



Belly Fat & Movement

continued from page 2

and walk for five minutes every hour during the workday. Whether you are hired, fired, or retired, this movement schedule is a healthy approach to limiting sedentary behavior every day.

Does a simple sit/walk program eliminate the need for strength training, stretching, and near-daily moderate exercise? No, but it's wise to begin an active lifestyle with the easiest step. Devote five minutes of every sedentary hour to walking.

Dr. Laura Pawlak (Ph.D., R.D. emerita) is a world-renown biochemist and dietitian emerita. She is the author of many scientific publications and has written such best-selling books as "The Hungry Brain," "Life Without Diets," and "Stop Gaining Weight." On the subjects of nutrition and brain science, she gives talks internationally. ■

ANNOUNCEMENT:

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Bloody Broke on \$200,000 a Year in Orinda

By Richard Colman

Jack Green, a mythical resident of Orinda California, earns \$200,000 a year. Yet, he's broke.

Orinda is a very pleasant suburb 15 miles east of San Francisco. In Orinda, the schools are excellent, crime is low, and the neighbors are friendly.

But Jack is broke. He cannot save any money.

How can someone earning \$200,000 a year, about three times what the average American earns, and be broke?

In Orinda, the median household income was \$165,000 a year in 2013, the latest year for which statistics are available. In California, the median statewide household income for the same year was \$60,000. The income numbers come from GuidestarPro, an organization that collects income data.

Jack, an engineer, has a wife and two young children. Jack's wife, Cheryl, stays home to take care of the children.

Jack should be living the so-called the American Dream. Yet, he has no money at the end of the year. What is going on?

Let's look at taxes. When one considers taxes of all kinds, Jack's income of \$200,000 a year is closer to \$100,000.

Taxes on Jack include -- but are not limited to -- the federal income tax, the state income tax, sales taxes, property taxes, payroll taxes (Social Security and Medicare) utility taxes, capital gains taxes, gasoline taxes, and perhaps more.

According to an article by the Associated Press (January 9, 2017), raising a child in the United States costs \$233,000 over 17 years (or \$14,000 a year). Thus, raising two children can cost \$28,000 annually. (In Orinda, the cost is probably higher.)

And there are other costs, like the

monthly mortgage, car payments, food, gasoline, utilities, repairs, and insurance. These costs can easily reach \$60,000 a year.

Taking Jack's annual income of \$100,000 (after taxes) and subtracting \$28,000 for raising two children and subtracting another \$60,000 for bills like the mortgage, food, gasoline, and other costs, Jack is left with \$12,000 at the end of the year.

The \$12,000 left over should be saved for two major expenses: (1) a university education for Jack's children and (2) Jack's and Cheryl's retirement.

Today, the cost of one year at a state university, like a campus of the University of California, can run \$40,000 a year. (A private university like Stanford can cost much more.) These figures come from the College Board.

Thus, four years at a state university can cost \$160,000 (at today's prices). With two children, the cost would be double: \$320,000.

If Jack has \$12,000 left over each year, he would have, after 17 years, \$200,000 (17 times \$12,000 equals about \$200,000). This calculation assumes no inflation, a dangerous assumption. For his two children, Jack would need \$320,000 -- (\$160,000 times 2 equals \$320,000).

Without student loans or scholarships for his children, Jack would not be able to save enough money to educate his two children.

What about Jack's retirement? Simply put, Jack has no money left to contribute

See Bloody Broke on page 3

Belly Fat & Movement

By Dr. Laura Pawlak

Today, unlike any time in U.S. history, body fat is accumulating pointedly in the belly. In addition to calorie restriction, what practice is required to decrease belly fat? Move about.

Losing the unwanted pounds gained during the holidays is a struggle for everyone. Keeping it off is even more difficult. What's the best way to maintain a lower weight, once achieved? Move about.

Scientists study the brain, searching for ways to keep it vital over the extra decades we now live. What is considered the most important lifestyle factor to retain cognition throughout life? Move about.



Moving fingers on a keyboard is the only exercise many people get.

More Americans are diagnosed with depression and anxiety than anywhere else in the world. What habit can aid in balancing mood? Move about.

Researchers agree that the most important natural way to bring about good health is movement. During activity, muscles release anti-inflammatory

See Belly Fat on page 2

The Icon is a periodic publication that covers news about Orinda as well as health-related matters.

Wine in Lamorinda?

By Richard Eber

Bill English is a great wine maker. As a member of the nationally renowned Contra Costa Wine Group, his entries in the group's annual professional-tasting competition have consistently won gold medals. He has also received awards from Wine Maker Magazine and the State Fair. This expertise has been gained with over 40 years experience, which began in the 1970's when English, an Orinda resident, first learned the trade. He purchased equipment from the iconic Wine and the People store in Berkeley.

His professional work as a chemical engineer was ideally suited for making vino, where science and art are meshed in this craft. Although he did not receive a formal education in wine making, five years ago English's talent in this field resulted in his going professional with his hobby. This transition was easy, as Bill explained: "I was making more wine than I could drink and decided that I either needed to make less or get bonded and make more."

Thus, the Meadow View Winery was created. It currently bottles a modest 200 cases per year -- with expansion occurring slowly each year. Their wines are sold locally in several stores including Jackson's Wine & Spirits, Wine Thieves, Total Wine, and Diablo Foods. The wines can be also be found at several restaurants in the area. Among these eating establishments are Home/Made Kitchen, Postino, Cine Cuvée, and Amoroma.

One of the unique aspects of Meadow View Winery is that it features grapes that are locally grown. There are approximately 125 vineyards in Lamorinda (Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda). Most of these vineyards are very small (well under an acre of vines), but a few have multiple acres. Almost all of these vineyards are located in residents' back yards.

Because of local growers' interest in producing locally made wines, this group got together and formed the Lamorinda

Wine Growers Association (LWGA). Their organization, with the backing of the membership and the board of directors, decided, in 2013, to have their growing area declared a unique appellation or what is termed a American Viticultural Area (AVA).

This was no easy task. To become an AVA, LWGA had to show that the association is in an area that has a unique climate, appropriate soil, and proper growing conditions, all of which distinguish LWGA from other areas in Contra County and other parts of the state that produce wine. After three years, the hillside vineyards, with their moderate climate, now produces excellent vintages such as Chardonnay, Syrah, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Sangiovese grapes. LWGA is now recognized as a unique AVA in California.

It was not an easy task that resulted in Lamorinda's having its status as a growing area, as is required by law, listed in The Federal Registry. Along with his colleagues in LWGA, Dave Rey, who developed data and paid for consultants to study geologic and climate conditions, played an important role in gaining approval for the new appellation's creation.

On this foundation, Bill English and his friends who grow grapes, while making high quality wines locally in Orinda, Lafayette, and Moraga, have every reason to be proud of their achievements in putting this area literally on the world wine map. Like those who preceded them, including those who go back thousands of years to Biblical times, local wine makers take pride and satisfaction in each bottle they create.

Most people who live in the Lamorinda area don't realize that the grape-growing

conditions are ideal where they reside. However, documentation that they live in a temperature-sweet spot near hillside vineyards and also reside in a residential suburban environment is not all that important when they open a bottle of the locally produced product.

All that matters is "taste," which can be found in abundance, thanks to Bill English and his associates who ply their trade in the American Viticulture Area known as Lamorinda.

Richard Eber is a frequent contributor to The Icon and is also an avid wine maker and member of the Contra Costa Wine Group. ■



Bill English, right, holds a glass of Lamorinda wine.



Wine grapes like these are grown in Orinda.

Belly Fat & Movement

continued from page 1

proteins that act as a natural protection against disease. In spite of the proof that moving is as vital as sleep, food, or water, less than 25 percent of the nation exercises.

Perhaps part of the problem lies in the mistaken vision of exercise as fitness training, often too tough for most mortals. Boutique gyms continue to augment the difficulty of their programs to retain the hardest of their hard-core members. While a few exercisers may enjoy the endorphin "high" produced by the physical demand of these classes, the average member is soon discouraged and disappears in about three months.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is the typical worksite, where the employee exercise program might be limited to moving one's fingers on a computer all day. Scientific evidence clearly shows that sitting for long periods of time heightens the risk of dementia, diabetes, depression, and, of course, obesity.

Now imagine that your workplace offers a program that can lift your mood and combat lethargy without reducing focus or attention -- and even dull hunger and cravings. What's the strategy? Stand up

See Belly Fat on page 4

EDITORIAL:

Bedeviled by Conflicts of Interest, Darlene Gee Should Resign from the Orinda City Council

Orinda's voters must have elected officials who are free of conflicts of interest, especially any financial conflicts of interest.

Sadly, Orinda City Council Member Darlene Gee has serious conflicts of interest that disqualify her from sitting on the city council.

In view of these conflicts of interest, Ms. Gee should resign her seat on the city council immediately.

During her 2016 campaign for a city-council seat, Ms. Gee, a vice president of the HNTB Corporation, an engineering firm, has taken significant amounts of money from HNTB itself, HNTB employees, and the general manager of BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit). HNTB has done extensive paid work for BART.

In addition, Ms. Gee has backed ballot measures that could be -- or are -- of assistance to HNTB.

Ms. Gee was appointed to the Orinda City Council on July 15, 2015. She was chosen to fill the vacant seat of Council Member Steve Glazer, who, in May 2015, was elected to the California State Senate.

On November 8, 2016, Ms. Gee was elected to a full four-year city-council term.

In her 2016 campaign for a city-council seat, Ms. Gee received, on September 6, 2016, \$1000 from HNTB Holdings of Kansas City, Missouri.

Also on Sept. 6, 2016, Ms. Gee received a \$200 campaign contribution from Grace Crunican, the general manager of BART.

Anyone checking the HNTB website, will see various BART projects listed. (One can go to Google and type in the terms "hntb bart.")

During her 2016 campaign, Ms. Gee received seven contributions from HNTB employees, six of whom live outside of Orinda. The names, locations, and dollar amounts of HNTB employees who contributed to Ms. Gee's campaign are: Anthony Lee (Cranford, NJ, \$99); Dina Potter

(Piedmont, CA, \$500); Joshua Englander (Sherman Oaks, CA \$100); Shannon Gaffney (Moraga, CA, \$100); Maureen Hays, Ladera Ranch, CA, \$100); Jeff Watson (Novato, CA, \$100); and Darryl Vice (Orinda, CA, \$250).

All of Ms. Gee's campaign contributions can be verified by examining records on file with the office of the Orinda city clerk.

In addition to campaign contributions, Ms. Gee has conflicts of interest in other areas.

HNTB provided \$20,000 to the Yes on Measure X campaign. Measure X, which was rejected by the voters of Contra Costa County in November 2016, would have raised the county sales tax by one-half percentage point. Measure X would have needed a two-thirds vote to pass. In Orinda, Measure X would have raised the sales tax from 9.0% to 9.5%.

Measure X would have raised almost \$2.9 billion over 30 years. Some of the Measure X funds would have gone to BART.

Ms. Gee, in her 2016 campaign for a seat on the Orinda City Council, supported Measure X. By supporting the measure, Ms. Gee was also endorsing the funneling of funds to BART and, hence, to her employer, HNTB. Ms. Gee should have taken no public position on Measure X.

Another measure on the November 2016 ballot, Measure RR, was passed by voters in Contra Costa, Alameda, and San Francisco counties. The Measure will provide \$3.5 billion to BART. Ms. Gee supported Measure RR. Again, Ms. Gee was in favor of a measure that ultimately would have benefitted HNTB. Why didn't Ms. Gee remain silent on Measure RR?

Dan Borenstein, a columnist for the East Bay Times, wrote about Measure RR on Sept. 8, 2016. He said: " I estimate

that . . . homeowners could face tax bills averaging as high as \$150 to \$200 annually for nearly five decades."

An Oct. 11, 2016, an East Bay Times article on Measures X and RR stated that ". . . Gee and Miller support the measures . . ." Miller refers to Inga Miller, a 2016 candidate for a seat on the Orinda City Council.

On three occasions (Nov. 28, Dec. 10, and Dec. 13, 2016), The Icon asked Ms. Gee, in writing, if she planned to return the campaign contributions from HNTB Holdings, Grace Crunican of BART, and the seven HNTB employees. No reply was ever received. The Icon is published by an Orinda resident and taxpayer.

The taxpayers of Orinda deserve better treatment than that offered Ms. Gee. There can be no crony capitalism or a lack of ethics.

The residents of Orinda have a right to be represented by city-council members who are free of conflicts of interest. Ms. Gee has violated the trust voters have placed in her.

Ms. Gee should leave her city-council post right away. ■

Bloody Broke...

continued from page 1

to his retirement.

Jack could obtain some financial assistance if his wife Cheryl found a job. Even so, Jack and Cheryl might not have much, if any, money left over for their children's education or for retirement

If Jack's or Cheryl's parents needed some assistance, there would not be any money for the parents.

Something is really wrong in America if a household earning \$200,000 a year, cannot save enough money for a university education for the children, retirement, and perhaps some help for mom and dad.

And remember, Jack lives in a nice suburb, Orinda, and earns much more than the average American.

It's no wonder that Americans are angry -- and broke. ■