board to keep our schools top notch, which will help all residents (and continue to make Orinda an attractive place to live). A big part of this equation will be solving this problem - whether through the inclusionary zoning ordinance, or otherwise. I believe this can be done without sacrificing Orinda's unique character.

Downtown Precise Plan

I fully support the Downtown Precise Plan and commend the Council for their work on getting us to this point. The biggest job of the new Council - in my opinion - is to see the plan all the way through.

Perhaps the biggest callout I would make

is that we need to make sure local businesses that have been in Orinda for a long period of time do not get left behind. There will definitely be impact as the way the plan is written to a lot of local businesses, and we want to make sure we provide support to them on an ongoing basis in the face of all the change.

With regard to incentives and strategy, I think it's the new Council's duty to track progress very publicly on the plan. And notify the public when we are off plan, how much we are spending, and where we've hit snags. Without public accountability, we will not continue to make progress.

I am not a real estate developer by trade, but numerous council members and candidates are. I'll rely on the expertise of the council to supplement my knowledge here.

Where I can support is attracting some of the top retailers to Orinda in partnership with the Council. I also plan on frequently using technology that is easily available to the community to get a sense of what residents actually want. And using my background in tech analytics to find ways to bring retail in that satisfies the largest number of residents, without sacrificing on 'must haves' (safety, no excessive traffic, etc).

Three Areas of Need

Focus. If there's one thing I've learned from the business world is that if you try to do too many things, you're in ef-

fect doing nothing. I consider keeping Orinda a safe place to live as table stakes. Outside of safety - I'm most focused on:

- Making sure the great work the existing council has done on the Downtown Precise Plan goes all the way through.
- Working with the School Board to keep the quality of education very high. It's a major part of what drew us to Orinda and will bring other families this way for decades to come - provided we can provide affordable housing for teachers and support the School Board in any way we can.
- Fiscal discipline. The city has done an amazing job planning for the future and being fiscally responsible (credit to the Council for this). I'd only like to add to that by seeing if we can bring in some new retail, thereby increasing tax revenue - which obviously has numerous positive effects on the community writ large.

◆ DREXEL from page 12

to get more shopping and dining options.

Third, we must manage the impact of state housing mandates on our safety and quality of life. As we are required to plan for roughly 1400 housing units in the next eight years, there is a risk of congestion and scale that isn't becoming of Orinda. This may create an unsafe environment in the event of a wildfire. I will do everything I can to make sure our safety and quality of life come first.

Leadership Skills

Active listening has been essential in the leadership positions I've held over the years. More recently, I was brought in as an executive to transform a large organiza-

Leadership Skills

I am an entrepreneur at heart, but I've been fortunate to have a varied number of career experiences. I've built companies from scratch to millions of revenue raising funds from the top venture capitalists in the world. I've personally invested in a number of successful private companies. And been part of the executive team at public companies. I've even had the opportunity to teach technology product management at UCLA as an adjunct professor. The common thread between all of these varied experiences is I have a strong sense of what success could look like in different settings, so I'm not intimidated by being thrown into something completely new. I believe the fact that I don't have experience in public office, and that I'm relatively new to Orinda, are actually major assets to the Council. I have a fresh set of eyes, and an unlimited amount of energy to contribute.

tion, to help re-align how work was done, how people were organized, create a vision, and enable and motivate people to reflect that change and do great things. Listening was step one and in all the other steps in that process.

A sense of fairness is also important. A leader understands all stakeholders in a situation, finds balance and moves forward towards a common goal in the most equitable way possible. I put this skill to the test on the Oakland Civil Service Board; we had to balance the interests of city workers, the community, and taxpayers to find just outcomes. Being the former chair and current commissioner of the Orinda Parks and Recreation Commission also puts this skill to the test.

◆ MALKANI from page 18

serve our constituencies.

I originally ran for this position based on feedback I received from many community members that they want their City Council representatives to listen and really hear their concerns and bring fresh ideas to our community. Listening and hearing is job one as a mother and as a lawyer. But job two is

taking what you hear and finding effective solutions. That is what I strive to do every single day.

I have held numerous leadership positions in my professional life and in our community – supporting our schools, youth sports, scouting, local arts, and charitable organizations.

For more information, please see www.latika4orinda.com.



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VISUAL ARTS

Jeff Heyman Comes Full Circle with his First Love of Photography

By KATHY CORDOVA
Staff Writer

After a diverse career that spanned the globe and even included a stint at the United Nations, Orinda resident Jeff Heyman is getting back to the passion of his youth – photography.

He always intended to return to it when he retired, and in June 2021, the time finally came. A little over a year later, the City of Lafayette Public Art Committee selected Heyman to hold his first solo exhibition at their Town Hall Theatre Gallery.

“Triptychs,” a collection of 36 photographs displayed in groups of three, runs Oct. 3 to Nov. 18, with an opening reception Sunday, Oct. 9, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Heyman describes the exhibit as a series of many potential narratives.

“I had no stories in mind when I made the photos,” he said. “So, it is left up to the viewers to invent their own stories for each triptych.”

All images are in black and white – Heyman’s preferred style.

“I believe black and white photography is often more emotive than color,” he said. “It’s more about light and shadow. And it’s also more fun!”

Heyman’s interest in photography began at San Ramon Valley High School, where a teacher, who had a profound influence on him, encouraged him.

“He knew Ansel Adams and he [the teacher] spent a lot of time helping me develop my classic techniques,” said Heyman.

After graduation, Heyman attended San Francisco State University, where he received a Bachelor’s Degree in

fine art photography.

Although there was a time when Heyman considered pursuing fashion photography, he said, “Life gets in the way. That didn’t work out and I had to bring in a paycheck.” Over the years, he worked at several different jobs, often incorporating photography into his responsibilities.

In his most recent position as communications analyst for the City of Lafayette, he took photos of city council meetings and events to use in newsletters and social media.

Ultimately, Heyman has no regrets about how his professional life unfolded.

“I feel really good about how it’s worked out,” he said. “Heck, I’ve had a lot of fun and was able to take photos and use them to promote the city.”

When he retired, people told him to make sure he had something to do. He took that advice to heart and founded his company, Outcasts Revisited Media LLC. In addition to communications consulting and fine art photography, he also hosts “Outcasts Revisited,” a radio show about classic punk rock and freelances as a photographer and writer for *The Orinda News*.

Heyman shares how he feels about achieving recognition for his photography at this point in his life.

“I’ve had photos in other exhibits over the years and I’ve won a few awards,” he said. “But having a solo show is very cool. Going back to my passion feels good. The neat thing is I am resurrecting things I learned. It feels as if this is what I should be doing.”

Kathy Cordova can be reached at khcordova@gmail.com.



COURTESY OF JEFF HEYMAN

Orinda photographer **Jeff Heyman**, seen here in self-portraits from 1976 and 2022, has his first solo exhibit at the Town Hall Theatre Gallery in Lafayette. His exhibit, “Triptychs,” featuring new work runs Oct. 3 to Nov. 18.

◆ DELAHUNT from page 16

tional Leadership in 2002 from the University of the Pacific.

I am a graduate of UC Berkeley, a member of CAL Alumni, the Rotary Club of Orinda and I have spent 38 years in California schools as a teacher, principal and district administrator. My contributions also include policy work while employed as an Educational Consultant for the California Department of Education.

Additionally, as GATE teacher for Sleepy Hollow, I wrote Gifted and Talented Units utilized by the District for many years.

My husband, Michael, and I raised our two daughters in Orinda and also have three grandchildren living in Orinda. I believe my personal skill set and deep roots in the community puts me in an excellent position to address the complicated issues facing our schools.

Please contact me at 925.323.8367.

◆ ALLEN from page 9

always had an eye for fundraising from following her father’s work. He did fundraising in Oakland.

ONE was created to fund more efficiently public schools within the area by having a group specifically set up to organize donations from parents, businesses and community members in Orinda.

Allen has big plans and a passion for bettering the community through her new role at ONE.

“I would love to start that conversation about how we can bring the community – as a whole – together to support our schools. Orinda is a fabulous town,” said Allen. “A lot of families are moving in so they can have their kids here. Let’s educate them as to why the schools are so great. It really comes back to the parents and the community.”

Annabella Booth can be reached at annabellabooth@gmail.com.

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Pet of the Month



NORAH MENDOZA

The Mendoza family, Leah, Paul, Emery and Norah, took in a stray cat they named **Eevee**. They think she was born somewhere around Aug. 2021. "We think she is a Siamese, and we've been loving her ever since the Monday before Thanksgiving," said Norah Mendoza.

Annual Festival of Trees Luncheon and Fashion Show Fundraiser

By BARBARA CORSI
Contributing Writer

Once again, the Orinda Woman's Club will sponsor a day to enjoy friends, food and fundraising fun. The 36th annual Festival of Trees Luncheon and Fashion Show is set for Thursday, Nov. 17, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the San Ramon Marriott Hotel.

Seating is limited and early reservations encouraged, according to Club President Jean Barnhart. This is the Orinda Woman's Club's annual major fundraising event. Dan Ashley, co-anchor of *Channel 7 News*, returns as Master of Ceremonies.

In addition to the luncheon and fashion show, there will be a silent auction, destination drawing and raffles for beautiful gift baskets, tabletop trees and wreaths.

Familia Unidas is a major beneficiary of this year's event. Located in Richmond, *Familias Unidas* works with a diverse population in West Contra Costa County. The organization deals with the problems of employment, homelessness, hunger and mental health. Funds generated from Festival of Trees will get focused on youth and mental health issues. *Familia Unidas* methods aim to empower individuals and connect them to relevant resources.

The Orinda Woman's Club Community Service Committee also benefits from this year's fundraiser. Proceeds will allow the committee to fund educational grants and donate to local organizations that address needs of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Past recipients of funding from the Orinda Woman's Club include CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) of Contra Costa County, Holden High School in Orinda, Infant Mental Health Program in Richmond, Project Second Chance of Contra Costa County and Seniors Around Town in Orinda, to name a few.

Back by popular demand, this year's fashion show will feature "runway style" modeling, according to club member and Fashion House Chair Patti Camras.

J. Jill, Chicco and J. McLaughlin will provide trending winter and holiday attire.

"We're excited about showcasing casual fashions in a friendly atmosphere," said Camras.

Models will include members of the



COURTESY OF ORINDA WOMAN'S CLUB

Orinda Woman's Club member, **Karen Norris**, arranges a tabletop tree raffled off in last year's Festival of Trees.

Orinda Woman's Club and local women such as former Orinda City Councilwoman and Mayor, Victoria Smith and Cindy Powell of The Orinda Association.

"It's fun knowing our friends and neighbors are, once again, the super models this year," added Camras.

Dozens of themed and decorated tabletop Christmas trees, lavish baskets filled with treasures and festive wreaths will be raffled to winning ticket purchasers.

In previous years, the tabletop trees featured a "Gold and Silver" money tree, a "Peppermint Palooza" and a "Winter Wonderland." Raffle baskets last year included "A Day at the Claremont Spa" and "Chardonnay Lover's Dream."

Silent auction items from past Festival of Trees events featured gift certificates to local restaurants Trader Vic's, Postino and TuTu's, a Tiffany decanter and a Big Game ticket package. Last year over 60 silent auction items were available. Auction items allow participants to indulge themselves or treat a friend to something special.

To purchase tickets online, visit www.OrindaWomensClub.org. For more information, call Janet Nelson at 925.451.0559 or Barbara Corsi at 925.788.7589. Tickets are \$95 per person (general parking is included). Donations are welcome and can be made via the online reservation form.

Barbara Corsi can be reached at barbara.corsi@compass.com.

What's On Deck With Parks & Rec!

2022 Fall Activity Guide is Online!
Go to www.orindaparksandrec.org.

Friday Night Movies in the Park
Movie begins at dusk. Orinda Community Park
October 7 - E.T.

Senior Trips and Wisdom Workshops are back!
Check "Senior Programs" in the online activity guide.

Food Trucks Every Thursday, 5 - 8 p.m.
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OBITUARIES

Celebration of Life for Orinda Resident Flo Weber Takes Place Oct. 9

By THE WEBER FAMILY

Florence (Flo) Dean Woodman Weber passed away July 13, surrounded in love by her five children. Flo touched many people with her positive outlook on life and her gentle kind spirit.

Flo was born in Evanston, Illinois, June 25, 1931. She graduated from Evanston Township High School and enrolled at Northwestern. Flo left Northwestern to marry her high school sweetheart, Carl J. Weber in 1952. Flo and Carl immediately moved to New York City living on 90th West. After two years, Flo and Carl returned to Evanston. While in Evanston, Flo and Carl had three children (Joe, Wendy, Nat). In 1959, Flo and Carl moved to Orinda and added two more children (Liz and Gretchen).

Flo was very dedicated to raising her children and was very active in the community. She served on numerous boards including the Orinda Woman's Club, AAUW, Democratic Party, Orinda Park Pool and The Orinda Association (OA). Flo took immense enjoyment on the OA board when the City was incorporated in

1986. Her other volunteer efforts included being a Brownie leader, musical accompanist, Meals-on-Wheels volunteer, working with the Head Start program and the yard duty lady at Orinda Union School (she called herself the "Yard Duty Fuzz"), to name a few.

An accomplished musician, Flo returned to Diablo Valley College in the 1970s and ultimately graduated in 1978 from the University of California Berkeley with a Bachelor of Arts degree in music. Flo went on to have an illustrious career in adult education for both Acalanes and Alameda County School Districts teaching music, history and current events. She also enjoyed sharing with her classes the stories of her many worldly travels with Carl. Flo returned to school to study California Natural History and was a docent at the Oakland Museum for over 30 years.

Music and the arts were an important part of Flo's joy. Flo played piano and sang in various groups including, Women Sing, Cantare, Village Singers, Weber Family Caroling Group and other local groups. Flo and Carl were patrons of the arts and

enjoyed supporting San Francisco Opera, ACT (American Conservatory Theatre), Berkeley Repertory, San Francisco and East Bay Symphony, Cal Shakes and Leshner Center for the Arts.

Flo was an avid bridge player. She and Carl regularly joined many friends for foursomes, hosting or playing at friends' homes, as well as at the Oakland Athletic Club/Bellevue Club.

Flo, a spiritual woman, raised her children at Santa Maria Church before moving to Newman Holy Spirit Church in Berkeley. Raised Episcopalian, she frequently attended St. Stephens Church in Orinda.

Flo joins her beloved husband of 65 years, Carl J. Weber (deceased 2017) with the Lord. Flo will be greatly missed by her loving family, Joe Weber (Judith) of Portola Valley and their children Elle Koleckar (Kevin), Matt (Austin), and Sam; Wendy Thorpe of Walnut Creek and her children Natalie Munoz (Rene), Joanna Warden (Jamie), and Andrew; Nat Weber (Jill) of Moraga and their children Allie and Ted;



COURTESY OF WEBER FAMILY

Flo Weber gave freely of her time to volunteer with local organizations and, along with her husband Carl, was an avid supporter of the arts.

Liz Witbeck (Ray), of Orinda and their children Esther and Hannah, and Gretchen Latimer (Jim) of Orinda and their children Katie Martinez (Andrew), Nick, and Jay.

[SEE WEBER page 31]

Stefanie Wayson Passes Sept. 5

By TOM WAYSON

Stefanie Wayson passed away in her sleep on Sept. 5. She is survived by her son Tom Wayson and grandsons Charles and Paul Wayson. She is predeceased by her husband Richard "Dennis" Wayson and brother Juan "Jay" Rodrigo.



COURTESY OF TOM WAYSON

Stefanie Wayson (1941-2022), who passed away Sept. 5, was an avid patron of the Orinda Library. "In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Friends of the Orinda Library," said son, Tom Wayson.

Stefanie and Dennis moved to Orinda in 1985, where she lived for over 30 years. During that time, she worked as a data analyst for American President Lines in Oakland and then for VISA in Foster City. Stefanie and Dennis were active in the Orinda Newcomers Club, and Stefanie was an avid patron of the Orinda Library, where she stocked up on books on tape for her long commute and novels to read while curled up with her kitties.

Stefanie grew up in Greenbrae and was the eldest of nine cousins, many of whom grew up in Orinda. After graduating from Redwood High School, she went to Stanford for her Bachelors Degree and then Cornell for her Masters in engineering, where she met Dennis. When it came time for them to move to California, Stefanie thought Orinda would be a wonderful place to raise their family, and she was right.

Stefanie was a loving mother, a fun-loving grandmother, beloved sister, admired cousin and dear friend. She will be greatly missed.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Friends of the Orinda Library.

A Celebration of Life was held Sep. 24 at Woodhall, but a virtual memorial can be found at: <https://www.forevermissed.com/stefanie-wayson/>.

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ORINDA ART SCENE

Orinda Art Scene

OCTOBER IN THE ART GALLERIES AT THE ORINDA LIBRARY AND WILDER



DAVID FONSECA

Art Gallery at the Orinda Library: Abstract Clay Monoprints, Photography, Books and Collages and Botanical Watercolors

The Lamorinda Arts Council presents abstract clay monoprints by Pamela Stefl Toki, photography by John Brown, books and collages by Suellen Cox and watercolors by Linda Kam in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library during October.

Learn more about these artists, Saturday,

Oct. 8, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m., at a reception where light refreshments will be served.

East Bay artist Toki shares her abstract clay monoprints this month.

“In a life and culture where so much is scheduled and predetermined, the making of art becomes sacred and soulful, revealing deeper aspects of myself,” she said. “Sharing this with others completes the journey – in this great mystery of life.”

Shift, her 84” x 42” metal-infused piece from an original clay monoprint, will be installed for a year outside the Orinda Library right before the Oct. 8 indoor exhibition.

Toki explained the meaning behind *Shift*. “It refers to the new reality we are all undergoing, with many changes and challenges, including the potential opportunities for growth, healing, deeper reflection and humanity’s shift into raised awareness,” she said.

“I think of my art as a reflection of something that wishes to emerge,” Toki added.

See more of her work and read about her artistic vision at www.pamelastefl.com/gallery.html.

Brown, a local photographer and treasurer for the Lamorinda Arts Council, reveals the rationale behind his new exhibition at the Orinda Library.

“My pictures will be in four categories: people, places, animals and black and white,” he said. “I did parks last time; I am trying to show a variety of work.”

“I think of myself as a nature photogra-



JOHN BROWN

As part of his *People, Places, Animals, and Black & White* exhibition at the Orinda Library gallery, John Brown captured a creepily clad reveler during the festivities of Brazil’s famous Carnival.



DAVID CHOI

Part of David Choi’s Human Life series, *One Hundred Eight Knots* replicates and expresses journeys of life into woodcut reliefs that depict happiness, labor, love and pleasure.

pher,” Brown added, “but the characterization is broad, rather than limiting. I explore nature in the wild, nature of people, nature of animals and nature of cities and communities.”

See more of his diverse photography at www.johnsbrown.com.

Orinda artist Cox, worked at Saint Mary’s College Library in Moraga for four years. Prior, she was a tenured librarian at California State University Fullerton.

She blends her library experience with her artistic talents to showcase her *Books and Collages* collection at the Orinda Library.

“I’ve spent my life – a well-ordered life – in libraries surrounded by books in an often chaotic, usually messy, yet always infinitely interesting world,” said Cox. “Now retired from academic librarianship, I try, through my artwork of artists’ books, mixed-media collage and assemblage, to bring a sense of symmetry, harmony and discovery into our world. My work is quiet, observant and reflective. It tells a story.”

Learn more about how Cox uses her art to tell stories at www.suellencox.com.

Orinda artist Kam exhibits her botanical watercolors. She taught art for 17 years in the Orinda Union School District, where she introduced a variety of art mediums to her students. After retirement, she eventually returned to her original love, painting and drawing.

A member of the Northern California Society of Botanical Artists (NCalsBA), Kam’s botanical art portfolio is comprised of watercolors, ranging from edible fruits and colorful flowers to succulents and seedpods.

Learn more about Kam and her watercolors at <https://artzlinda.wixsite.com/mysite> and <http://www.ncalsba.org/wordpress/ncalsba-main/gallery/kam/>.

Art Gallery at Wilder: Wood Cutout Works

The Lamorinda Arts Council (LAC) presents the woodcut relief designs of featured artist David Choi at their virtual Art Gallery at Wilder, Oct. 1 through Nov. 5. Enjoy more of Choi’s artwork at www.lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries/.

Originally from Korea, Choi now calls the East Bay his home.

“Previously, the subject of my work concerned neglected and abandoned city streets and back alleys depicted in etchings/print works. However, my latest projects, within the *Human Life* series, replicate and express journeys of life into woodcut reliefs that portray happiness, labor, love and pleasure,” he said.

Choi believes art is interpreted generally through the eye of the beholder, but if someone were to ask him what he wants him or her to see through his work, his answer is simple.

“Human life,” he said. “Our time here on earth may feel short, but throughout our lives we go through countless, perhaps seemingly infinite, amounts of emotions, feelings and expressions. I want to replicate and depict such human life in my style of artwork.”

Choi added, “I found it fascinating that in the Buddhist tradition, with open interpretation, there are 108 earthly feelings in life. Thus, going forward, I plan to continue to create 108 pieces of woodcut relief to signify those expressions of feelings in life. This will be my ongoing work on the *Human Life* series.”

For years, Choi has been interested in yin and yang energies or forces.

“They’re believed to be the origin of the universe in East Asian philosophy,” he said. “This may be another part of my inspira-

[SEE WILDER page 31]



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LOCAL BUSINESS

Andrew Eyman Takes Ownership of the Orinda Frame Store

By JEFF HEYMAN
Contributing Writer

Andrew Eyman, the new owner of the Orinda Frame Store, has some fresh, new ideas for the shop.

“This isn’t the old Orinda Frame Store anymore,” said Eyman, who heralds from Walnut Creek.

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the old Orinda Frame Store, according to Eyman, is coming back to life step-by-step with him readying it “for realities of the 21st Century art world.” He aims to have the shop fully open this fall.

A longtime visual artist, Eyman tries to leave no detail unnoticed.

“Every speck of dust matters,” said Eyman. “I’m very particular about details, especially when I am framing a work of art.”

Also particular about the store itself, he said he plans to make it “a cool, fun place for people to come to.” Eyman said he envisions the shop as a place to reflect the art world writ large, from the store’s furniture, layout, lighting and music, in short – the entire customer experience.

Already, as Eyman readies the store for new and past customers alike, it has a hip, cool vibe with house music playing in the background and a colorful interior full of an array of frame options.

“My big passions are art and music; they are the two main things in my life,” he said. “I plan to have a gallery space as part of the shop with all kinds of music playing: house, film scores, classical and more.”

Art has been a big part of Eyman’s life ever since he was a child growing up in San Francisco.

“Art was my whole life. I used to draw all day as a kid – I still have an indent in my finger where I held the pencil,” he said.

Receiving a scholarship to study at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, Eyman went on to the San Francisco Art Institute and then on a four-year visual arts residency in Paris. That experience, he said, “was life changing in many ways,” introducing him to a host of artistic genres and people from all over the world.

“I got to know different art styles, from art deco to contemporary, as well as current trends in the art world,” said Eyman.

Eyman returned home to the Bay Area in 2003 to continue his art. While putting together a portfolio at Diablo Valley College, he realized he could frame the work himself.

“I’m good with my hands and always liked to make things,” he said.

That talent is evidenced as Eyman showed off an experimental frame he built, illuminated with LEDs that can be programmed to change color.

Eyman worked at Michael’s Art Supply and other frame shops, including the Orinda Frame Store, of which he took ownership on July 1.

“This will be a high-quality, custom



JEFF HEYMAN

Andrew Eyman, new owner of Orinda Frame Store, located at 110 Village Square, said he has fresh new ideas for his store.

frame shop,” he said.

Located at 110 Village Square, the Orinda Frame Store opens this fall. It’s currently taking special orders. For more information, email orindaframe110@gmail.com.

Jeff Heyman can be reached at heyman.foto@gmail.com.

◆ WILDER from page 30

tion for my artwork. I want to express that principle with human figures on woodcut print – in Korean or Classical Chinese – the raised engraving is called yang carving and the depressed on it, is yin carving. Interestingly, when printing, the yin and yang carvings on wood give the opposite result on paper.”

“In printmaking as well as in the philosophy, yin can become yang and yang can become yin,” Choi added.

Discover more of Choi’s work and read about what else inspires his artistry at www.sooanddavidchoi.com.

The Wilder Art and Garden Center is located at 20 Orinda Fields Lane. The virtual exhibit runs Oct. 1 through Nov. 5. Schedule a viewing by appointment with Curator Ani Breslin by contacting anistonbreslin@berkeley.edu. For more information, call the Lamorinda Arts Council at 925.359.9940.

David Fonseca can be reached at davef52@gmail.com.

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visit www.tomfranco.com.

John Toki, a Bay Area studio artist and retired adjunct professor from California College of the Arts (CCA) in Oakland, attended the installation. He’s an art textbook author and co-author of several books on ceramic sculpture. Toki was also Franco’s art teacher at CCA.

“It’s important that the next generation of art students contributes to our society through the arts,” said Toki.

He talked about the crucial experience the art students received during the installation.

“They got an opportunity to learn how to run a crane and how to manifest large sculptures,” said Toki. “They don’t get that in college. With this, they get this real-life experience that is so valuable.”

An educator for over 25 years, Toki retired as a faculty member from the CCA in 2007. Throughout his career he conducted workshops and lectured widely. Read more about Toki’s art at www.johntoki.com.

To find out more about LAB, see

www.localartistsberkeley.org.

The Art in Public Places program, or “ArtSpace Orinda,” has placed outdoor sculptures in Orinda since 2007. Its mission recognizes artists as important cultural resources, installs artwork throughout the city to broaden public awareness and encourages dialogue about public art.

To find out more about Art in Public Places, visit www.artspaceorinda.org.

David Fonseca can be reached at davef52@gmail.com.

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She is also survived by nine great grandchildren Grace, Shepherd, Carpenter, Lucas, Michael, Benjamin, Avery, Charlotte and Eleanor. Flo is also survived by her sister-in-law, Natalie Weber.

Her Celebration of Life is Oct. 9 at the Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, at 2 p.m. Please join us in celebrating a magnificent life well lived.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Oakland Museum of California.

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The chip shortage for new vehicles still raises questions with no real answers as things continue to change. New vehicles, if any are on a lot, are selling above MSRP (Manufacture Suggested Retail Price), and used ones are valued higher than usual, due to the shortage.

Many people in the U.S. shop for new vehicles by going to a dealer, picking one they like and driving off the lot the same day, which isn't a realistic option these days.

There are, however, some ways to avoid dealer mark-ups. One is to find a dealership that honors the MSRP; another is to order a vehicle and option it however one pleases. The downside is waiting for it to be built and delivered to the dealer. Not every dealership will allow this tactic of avoiding mark-ups, stating it's their policy.

Another imminent issue dealerships will face is a shortage of lease returns. Under normal circumstances, a leased vehicle would be returned to the dealership and the vehicle would be serviced and prepped for sale. But since used cars are valued higher than before, people leasing are in an odd place. Some are actually able to sell their lease to a company such as CarMax and pocket some money as a result.

Certain manufactures won't allow this. For example, a Hyundai lease is not allowed to be sold to a third party, such as CarMax. The lease will have to be returned to Hyundai or bought out. This is due to the fact the lease is financed by Hyundai itself; many other brands do this as well.

The other variable with leases right

now gets put into play because some people may choose to buy it out since the market is scarce. All of this results in fewer lease returns for dealers to sell.

Moving forward, manufactures are starting to take notice of things that need to change. Electric Vehicle (EV) brands have notoriously shifted the way people purchase cars by doing everything online, with customers picking the vehicle up at a store or through home delivery.



DAVID DIERKS
This 2022 Porsche Taycan electric vehicle (EV) appeared at the Orinda Classic Car Show.

Ordering your car may become a norm in the future. Doing so would contrast with the traditional U.S. way of purchasing. European and Asian countries are already using this alternative, since some dealers there do not have the real estate to keep a large inventory of vehicles on their lots.

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◆ BTC from page 25

on a project for Grateful Gatherings. Tasked with setting up an apartment for a family in need, the team did everything, from hanging decorations to moving furniture to setting up the TV.

"I will never forget the moment at the end when the family entered the apartment," said Scheiner. "So much joy and gratitude! It was clear what a huge impact Grateful Gatherings had made on the family's life."

Luke Lamison (Class of 2022) achieved the highest cumulative philanthropic service hours earned across his six years with btc Orinda. He earned over 140 cumulative hours, working extensively with Aspire Education Project – Community Reading Buddies, which he founded. Lamison plans to study business and economics at the University of California, Los Angeles in the fall.

Nine TeamMates were recognized with the Single A Award (25+ hours) during the League year: Kellen Baker, Carson Beury, Charlie Burke, Aidan Chan, Michael Gkatzimas, Luke Lamison, Ryan Sinnreich, Andrew Sinnreich and Hayden Westover. Salman Aseem, Sulaiman Aseem and Logan Letulle – were awarded the Double A Award (50+ hours). Kyle Odmark was awarded the Triple A Award (75+ hours).

Additional recognition was given to the TeamMate who earned the most philanthropy hours in each class year during the league year. Awards were presented to: Luke Lamison (2022), Kyle Odmark (2023), Casey Scheiner (2024), Sulaiman Aseem (2025), Logan Letulle (2026) and Salman Aseem (2027).

The Class of 2023 was recognized as the class with the most total volunteer hours, with over 375 hours.

In addition to the btc awards, several TeamMates were honored to receive the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. This award is given to TeamMates who earn 50+

hours (ages 15 and under) or 100+ hours (age 16 and up). Recipients included Casey Scheiner ('24), Sulaiman Aseem ('25), Logan Letulle ('26) and Salman Aseem ('27).

The boys team charity is a volunteer service organization dedicated to developing an altruistic spirit in young men through active participation of parents and sons in philanthropic projects in their communities.

Teams of seventh through twelfth grade boys, along with their coaches (parents), work together to provide hands-on support to non-profit charity organizations in local communities. In addition to providing valuable community service, the organization strives to promote personal growth, strengthen family relationships, develop team skills and provide educational opportunities for young men.

For more information about btc Orinda League, visit https://btcorinda.chapterweb.net/c_default.aspx.

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◆ UKRAINE from page 25

aid. Suddenly, news spread throughout the crowd. "Russian retreat, we won!" and at the same moment, there was a deafening roar. All our artillery, all batteries, which saved every shell during the siege, opened fire on the fleeing Russian columns. They fired all day, from early morning until late evening, carrying revenge for every dead person in my city. And in the evening, the Internet was filled with video from the outskirts of the city, where people from all over the world saw broken Russian columns and abandoned equipment.

American friends, please remember our feat as the war winds on, and may you all have a peaceful sky above your head.

Ogei Anton can be reached at vovkadeg115@gmail.com.



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