

## “World Premiere” at OIS

By Lee Borrowman

Have you heard? “Ode to a Guinea Pig” premiered at Orinda Intermediate on March 16th, as did “Potter of the Rings,” “Cheese Fondue” and over thirty other brand new compositions by the 6th, 7th and 8th grade students in the school’s Concert Band, Bulldog Band, String Orchestra and Jazz Bands.

(bass) say they had trouble keeping their composition to only two minutes. “We actually had to cut it down because it was too long.” They claim their piece was created by “playing random notes that sounded good, and then we chose rhythms that worked.” The duo decided to title their composition “Jazz Confusion.”



The musicians were dashing in their formal wear

“This is the second year of what we hope will be an annual tradition,” says Music Director Greg Mazmanian. Starting in January, the students worked alone or in ensembles to compose a short original work of one or two minutes in length. They used Finale music software to prepare their scores. “For many students, it’s the first time composing a work, let alone performing it in public,” Mazmanian explains.

Adam O’Camb (alto sax) and Ethan Wittenberg

O’Camb and Wittenberg were a bit nervous as show time approached, and tugged at the collars of their dress clothes. O’Camb’s father, Joel, was excited. “This is a great program, and this year we have an even larger audience than last year. It’s wonderful for the kids to have an opportunity to do this.” By the end of the evening, over 100 students had performed their works, and most are already looking forward to doing it again next year.

## Conference Report: “Living with your Teenager”

By Lee Borrowman

“What’s the first thing we say when our teenager gets into trouble or does something wrong?” began keynote speaker Dr. Mike Riera. “We ask, ‘Why? Why did you do that?’ How often is that question answered in any other way than ‘I dunno?’ If your teenager knew the answer to that question, he might not have done it in the first place!” Riera engaged, amused and offered expert advice on how to understand teenagers when they don’t understand themselves to an audience of about

At the lunch break, parents mingled in the sunshine. “It was really hard to hear about all the scary stuff that goes on, and then be told they need us to trust them,” mused one mother skeptically. “Riera really hit home with me,” said a dad, “my son’s just starting high school and I can totally relate to communication challenges!”

In the afternoon, break-out sections were offered on topics such as internet dangers, teenage driving, communication methods, and



Dr. Mike Riera preps teenage panel in the “green” room

350 parents on March 3 at the Acalanes Adult Center’s Annual Parenting Conference, “Living with your Teenager.”

The keynote address was followed by a discussion session with a panel of teenage volunteers, that was at times both funny and frightening. Moderated by Riera, the panel was composed of two representatives from each of Acalanes, Campolindo, Las Lomas and Miramonte High Schools. They spoke candidly on such subjects as the widespread use of alcohol, driving under the influence, teenage sexuality, the party scene and what they felt teenagers need from their parents. “You have to trust us to make the right decisions,” insisted more than one panelist. When asked what parents could do to do to keep their children safe, the panel advised, “Know who your kids are hanging out with, and know their parents. Some parents will look the other way and let almost anything go on in their homes.”

gender-specific workshops. The event was organized by the Acalanes Adult Center and

the Parent Education Coordinators at each of the Acalanes Union High Schools.

## Lamorinda 4-H is Growing

By Lee Borrowman

Remember? Head, Heart, Hands, Health

“4-H is all about teaching leadership, citizenship and life skills. There is something for everyone,” says Lamorinda 4-H Community Leader Michelle Chan. “Whatever you’re interested in, we probably do it in 4-H.” Now in its second year in Lamorinda, the program is enjoying renewed interest from today’s students.

The fifty or so current members of the Lamorinda 4-H program, ranging in age from kindergarten through 12th grade, can still participate in many of the activities that adults may remember from times gone by, from the raising and showing of chickens, pigs and other livestock at the county fair to horticulture, cooking and sewing. But these days there are many more opportunities, especially for older students.

Although parent volunteers provide oversight, “One of the great things about 4-H is that it’s the older kids who run the meetings and are in charge of the by-laws. Our older members are the group leaders, and they teach the younger kids,” says Chan.

“We also do a lot of



Ari Mann, Sara Captain and Rebecca Peconom at the 2006 Youth Fair

community service projects.” These include food drives and collections for the Crisis Nursery. Chan continues, “Earlier this month we worked with the California Rescue Dog Association on a training exercise at Briones. 4-H volunteers got to go and hide, and the dogs found them.”

“4-H membership also looks great on a college application,” explains Chan.

“We even have a young woman who won a full scholarship to college for shooting skills” that she learned through 4-H. “One of the things my (teenage) daughter likes best about 4-H is that it gives her a chance to meet people who live outside our community. We do so many county-wide events and activities that she has friends from all over and from many different backgrounds.”

The youngest kids may begin by caring for Pocket Pets, which are many of the common small household pets such as rats, hamsters, lizards and cats. “They learn how to care for and be responsible for those living things,” Chan says, “We also have a younger group that is raising chickens and collecting eggs.” As children mature and become ready to assume more responsibility, the projects grow with them.

Lamorinda 4-H meetings are held the second Wednesday of every month in Lafayette. “Everyone is welcome,” says Chan. For more information contact Michelle Chan, Mmchan6@yahoo.com.



Poultry demonstration: Madison Gibson, Rebecca Peconom, Allison Kostecki, Kate Gabel, Jennifer Chan, and Tyler Tasker

### Lamorinda Weekly Online

A 1:1 copy of the printed edition is online available to print, download or send as an email. Each story is also available online, just as it appears in print. Go to: <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/html/read.html> (a pdf reader is required to view the pages.)

Look for monthly 4-H updates in the Lamorinda Weekly.

Coming up in 4-H: On April 28<sup>th</sup> there will be a county-wide 4-H Food Fiesta and Fashion Review held at Stanley Middle School. The 4-H Food Group will prepare and present different dishes, and the Sewing Group will be modeling its own fashion creations. The winner of the Fashion Review will receive a new sewing machine. The next big event will be this summer’s 4-H Fair; planning is already underway.

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