

Acalanes High School • Burton Valley • Camino Pablo • Campolino • Del Rey • Donald L. Rheem • Glorietta • Happy Valley •

Lamorinda Schools

Joaquin Moraga • Lafayette Elementary • Los Perales • Miramonte • Orinda Intermediate • Sleepy Hollow • Springhill • Stanley Middle • Wagner Ranch

Jazz Messengers in Monterey

The Stanley Middle School Jazz Messengers made a three-peat appearance at the Monterey Jazz Festival's Next Generations Festival the weekend of March 24. Participation in the Festival is by invitation-only, after a blind audition. Music Director Bob Athayde is very proud of his musicians.

"It was the best they've ever played," reported Athayde. "Fourteen of our kids took solos in our performances. Other bands featured only a few kids. With us, all of our kids contribute and all of our kids grow."

6-grader Angela Falk won an award for her outstanding trombone solo. "It's pretty cool," she smiled.



Award winner Angela Falk

The Round-Up is Coming!

Submitted by Debbie Mckeen

Come on down and join the fun at this year's Wagner Ranch Round-Up Saturday, April 28th from 11:00 am- 3:00 pm. The Round-Up welcomes everyone to share in the fun, food and festivities! There will be great music, terrific food, games, pony rides, a cake walk, inflatable amusements, a bake sale and much more! The Round-Up is the

rootin', tootin' event of the year!



Don't miss Kiss-the-Pig! A little fundraising fun - the kids put quarters, dollars, dimes and nickels in the piggy banks in the name of the teacher they want to Kiss-the-Pig. The teacher with the most in their bank gets the honor of kissing Basil the Pig on Round-Up Day!

Burton Valley's Science Fair

Submitted by Robin Longchamps

Jesse Longchamps and Evan Brown sold pizza at Burton Valley's Science Fair.

The fifth graders are raising money by selling donated goods and local deliv-

ered pizza - Pizza Oliva - to earn money for their autograph t-shirts, yearbook and graduation party from elementary school to middle school.



Jesse Longchamps and Evan Brown

Tee-Time!

By Andy Hubbell, Contributing Writer

The mention of balls and tees this time of year might bring to mind golf for many. But not to local kindergartners! For them, these words conjure up the kind of excitement only baseball can bring, especially if it's the first baseball you have ever played. Like the time-honored spring ritual of the grand old sport itself, Tee-ball has begun throughout Lamorinda, bringing kindergartners out to local ball fields every Saturday to learn the basic skills and rules of the game. And with the kids come many dads and moms, to coach and cheer and to generally have a great time.

But the local history of Tee-ball, the first formative step in our children's introduction to the "national pastime," is probably not well-known, and certainly not as deep as some might expect. In fact, prior to the 1980's, young kids in Lamorinda didn't have the option to learn the nuances of hitting a baseball from a tee, at least at an organized level. Organized baseball essentially meant coach-pitch with a hardball, or in some cases an overly-soft nerf ball, which didn't appeal to many parents of kindergarten-age children. According to longtime Moraga resident Art Coombes, one of the moving forces behind establishing an LMYA Tee-ball program in the area, many kids were choosing to play other sports in the spring as a result. With young kids of his own clamoring to play, Coombes became Moraga's first Tee-ball commissioner in 1982, joining forces with two other local volunteers, Charlie Franklin and Kurt Jacobs, to form co-ed leagues in Lafayette and Moraga. One of the first things Coombes did was to bring in equipment, such as batting tees and soft baseballs, which helped sooth-

parental worries of injury. A key piece of equipment was a nylon-coated, soft-core baseball called the "Incrediball." Produced locally in the Bay Area, LMYA was able to acquire quantities of this baseball with the help of another Moraga resident, and former major league ballplayer, Del Unser.

LMYA Tee-ball was an immediate success, and has remained so to this day. During Coombes' tenure as commissioner, games were played one weekday afternoon and on Saturdays. Much as today, kids back then had full schedules. Coombes particularly remembers one humorous incident in his Tee-ball coaching career.

"During one game," Coombes recalls, "a hard ground ball was hit to our third baseman.

He was in the proper position to field the ball, but the ball



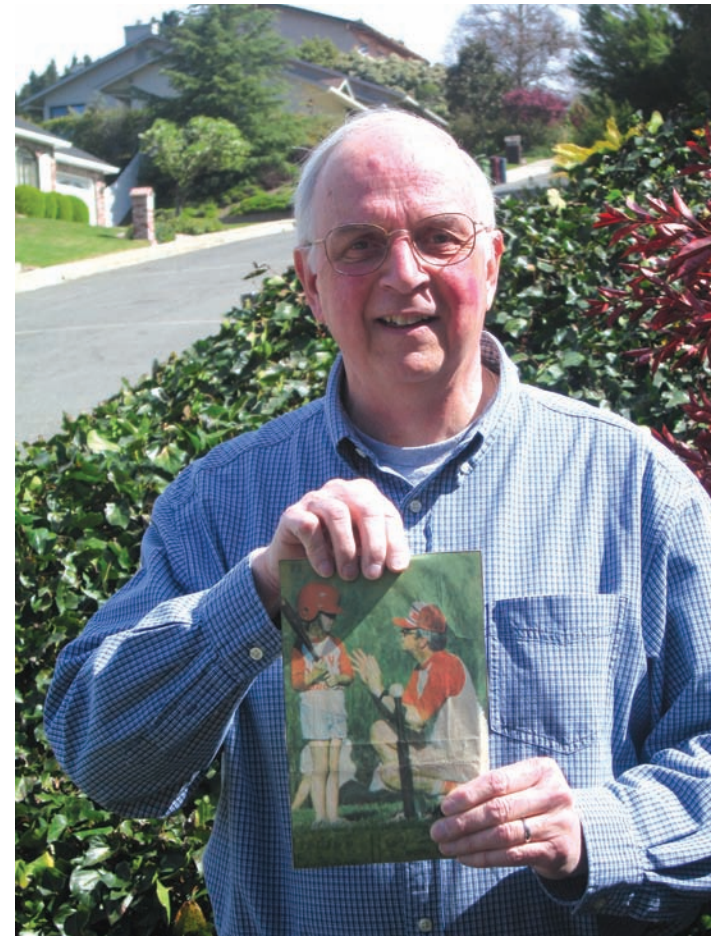
Tee-ball today

went right between his legs, and the boy didn't budge! I walked over to him to ask him why he didn't try to field the ball, lifted his cap, only to find he was sound asleep! Early morning swim practice, followed

by a full day of school, and then tee-ball was too much for him."

Today, Moraga Tee-ball games are played on Saturdays at the upper baseball field at Los Perales Elementary School and Lafayette Tee-ball games are played the same day at Stanley Middle School. Back in the beginning, under Commissioner Coombes, team jerseys and caps carried the LMYA name, differentiated only by color for each team. Today, though, each team sports the name and colors of a Triple A pro team, with catchy monikers like the Mudcats, Scrappers, Storm, and Ironbirds. While Tee-ball lasts only one season, these jerseys and caps will remain in closets for many years after, providing touchstones to a happy past when baseball first touched young lives.

Gameday schedules can be found at the following LMYA link: http://www.lmysports.com/documents/TBall_Baseball_Game_Schedules/2007_tee-ball_game_schedule.doc



Art Coombes, with photo of himself coaching ~20 years ago

The Lamorinda School pages were created as a place for our schools to share with the community all of the wonderful things our kids do all day. We are currently seeking parent-reporters (or grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin, teacher, you get the idea)! If you are interested, please contact the Schools Editor, Lee Borrowman, at lee@lamorindaweekly.com

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