

CITY'S EARLY COMMUNITARIAN SPIRIT LIVES ON

Lafayette's Service Organizations Part 1: A Community That Cares

Lafayette has a long history of "Communitarianism." And you just might be asking yourself right now, what the heck is Communitarianism? Well, actually, the City's incorporation in 1968 was based on a communitarian-centered culture, one that embraced volunteerism, a community spirit, and working together for the common good. It formed the basis for our all-volunteer City Council and the more than 20 Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces – made up of an astounding 125 members! (To learn more about Communitarianism in 1960s Lafayette, watch an interview with our City's first mayor, Donn Black, at <http://bit.ly/DonnBlackInterview>) But it doesn't stop there. Throughout Lafayette, our volunteer-based service organizations work hard to ensure that our city is one that cares and a place where residents really do "Love Lafayette."

In this issue of *Lafayette Vistas* we take a look at some of our community-based service organizations. We regret not being able to feature all groups in this edition of *Vistas*. In a Communitarian town such as ours, there are so many service organizations that to list all of them would require producing a phonebook-sized publication! So, in order to include as many service organizations as possible, we are publishing the Communitarianism *Vistas* in two parts, Part 1 in this fall edition, with Part 2 coming this winter. We hope you enjoy these special editions.

OUR LIBRARY'S DECADE: THANKS TO THE LAFAYETTE LIBRARY & LEARNING CENTER FOUNDATION

Ten glorious years ago in November, the Lafayette Library & Learning Center finally opened its doors to those who had so lovingly, and painstakingly, worked for at least twice that long to make it a reality. The winding road from concept to construction was truly a collaborative effort by all members of the community, the city, and the county. Today, our bustling downtown Library boasts the Lafayette Historical Society, the Friends Corner Book Shop, a program-packed Community Hall, named after former mayor Don Tatzin, who did so much to make the Library a reality. Thanks to the efforts of the Lafayette Library & Learning Center Foundation, which historically provides over 50% of the Library's operating budget and, combined with the Friends of the Library, supports the majority of the Library's program funding, our magical library is filled to the brim with people, programs, and, of course, books. With the generosity of donors, the Library is able to add hundreds of new books to its collection each year, offer an outstanding selection of periodicals, and provide dozens of free programs.

Senior Librarian Vickie Sciacca and her staff make it their mission to engage local schools and senior organi-

zations with writers, artists, musicians and speakers on such diverse issues as "nature journaling" and the "beauty of microbiomes." Close to a hundred of the world's leading authors have appeared at the Library: Joyce Carol Oates, Joyce Maynard, Rick Steves, David Sedaris, Eric Larson, Mary Roach, Kelly Corrigan, Cheryl Strayed, and more. The Lafayette Library & Learning Center is also a proud founding member of the Simpson Literary Project. This project funds writers'



workshops, a writer-in-residence program at the Library, and The Simpson/Joyce Carol Oates Prize of \$50,000 awarded annually. To find out more about programs and activities at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center, visit them at <https://www.lllcf.org>. Join the Foundation for a "Day at the Library," Saturday, November 10, 2019, from noon to 3pm, it's a free community-wide celebration for people of all ages. See you there!

Our Library by the Numbers

- 4 million: patrons who have used the Library since it opened 10 years ago
- 10,000: programs offered
- 40: public computers
- 300,000: program attendees
- 300,000: items borrowed last year
- 42,000: computer log-ins per year
- 20,000: Sunday patrons annually – more than all other County libraries
- 800 to 1,000: people visiting the Library each day

LAFAYETTE'S SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS: PART 1

■ The Library's Friends

Friends of the Lafayette Library & Learning Center is a nonprofit organization formed to support the programs, collections, and services of the Lafayette Library & Learning Center. In 2009, the new Library opened with the help of a \$1 million donation by the Friends! Incorporated into the Library's building is a 1,400 square foot retail space at the corner of Golden Gate Way and First Street, which is open



six days a week as Friends Corner Book Shop. The Book Shop, staffed by 150 volunteers, contains an ever-changing selection of some 20,000 used books at low prices. The proceeds are used to continue to make significant contributions to the operation of the Library, including supporting Sunday hours, programs for children, teens, and adults, and ongoing development of the book collection. The Friends also help arrange lectures and presentations. The next time you're looking for that perfect book for yourself or a gift, shop right here in town and support your local library!

■ Where History Lives: The Lafayette Historical Society

The Lafayette Historical Society was founded in 1973 with a mission to keep alive the power of history, to ignite the imagination, stimulate thought, and provide enjoyment. Since moving to the Lafayette Library & Learning Center a decade ago, its History Room has become what is fondly called Lafayette's "front porch." One never knows who or what will come through the front door! And a lot has. Although many residents know that the Historical Society is the caretaker of Old Betsy, our 1919 Model T firetruck, there is much more going on.

Last year, for example, a longtime resident brought in some artifacts from Lafayette's long-gone Alta Crest Dairy. He shared stories and a few treasures with the Historical Society's Tuesday volunteers, and now the History Room has on display the only original Alta Crest Dairy milk bottles known to exist. Recently, items from Harry's Nursery, which was located for many years at the West End of Lafayette, made their way through the front door. Harry Ide and his wife Shigeko Rinrei Ide lived and worked at their nursery for many years. Sadly, they were taken away from their home and interned during World War II. But thanks to the kindness of another Lafayette resident, they were able to return to the city they loved. The History Room also has the extensive collection of personal items from the estate of Rita and Manuel Santos, who lived on Happy Valley Road. Mrs. Santos kept a journal every day from 1928 to 1981, and they wrote to each other while courting. It's fascinating to read what was happening in Lafayette back in the good old days. You can see all this and more by visiting the Lafayette Historical Society on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Join them on the "front porch" soon! Find out more at <https://lafayettehistory.org>.

■ Lafayette Community Foundation Makes a Difference

Founded in 1999, the Lafayette Community Foundation is proud to be celebrating its 20th Anniversary as an active philanthropic organization. Its mission is to invest in programs and projects that promote and enhance the civic, cultural, educational, and environmental health of Lafayette. To date, LCF has raised more than \$550,000 to fund its Excellence Grants and Donor Advised Gifts (this year's recipients are pictured below), and has given more than 175 grants to organizations in the categories of Arts & Culture, Community Building, Environment, Seniors, and Youth Development in Education.



LCF has been instrumental in contributing to two very impactful community projects: The acclaimed Lafayette Library & Learning Center, and the permanent stage at the Lafayette Reservoir. LCF also sponsors and participates in a number of events to raise money for its annual Excellence Grants such as the Winemakers Dinner in February, a five-course meal including wine pairings as well as a silent auction, Taste of Lafayette Raffle in May, a Senior Symposium in August, and Oktoberfest, a new fundraiser this year. To learn more about LCF, please visit <https://lafayettecf.org>.

■ Open for Business: Lafayette's Chamber

In 1947, a group of concerned business people launched the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. The stated mission of the organization was: "To promote and maintain a healthy business climate and to preserve and enhance the quality of life in Lafayette." Now, 70 years later, the Chamber has grown to include more than 600 businesses and professionals in Lafayette and neighboring areas. It remains the principal advocate for the commercial community, helping the downtown thrive and encouraging new enterprises to locate here. At its location on Lafayette Circle, the Chamber offers networking opportunities, professional development strategies, and a young professionals' group. Plus, they host several annual signature events—the Art & Wine Festival, Res Run for Education, Community Thanksgiving Breakfast, Taste of Lafayette, and more—events that bring the community together and raises funds for our local schools and organizations. In 2018 alone, the Chamber gave over \$41,000 to our schools. This vital operation is managed by Jay Lifson, Executive Director, four part-time staff members, and a volunteer board of directors. For more information visit www.lafayettechamber.org, or call (925) 284-7404.

LAFAYETTE'S SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS: PART 1

■ A Century of East Bay Masonry: Acalanes Fellowship



Freemasonry is an ancient Craft and the world's oldest extant fraternal society. Its traditions trace their roots to the chivalric and hermetic orders of antiquity, and to the stonemasons' guilds of medieval and earlier periods. As a fraternity, Freemasonry strives to make a meaningful impact on society through charitable work. Our local lodge, Acalanes Fellowship, located in the heart of downtown Lafayette, is a vibrant center of Masonic life. Chartered in Oakland in 1920, and relocated to Lafayette in 1953, Acalanes Fellowship, next year celebrates a century of Masonic activity in the East Bay. The lodge's charitable efforts focus primarily around literacy, education, and caring for the aged. And with members from their 20s to their 90s representing a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds, Acalanes Fellowship has a long history of graciously welcoming visitors, which has rightfully earned them the nickname "the Friendly Lodge." To learn more about the gentle craft of Masonry, and our local lodge, please visit <http://acalanesfellowshiplodge.com>. Stated meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month.

■ Park Theater Trust is Lighting Up Lafayette

Lafayette's Park Theater, which has been shuttered since 2004, is a community gem, a rare example of the architectural style known as Streamline Moderne. Memories of its deep impact on Lafayette linger – who didn't go there on a high school date? – and reopening the Park Theater remains a priority for citizens, local business, and the City as we all work to revitalize downtown. A year ago, the City of Lafayette called for a volunteer citizen's group to study options and the Park Theater Action Committee came into being. Seed monies granted by the Lafayette Community Foundation helped transform the Committee into the Park Theater Trust.

The Trust launched a website, formally become a nonprofit, appointed its initial board of directors, and established by-laws. All this to protect the iconic Park Theater and to restore, operate, and revitalize it into an accessible and inclusive community-centered cinema, an arts and culture hub with programming that includes critically acclaimed films, throwback favorites, and engaging non-film events.



Acquisition of the property is the next step, which the Trust is actively pursuing. Get involved and join the Trust's open meetings which are held the last Wednesday of every month from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., at the City offices. Visit <https://parktheatertrust.org> for more information. As they say, "Light up the Park, light up Lafayette!"

■ A Tale of Two Rotary Clubs

The Lafayette Rotary Club was founded in 1946, and is primarily made up of Lafayette community leaders – 83 of them to be exact, including Lafayette City Manager Niroop Srivatsa, pictured in the center, below. Lafayette Rotary believes in a shared responsibility to take action to address the world's most persistent issues, to see differently, act responsibly, and to change the lives of others for the better. Over the past year, Lafayette Rotary, recognizing that sex-trafficking is among the United States' fastest growing criminal enterprises and that California is one of the nation's top four destinations for trafficked individuals, has partnered with New Day for Children, an Alamo-based organization



that strives to meet the unique needs of rescued girls who have been sex-trafficked. New Day combines shelter, education, and therapy to lift the girls out of their desperate circumstances and provide them with a safe, loving, and hope-filled place to live and flourish. Find out more about Lafayette Rotary's work by visiting <https://rotarylafayette.org>.

Founded in 1987, Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary makes a difference by providing help to those in need, developing youth, and improving the community. Chief among their activities are projects that help seniors remain in their homes. Lamorinda Sunrise also supports an annual student-led writing and photography enrichment program open to all Lafayette middle school students, in addition to a conference offering educational opportunities for girls in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. Internationally, a major focus has been an ambitious campaign aimed at eradication of polio worldwide, as well as international service projects, primarily in Central America. For more information on Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary visit, www.lamorindasunrise.org.

So Many Communitarian Groups, So Little Space

We hope you enjoyed this special edition – Lafayette's Service Organizations, Part 1 – of *Lafayette Vistas*, and are looking forward to Part 2 which will be coming out this winter. If you would like a Lafayette service organization to be featured in the next issue of *Vistas*, please write our Communications Analyst, Jeff Heyman, at jheyman@ci.lafayette.ca.us.



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VOX POPULI - Street Interviews:

Thinking about Lafayette's long history of "Communitarianism," we went to a recent Community Liaison Meeting and asked attendees what community spirit means in Lafayette. Here's what they told us.



Jaime Rich – Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Team ("ADAPT") Lamorinda: The community spirit here in Lafayette is really ever-changing and growing. I think the community realizes that this is a cool city and getting cooler. We're up and coming and competing with our neighbors in Walnut Creek, etc. And being that I deal with young people, the community is all about the future, the safety, the wellness and health of our young people.



Lauri Byers – Supervisor (District 2) Candace Andersen's Office: Although I am not a Lafayette resident, I have been interacting and working with Lafayette for over 20 years now. I have never felt anything but welcome here. People are wonderful, the events are well organized, everyone is friendly, and we always have a good time. I am happy to be part of Lafayette.



John Nickerson – Superintendent, Acalanes Union High School District: It's a tight-knit community that supports each other, and supports the kids and students of Lafayette. The fabric of Lafayette is unique; it's a small town, yet a robust business community. It's a great place to live.



Pippa Fisher – Reporter, Lamorinda Weekly: Community service throughout Lafayette brings in such a wide range of people. It's very diverse, those involved, and people really do love Lafayette. The community spirit here is very healthy. I'd say alive and well!



Judy Carney – Community Liaison Organizer: I think it represents putting people together. It's a community that really thrives on the past and the future all at once. I value the concept of bringing people together, communicating, and moving forward.

Find out what's going on in Lafayette. Join the Community Liaison Meeting each fourth Monday of the month at 8:00 a.m., in Supervisor Candace Andersen's conference room at Fire Station 15, 3338 Mt Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. To learn more, email Judy Carney, who puts on these great meetings, at judy.carney0@gmail.com. She'd love to hear from you.

CITY DIRECTORY

For Council Members call: 925-284-1968

Council Members

Mike Anderson	Mayor
Susan Candell	Vice Mayor
Steven Bliss	Council Member
Cameron Burks	Council Member
Teresa Gerringer	Council Member

Email all Council Members at:
cityhall@lovelafayette.org

Administration

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Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	925-299-3227
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Jeff Heyman, Communications	925-299-3241

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 925-646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Whitney Simon, Program Mgr. 925-299-3216

Parks, Trails, Recreation 925-284-2232

Jonathan Katayanagi, Director

Senior Services 925-284-5050

Police Services

Ben Alldritt, Police Chief	
Emergency: 24 Hours	911
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	925-284-5010
Police Business Office:	925-283-3680

Anonymous tipline, traffic enforcement, suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 925-299-3230

Fax 925-284-3169

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Website www.lovelafayette.org

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