

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



Ali Lowrey and Hayley Andrews check their vines

4-H Update

4-H Vineyard Project Submitted by Sara Captain

On a warm summer evening, high school students across Contra Costa County gather at the Captain's vineyard in Moraga. This is not the first time they meet each other, nor is it the first time they prepare to get dirt on their hands by dressing in old torn jeans and thick leather gloves. These members of the Lamorinda 4-H Vineyard Project meet once, sometimes twice a week during the summer to learn about managing a vineyard by experiencing it first hand.

"It really opened my eyes to the ancient process of grape growing," said Chandni Dhupelia, a Senior at Miramonte High, "But it's not only educational...I also had a lot of fun meeting other people who shared this common interest."

Susan Captain, the Project Leader, attends courses and seminars all around Cali-

fornia, from UC Davis to the famous wine country itself, Napa. She brings information to the 4-H Vineyard Project members, who then decide what they think is the best way to produce the finest grapes. Each student selects his or her own section of the vineyard and manages it, receiving only information and supplies from Captain. They must deal with questions such as, "Should I put manure on my plants? What is the best way to weed? How can I control erosion?"

With another summer just around the corner, the 4-H Vineyard Project is beginning to pick up again. For more information on Lamorinda 4-H, please contact Michelle Chan at mmchan6@yahoo.com or 925-283-9519.

Sara Captain is Co-President of Lamorinda 4-H and a student at Miramonte.

JM Named California Distinguished School

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell announced on Monday that Moraga's Joaquin Moraga Intermediate is on the list of 171 California middle and high schools that have been selected as 2007 California Distinguished Schools, an annual award that recognizes some of the state's most exemplary public schools.

"These middle and high schools have shown they are able to meet the challenge of providing their students with the kind of

rigorous education that is essential to their future success in the classroom and the workplace," said O'Connell. JM Principal Catherine Mikes happily exclaimed, "We are so pleased! In fact, we are just tickled!" The list of 76 middle schools and 95 high schools may be accessed online at Distinguished School Awards - California School Recognition Program. The schools will continue to be designated as a California Distinguished School until 2011.

Lamorinda Weekly readers asked: Where do you keep the chickens and other livestock?

4-H Answer: Livestock is kept at other 4-H members houses, who have enough land, or boarded at a barn. We have actually had people who own property offer to let us keep our animals there for free. So far, if a child wants to have livestock, it hasn't been a problem.

4-H Seeks a Nurse: Are you or someone you know a medical professional? 4-H Camp 2007 wants you!

In order for Contra Costa Co. to hold its annual 4-H Camp in Angwin, we must have someone currently licensed onsite. If you are at least 25 years old, currently practicing as an MD, RN, LVN, EMT or Paramedic, this fun week is for you! Please contact Mark Johnston 925-875-2353 or Linda Whalen 925-646-6543 if you are interested or have questions.

Camp Details: Camp is for one week this summer, from June 17th to June 23rd, you could be part of an exciting and vital program at Las Posadas State Forest.

A Spring Break Tradition Continues to Draw Enthusiastic Teens

By Sarah Henningsen

During the week of April 1st - 7th, nearly 200 individuals traveled to Tijuana, Mexico for a service trip sponsored by the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. This philanthropic retreat has been extremely popular among students from Campolino and Miramonte High Schools, those both of Christian faith and of no religious affiliations. As in past years, the trip was a highlight for many Lamorinda teenagers and a great community gathering of humanitarianism.

The main purpose of the Mexico trip is to build houses for impoverished families in Tijuana, an area in which a large percentage of the population lives below the poverty line or on the streets altogether. Each participant is assigned to a team of 11-13 members who work throughout the week to construct one house together, each consisting of two rooms. Campolino junior Jenna Hermansen reflected on the work portion of the Mexico trip: "Not only did I have a blast, but it showed me how lucky and blessed I am to come home to a

safe and welcoming

A couple of high school seniors served as team leaders, responsible for organizing social events prior to the week in Mexico, giving assignments during the construction process and unifying the team as a whole. Senior Kenny Kaprielian, who has gone to Mexico every spring vacation since his freshman year, commented on his role as a leader of the Blue Team: "I thought the whole thing was an awesome experience. It was great seeing my team work together and watching them interact with the people in Mexico."

From a religious standpoint, the project is not intended to impose Christianity on those

involved and instead focuses upon a community gathering of spirituality and renewal. In contrast to other church retreats that are exclusively restricted to parishioners, this service trip is open to anyone who is curious, willing, and interested in participating.

As evidenced by the extremely positive talk and reminiscing at the high schools, MVPC's philanthropic trip to Mexico was thoroughly enjoyed by dozens of individuals. Junior Susan Brinkerhoff took a lot away from her experiences in Tijuana, expressing that, "The main focus was just bringing hope to the people in Mexico. Even though there was prayer and reflection, at the end of the day, it was all about helping people out and building a sanctuary for them to come home to."



The group made new friends

Lafayette Appoints New Superintendent of Schools

The Lafayette School Board announced last week that Dr. Frank S. Tom has been unanimously appointed as Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Tom has worked in the San Francisco Unified School District for the past six years. Currently, he is the Assistant Superintendent of Equity Assurance and Internal Coordination. Prior to this appointment, he served as the Assistant Superintendent of High Schools for five years. Dr. Tom was also a school administrator and teacher for twenty-four years, serving students in elementary, middle and high schools throughout the Bay Area.

Board President Shayne Silva stated, "We are excited to welcome Dr. Tom as our new su-

perintendent. We believe his curriculum expertise and his focus on educating the whole child are qualities that best fit our district's philosophy and the focus of our Strategic Plan."

Interim Superintendent Bill Levison's contract ends on June 30. Dr. Tom will assume the post on July 1, after spending the intervening weeks talking to staff and parents.



All Night Walk-a-thon at Miramonte

A group of Miramonte students will not spend the hours between 6pm and 6am on April 21-22 at a party or in restful sleep in their warm houses and cozy beds. Instead, they will be out walking on the Miramonte track to raise money for Invisible Children, a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the quality of life for war-affected children in Africa. The students decided to walk at night to symbolize the Ugandan children who walk at night to escape danger. 100% of the proceeds

from walker sponsorship will go to Invisible Children. Volunteer parent chaperones will be assisting at the event.

For information on making a donation to the Walk-a-thon please send an email to Miramonte Leadership student Kristina Crocker, kristinacrocker@yahoo.com. For more information about Invisible Children, please visit the following www.invisiblechildren.com. Information for this story was submitted by Meredith Radke.

JM Creative Arts and Writing Contest Awards

On Thursday, April 12, JM honored dozens of student writers, artists and musicians who participated in the school's annual Creative Arts and Writing Contest.

1st, 2nd and 3rd place awards, as well as honorable mentions, were given out at each grade level in several different categories of writing, musical performance and composition, art and photography. Several prolific students won awards in multiple categories.

Opportunities like this one happen in all of the Lamorinda school districts. You have only to attend one of these events, see the pride on the student's faces and view some of the amazing work of our children to realize the value of continuing to support

arts education in our schools.

The complete list of winners in the JM contest is too long for us to mention everyone. First place winners include Jenna Reynolds, Darren Brodoway, Alan Hickey, Amanda Chan, Eugene Wong, Hans Aasman, Griffin Piatt, Tom Zhang, Hanna Ousterman, James Marvel, Brooke Dugan, Colton Jang, Annie Guo, Marie Lu, Emily Zhu, David Ozer, Parker Hasler, Steven Zhou, Clara Fuchshuber, Alexander Nelson, Sam Firth, Ruthie Shapiro, Anthony Reardon, Tim Somers, Raneem Taleh-Agha, Celestine Ratsch-Rivera, Emma Lyddan, Rhea Jayachandran, Matthew Yoklavich, Steven Wetterholm, Jacqueline Tao, Kevin Blouse and Jack Hasler.



Families were able to view all of the contest entries in the JM library after the event

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.)

CANYON SCHOOL SPRING CONCERT

Submitted by Sally Swanson

On March 29th Canyon held its first ever Music and Movement Recital. Grades kindergarten through eighth participated in a program with a decidedly Caribbean feel. Music Director Hadley Loudon directed folk songs orchestrated with marimbas, drums, recorders and key-

board. Movement Director Ken Pitts led students in Capoeira with talking sticks and call and response. Two Middle School groups sang original blues songs accompanied by guitars and recorders. The finale featured Samba chants and dances with tamborines. The lively music and foot tapping left the audience feeling that this concert should become an annual event at Canyon.



Free Storys

Children's Storys-Free
Age's 5 on up
Go To <http://home.com-cast.net/~william.sawyers/>

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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If you are a War-time Veteran or a Surviving Spouse

You may be eligible to receive benefits to help with your healthcare.

Many American Wartime Veterans are unaware that they may be entitled to a pension benefit. This tax free benefit may help offset the cost of Assisted Living, Skilled Nursing or help with independent living.

To learn more about War-time Veteran benefits please join us on

Saturday, May 5th 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Please RSVP - Candice Moses
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