

# School is out - yeah!

# Have fun, kids! Lamorinda Weekly team

## Global Relief Outreach:

### Stanley Students Take on the World

By Lee Borrowman

Four years ago, Stanley Spanish and History teacher Jack Walton responded to an inquiry from some students, wondering how to help a couple of international charities, by organizing a student-led club called Global Relief Outreach (GRO). A natural step for Walton, who has been actively involved in social justice and charity relief programs for most of his life, GRO offers an opportunity for Stanley students to make a big difference in the lives of children who live under conditions that most Lamorinda middle-school students have never experienced.

Foundation and the Nature Conservancy."

GRO disburses funds to several charitable and relief organizations each year. This year's biggest beneficiary, receiving \$7300, was Contra Costa County's Shelter, Inc., which offers support services to homeless individuals and families. The impressive list of organizations to which GRO made contributions this school year includes UNICEF, the Kerewan Nursery School in Gambia, ACE Africa (Action in the Community Environment, which works with orphaned and vulnerable children) in Kenya,

organizations with which they are familiar. For example, science teacher Dianne Chandler's daughter Cassie introduced the students to ACE Africa, and Walton has had a long involvement with Amigos Anonymous. These personal contacts help insure that only reputable organizations are supported. The students decide as a group what fund-raising activities to pursue and to which organizations they wish to give.

This year's list of fundraising activities included the sale of hot soup at lunch, a school-wide dance, a walk-a-thon, a canned food drive and a coin drive. Through their combined activities, Global Relief Outreach raised an astonishing \$23,000 this year.

The 20-25 members of GRO meet weekly at lunch time during the school year to plan fund-raising activities and discuss the many possible recipients of the proceeds. Meetings are conducted under a loose interpretation of the rules of Parliamentary procedure, and Matt Zelin, the current Club President, waits more or less patiently for members to "move" and "second" a motion before proceeding to a vote.

When first asked why they spend so many of their lunch hours engaged in these activities, the students gave the standard middle-school reply, "Because it's fun!" But there's more to these kids than hanging out with friends and planning activities. Erin Grant first joined GRO because she was on the Student Council and that illustrious body asked her to do so; two years later, she's still in GRO because she enjoys "working with friends and classmates to help others."

GRO has received well-deserved recognition for its efforts by the Peace Corp and the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors.



GRO members Hanna Borosky, Erin Grant and Katie Waal



GRO President Matt Zelin

"GRO responds to both global and local issues," explains Walton. "In the past we've supported organizations that were engaged in tsunami relief efforts, aiding Katrina victims or caring for displaced children in Darfur. We have sent funds to the Peace Corp for a library in Honduras, and made donations to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer

the J.F. Kapnek Trust in Zimbabwe, Amigos Anonymous and an orphanage in Mexico, a school in Columbia, Heifer International (working to alleviate world hunger) and the Contra Costa County Food Bank.

The group receives guidance from Walton and several other teachers who often bring ideas to the table, as well as information on various relief or-

## Colleges of Choice for Lamorinda Seniors

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For example, last year 12 students went to USC, this year only 1. The difference could be attributed to the price, which just went up to \$50,000 per year." In addition, the "friend factor" can help rule out a school if a student has a number of pals planning on attending. "Overall kids are looking for a new experience," says Carrel.

With regard to out of state public schools, the unanimous choice was University of Oregon. Acalanes has 17 students going there, Miramonte, 13, and Campolindo 9. Second place was University

of Colorado, Boulder for Campolindo and Miramonte, and University of Arizona for Acalanes. University of Washington and Oregon State also will have a handful of Lamorinda students.

Terrence O'Neill and Taylor Neason are both the lucky recipients of track scholarships at Syracuse and Penn, respectively. While they were happy to receive the scholarships, Taylor expresses both boys sentiment, "They own you."

Looking at private schools across the country, our students are all over the map.



Harvard is the destination of 3, 8 at Stanford, 9 at St. Mary's in Moraga, and one or more students at the following: Baylor, Brigham Young, Columbia, Duke, Earlham, Georgetown, MIT, Notre Dame, NYU, Oberlin, Pepperdine, Reed, Tulane, Vanderbilt, and many, many others.

## Congratulations Class of 2007

	Acalanes	Campolindo	Miramonte
% Going to College	96.5%	96%	99%
% Going to 4-Year School	73.5%	82%	85%
% Going to 2-Year School	23%	18%	14%
% at a Univ. of California	25%	22%	25%
% at a California State University	22%	16%	18%
Most Popular UC	Davis	Berkeley	Santa Cruz
Second Most Popular UC	Berkeley	Santa Cruz	Davis
Most Popular CSU	Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo	Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo	Sonoma
Second Most Popular CSU	Chico	Chico	Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo



Just for fun, Ilene tries on the hat!



Oliver and the boys try their hand at needlepoint. Ava writes with a feather.

## Los Perales Students Return to the 1850s

By Lee Borrowman

Dressed in jeans, plaid shirts and straw hats, or in gingham, aprons and braids, the boys and girls in Margrethe Ramirez's 3rd grade class at Los Perales last week got a little taste of what life may have been like for students in the days of one-room school houses, goose-quill pens and dunce caps.

For two days, the students and their teacher dressed for their roles as pioneers. Children were assigned parts to play as members of various pioneer families, from poor immigrant farmers to shopkeepers and wealthy ranchers.

The usual clustered table groups were separated and lined up to resemble rows of benches, on which sat the children ordered by age and gender. Girls were allowed to go first in everything, much to their delight. Boys had to learn when it

was appropriate to remove their hats. Classroom lights were left off.

In an illustration of the rote memorization and recitation practices of the day, Ramirez asked her students to learn a short poem for their homework. The following day, each and every child in turn stood alone at the front of the classroom and recited the poem. A round of applause rewarded a successful attempt. When one slipped up, the entire class recited the poem again. Twenty students and half again as many recitations later, it seemed unlikely that any would ever forget "Trees."

Quill pens proved to be something of a challenge for many of the students. Fortunately for their parents, the children were armed only with washable ink. Needlepoint turned out to be a more manageable endeavor, as did

writing with "charcoal" on slates. Ramirez also read aloud to the class, conducted a traditional spelling bee and led the children in a lively game of Ring Toss, among numerous other activities.

The students prepared for the simulation by studying about the pioneers. They read books such as "Sarah, Plain and Tall," and a section of their social studies textbook entitled, "If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon."

Although technology did occasionally intrude, in the form of period music emanating from a cd player, Ramirez successfully created as real an historical experience as children in a modern classroom could have, as evidenced by the excitement of the students for the project and their subsequent renewed appreciation for life in the 21st century.

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