

Life in LAMORINDA

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF



Trick-or-Treating for UNICEF (top to bottom, left to right): Anne Robles holding baby Carly, Andrea Lucacher, Kelly Robles, Charlie and Grace Woidat

UNICEF works with governments, national and international agencies and civil society to support effective and essential actions at each phase of the life cycle of the child, from the mother's pregnancy through early childhood, preschool and school-age years and adolescence.

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF was started in 1950 when a group of

young trick-or-treaters went door-to-door on Halloween night in Philadelphia, carrying milk cartons to collect change. The result was much bigger than they could ever have imagined, since over the past 56 years the children of the United States have raised more than \$132 million to help build a better future for children around the globe.

Some in Lamorinda have

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taken over the challenge and this year, community groups and schools are joining forces. The Moraga Junior Womens' Club joined the fund raising effort two years ago. Anne Robles, a mother of 3 young children, says, "Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF is a great way to teach our children that there are less fortunate children in the world and that this is one way in which they can help." Mei Lin Wolff, who started the program for the Moraga Juniors, said the experience was great: "My daughter, who attended school at Glorietta, went with a group of friends and the response was unanimously positive. Some people were surprised, but most remembered doing it during their childhood or having had their kids doing it." "Some people didn't have change," she adds, "so we ended up getting \$5 and \$20 bills!"

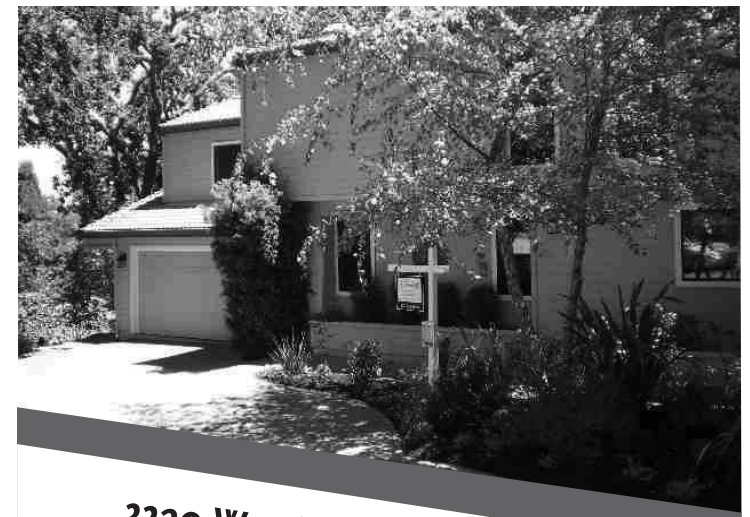
Robles campaigned to get other groups to join in, and this year the Lafayette Juniors and the Lamorinda Moms Club plan to share in the philanthropic effort. "It is amazing what difference even small amounts of money can make," adds Robles. According to UNICEF data, \$1 protects a child from polio for life. Additionally, \$1 immunizes one child against the deadly disease measles. Measles claims more children's lives each year than wars, famines, and natural disasters combined. \$2 can provide 66 children with vitamin A capsules for a year. Vitamin A protects children from permanent blindness, helps them grow strong and protects against certain types of in-



fections. \$2.46 can buy school supplies, such as pencils, books, chalk, slate board and paper for one child for one year. \$9 buys a pack of 200 water purification tablets. Drinking unsafe water can lead to diarrheal diseases, which kills 1.5 million children each year.

The "Leadership" class at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School is a veteran of the program. For 10 years now the middle school students have participated, raising anywhere from a few hundred to more than a thousand dollars depending on the year. Gerald Gruen, the Leadership teacher, explains that the students chose a different way to raise money this year. "The students have dropped boxes in every first period class and organized a competition between them," says Gruen, "some classes have already required additional boxes and we are very excited to see the outcome."

Pier 1 Imports, a corporate sponsor of the project, gives away the orange containers for free. The Walnut Creek store, 2099 Mount Diablo Blvd # 101, confirmed that it has many containers available in a basket just inside the entryway. For more information on this program and on actions developed by the UNICEF go to www.unicef.org.



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2 Years Later: Assessing the Impact of OSH on the Local Retail Scene

By Sophie Braccini

In August of 2005 Orchard Supply Hardware (OSH) opened a store in the Moraga Center. As the project worked its way through the planning and construction process, discussions were often loud and heated. Some argued the big retailer would bring much needed sales tax revenue to Moraga, while others worried it could attract too much out of town traffic and significantly hurt locally owned businesses. OSH, which is part of the Sears Group, owns some seventy-five retail hardware stores in California. The level of investment that OSH brought to Moraga would be of significant concern to any local

merchant in the hardware, nursery and hard-goods business. Now, two years later, the presence of OSH has not lead to the closure of any local business, but it's hard to assess the full impact of the store on local business and the community at large.

The Town's primary motivation for approving the Moraga OSH store was the expected positive impact it would have on local finances through local sales taxes. When contacted, Town staff was unable to provide details on tax revenue, and Eric Evensen, OSH's Store Manager, is hesitant to discuss specifics. "I cannot give you a precise figure," explains the manager, "but I can tell

you that we have met all our objectives and that we're where we should be. Our commitment to Moraga isn't about to falter."

On the other hand, local Moraga Hardware & Lumber owner Bill Snider has seen erosion in sales volume and customer traffic since the opening of OSH in late August of 2005. Snider states: "Prior to the opening of OSH, we were continuing to grow at a brisk pace since my purchase of Moraga Hardware & Lumber in April of 2000. Instead of growing the business, we are now focused on maintaining market share, hanging onto our customer base, and customer service. I have

been forced to downsize my staff and my ability to give back to the community is now limited.

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Fall Open House Keeps Fire Safety Top of Mind

By Jennifer Wake

As the air turns chilly, and rain begins to fall, there's nothing quite like the warmth and comfort you can get by bundling up in front of a roaring fire. But according to the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, when fireplaces and woodstoves are not properly maintained or used incorrectly, the result can be devastating.

Before your first fire of the season, be sure your chimney has been inspected and cleaned by professionals in the past two years if it used often, the District says, with home flues for wood burning stoves inspected once a year.

"Since high flames burning hot will burn clean, and clean fires have leave little creosote and resin,

open the draft wide," the District suggests on its Web site. "Make sure that your chimney has a spark arrestor or wire basket on the top of the chimney, always use fireplace screens or glass doors, and never the door of a wood burning stove open unless there is a screen or glass door backup."

Simple tips like cleaning ashes out of the fireplace or stove regularly (keeping in mind that ashes can remain hot for days after a fire), never leaving a fire unattended, having a fire extinguisher accessible that you know how to use, and making sure there are working smoke detectors in your home can help to ensure an enjoyable and safe fall season.



Lamorinda residents can get the latest information on emergency preparedness and fire safety from firefighters at the Moraga-Orinda Fire District's annual Fall Open House at Fire Station 41 (1280 Moraga Way in Moraga) on Saturday, Oct. 20 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Residents can also take a peek at the fire fighting equipment, the engines, and ambulance.

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