

Life in LAMORINDA

Saint Mary's Students Collect Heaps of Dorm Leftovers

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Sierra Timmer, Ashley Dernbach, Kat Delpit, Megan Burton and Keenan Flynn Photo Cathy Tyson

Although the campus was nearly deserted, five hardworking Saint Mary's students volunteered to sort through the debris left behind by departing residents so that salvageable clothing and dorm room items could be recycled.

"You wouldn't believe how much stuff gets thrown out and left behind when students leave for summer!" said Ashley Dernbach of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee. "We started out with the goal of collecting all of the clothes that students living in the residence halls don't want to take home for sum-

mer. Because so many students leave non-clothing items in our collection boxes we have expanded our operations a bit and will be collecting anything worth saving."

All of the clothes will be donated to the Larkin Street Youth Services in San Francisco, an organ-

ization that helps homeless youth, everything else goes to Goodwill. Juicy Couture jeans, UGG boots, t-shirts, purses and desk lamps were just a few of the items left behind. While the students were loading up a van, two young ladies rolled up in a Mercedes to drop off more gently used clothing.

Just who are these community service minded kids? Organizer and soccer player Ashley Dernbach of Richland, Washington is an economics major who will be volunteering in Brazil this summer. Megan Burton from Honolulu, Hawaii is a business administration major who will be going home for two short weeks, then its back to Moraga for summer volleyball. Keenan Flynn, a kinesiology major from Sacramento will be playing soccer in Spokane with Gonzaga students this summer. Sierra Timmer of tiny North Fork, California will be rowing in San Diego this summer with the crew team. Finally softball player Kat Delpit, a business major from Palos Verdes, California will start her summer off with a vacation to Loreda, Mexico.

Family Focus:

How to Help Your Child Develop a Healthy Body Image (Part 1)

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

In my last column we looked at how a child's distorted body image can have serious consequences. As with so many issues, the earlier we can help instill certain values and perceptions, the more our children are likely to benefit. By the time many teens and adults come in for therapy, they report having struggled with their feelings ever since they were children. (There are increasing numbers of boys with distorted body images, but for our purposes we will use the pronoun "she.")

Here are a few brief suggestions for helping your child develop a healthy body image:

Provide unconditional love and acceptance: As parents, we know it is important to provide unconditional love and acceptance for our children. One of my patients, "Cara," remarked how her parents seemed to care more about what others thought than what she thought and felt. Her parents wanted her to always look her best, to achieve her best, and to make her family proud. Cara did not feel that she could be herself and still receive her family's approval. Her feelings of resentment, anger, guilt, and self-disgust provided fertile ground for Cara to develop both a dislike of her body and an eating disorder.

Offer encouragement instead of criticism: Of course our kids are going to make mistakes and act up at times. It is our challenge to figure out ways to help them through these tough times by providing positive caring and encouragement rather than blame and criticism. Even if they don't admit it, they are probably already feeling bad about themselves when they mess up, so

it is important not to add to their burden. It may not seem likely at times, but our children are highly responsive to our opinions, words, and actions. Help your child develop reasonable expectations of herself: Some children are so ambitious or eager to please that they begin to expect too much from themselves. They may compare themselves too much to others in our highly accomplished community and become dissatisfied with themselves. Again, when children are self-critical, they often transfer these feelings to their perception of their body. Parents need to be able to walk the fine line between having certain expectations of their child and being flexible and realistic. For example, if your child is used to excelling in school, but suddenly finds the workload overwhelming and difficult, you need to help her adjust her expectations, and also modify yours as well. This does not mean that you won't try to find ways to help her continue to excel; only that you will prepare for and accept the possibility, calmly and lovingly, that her grades may fluctuate. Your attitude of acceptance and encouragement will help influence how your child is able to handle challenging situations.

In the next Family Focus column we will discuss more ideas for helping your child form a healthy body image.

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Profound Differences ...

... continued from page 3

Vice Mayor Dave Trotter and Deschambault both agreed to leave the rule unwritten so each Council could adapt to circumstances; they were supported by Council Member Ken Chew. The vote was 3 to 2, Bird and Metcalf opposed.

The drama went up a notch when the next issue on the agenda was reached, by midnight a letter by Town Manager Vince to address rumors about the Mayor manipulating staff reports.

Prior to the April 30th joint meeting between Planning and Council, Bird had witnessed an incident in the Town office during which Planning Director Lori Salamack noticed that one of her reports had been modified without her knowledge.

When Bird questioned Town Manager Phil Vince, he confirmed that changes had been made according to requests by the Mayor. In a public statement, Vince explained that the modifications were only formal and that Mayors have reviewed documents at his request in the past. "These allegations of manipulations are nonsense," stated Vince.

"What is happening here is a disgrace," said the Mayor, referring to emails that had been circulated in town, "it is negatively affecting our community. We are spending time on non-issues when there is so much to do."

Metcalf didn't consider the issue trivial. "It is true," he confirmed, "that (as immediate past Mayor) I reviewed documents at the request of staff. But I do not think it is a good idea. It can lead to a perception of manipulation that's damaging to the trust the people need to have in their elected officials."

Council member Bird reiterated that she finds it unacceptable for a Mayor to see a report before the other members of the Council.

Bird added that the Mayor also should not be solely responsible for setting the Council's agenda with the Town Manager.

This concern was echoed by property owner Dave Bruzzone, in reference to the 'Moraga Initiative Expanding Open Space and Residential Land Use Designations and adopting a Development Agreement,' the open space initiative favored by the Bruzzone family, "I now understand why our initiative was not put on the agenda in a timely manner." Bruzzone further questioned whether the staff report on his initiative had been modified.

"We need to get this out in the open," said Trotter, "this is therapy and things will get better."

"You need to govern yourself," urged the Town Manager, "adopt rules and regulations."

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