

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

**School Governing Board Meetings**  
**Acalanes Union**  
 High School District  
 Board Room AUHSD Office  
 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette  
 Wednesday, Jan. 14 at 7:30  
 Wednesday, Jan. 21 at 7:30

**Lafayette School District**  
 LAFSD Office  
 3477 School Street, Lafayette  
 Monday, Jan. 12 at 7:00  
*Effective 02/11/09, regular board meetings will move to Wednesdays*

**Moraga School District**  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium  
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
 Tuesday, Jan. 13 at 7:30

**Orinda Union School District**  
 OUSD Office  
 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda  
 Monday, Jan. 12 at 4:00

## Rheem Going Green

By T.R. Audley



Rheem students pack-up plastic bags  
 Photo provided

Rheem Elementary School is being recognized for their efforts to "go green." Over the past year, students, teachers, parents and administrators have more than met the challenge to do better for the environment. "Every little bit helps," says Principal Elaine Frank. So she and her staff look for opportunities to recycle...and cash in on their efforts, too.

During 2008, in their second year of participating in Wal-Mart's "Kids Recycling Challenge" for plastic bag reclamation, Rheem School was awarded 1st place in the San Francisco Bay Region for

most bags collected. Being the overall winner meant that they took home the first prize pot of \$3,000. Rheem's effort, however, added up even before the winner was decided. Through the Wal-Mart program, \$5 is available to schools for each 60-gallon bag filled with the used plastic bags. With 295 bags filled, Rheem earned \$1,475 dollars even before the grand prize was awarded.

Before plastic, however, a bigger waste concern on campus is paper. So by communicating with parents through e-newsletters and a school phone messenger system, Rheem cuts paper waste each week. "We estimate that we are saving cases of paper each year, thereby helping ease the strain on both our budget AND our planet," says Frank. And parents don't worry that important announcements from their child's teacher will be lost in their child's backpack either. Email addresses were collected

in each classroom at back to school night so that teachers can send class announcements electronically.

In addition to work on campus, Rheem is leaning on parents for recycling education at home. The school asks parents to elevate commonplace blue recycling bin by talking about its importance with their kids. Parents are also asked to reduce children's lunch waste and visit the Contra Costa County Solid Waste Authority website for more ideas on ways to reduce waste.

For Rheem's efforts, the CCC Waste Authority has recognized the school as well. Since 2002, Rheem students and staff have been dubbed exemplary "Waste busters" by the Authority for their understanding and practice of recycling. In 2008, they were brought into the "Waste busters Leadership Circle," a distinction that will award the school \$1,200 annually for continued efforts to reduce school waste. In addition, Rheem 5th graders were invited to be among the first in the Bay Area to visit the newly opened CCCWA Materials Recovery Facility in Benicia.

Bess Inzeo, a teacher at Rheem, was instrumental in designing the field trip. "We are very proud of Ms. Inzeo's work on this project," says Frank. As a result of her involvement, Rheem students were asked to provide field trip feedback to help make the experience more successful for future visitors.

Rheem's "greening" work continues this year as a new school garden takes shape. Planting and harvesting are planned for spring 2009.

# Lamorinda Schools

## Acalanes' New Director of Instrumental Music Receives Award

By Jean Follmer

Acalanes High School's new Director of Instrumental Music, Norman Dea, was awarded the Bandworld Legion of Honor Award from the John Philip Sousa Foundation last month. The award was presented during the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago. Dea said he was one of only six Band Directors in the nation to receive the prestigious annual honor. The award is presented to exceptional Concert Band Directors who have taught for a minimum of 15 years.

Dea replaced Rick Meyer as the Director of Instrumental Music at Acalanes this year. Prior to leading the band program at Acalanes, Dea spent his entire 25-year career in a similar capacity at Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek. Under his direction, the performing groups at Las Lomas "have consistently received Unanimous Superior Ratings and Gold Awards at music festivals throughout California and abroad." Dea has accepted numerous awards including: The California Music Ed-

ucators Association (CMEA) Outstanding Band Director in 2004, the CMEA Bay Area Outstanding Music Educator in 2005 and the California Band Directors Association (CBDA) Citation of Excellence in 2006. In 2003, Dea was honored as the Acalanes High School District Teacher of the Year. He is also listed in Who's Who in America and Who's Who in American Education.

Mr. Dea is very active in promoting music education in our schools and

currently serves as the President-elect of CMEA. He has also served in past leadership positions for CMEA. Dea is the

Co-Founder of the Contra Costa County High School Honor Band and he currently serves on the Advisory Board for Cazadero Music Camp. Dea said he is honored "to work at Acalanes High School with such supportive colleagues as Mr. Bruce Lengacher, Mr. Bob Athayde and Mrs. Loretta McNulty and with such wonderful students and a supportive community."



Norman Dea  
 Photo provided

## Ask Doctor Harold:

### ADHD - What is it, really?

By Dr. Harold Jules Hoyle, Ph.D.

I was recently at a holiday party where the grandparent of a local child said to me, "We didn't have all this ADD stuff when I was a kid. Kids played outside and got everything out. I think it is these kids with all their electronic stuff, what do you think?"

Once a psychological disorder makes its way into our pop culture, a lot of misinformation can happen. So here is a crash course on the recent research on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

What is it?  
 ADHD (it was called ADD until 1987) is a serious psychological disorder for those that have it and their families. Although we often use terms in our conversation like "I was a little ADD this morning," kids and adults who are diagnosed with this disorder are at risk for serious issues in school and life.

At its core, ADHD is a disorder of the executive functioning parts of the brain: the brain's personal assistant. In small children their motor area of their brain develops early and the personal assistant in their brain develops more slowly. So you have more movement with less planning. These children are less inhibited, Making them more likely to climb to the top of the bookcase or do other dangerous things without thinking twice. They are also more impulsive, making them more likely to get out of their seats in class. These children have deficits in working memory. This is the memory we use to get things done.

Imagine for a moment that you end up in the kitchen looking around thinking, "what am I

doing in here?" (I am sure it happened to you at least once this holiday season.) And then someone asks you what are you doing in the kitchen...The research on this shows your most common response will be to make something up. This is what the ADHD kid has to deal with possibly hundreds of times a day.

So this is not a disorder of the perceiving type of attention. These kids see what other kids see and know what other kids know. They just can't do what other kids can do. It is a disorder of doing.

What it is not?  
 The researchers in the field are in agreement now that you cannot make a person ADHD with video games, television, and cell phones. I am not saying these don't have their own affects on our kids and our culture, they do, but not in creating ADHD.

So what do you do about it?  
 ADHD needs to be diagnosed by a licensed medical professional and not a teacher or aunt or grandparent. Start with your pediatrician and go from there. A general rule about treatments is to check things out thoroughly and get more than one opinion. In reference to ADHD there have been decades of controversy about the cause, nature, and treatment of the disorder even among the researchers. The common treatments fall into the three common categories biological, psychological, and social; many studies indicate using factors from each together results in the best outcomes. Biological treatments include changes in diet and medication in the form of stimulants, of which there are

a tremendous amount of new distribution models like patches and time-release capsules. Psychological treatment includes individual and family counseling, behavior modification, and direct instruction at the point of performance. Social interventions include time management training, social instruction and use of social scripts.

What can you do to help?  
 First of all, if you think your kid has an issue get professional opinions, just like you would if the check engine light goes on in your car. After this first step, help the child to build that personal assistant. Instead of telling the kids how and what to do, get up off the couch and go help them with the when and where of getting things done.

I worked with a child with ADHD who stopped doing her homework because even when she did get it done, she lost it, forgot to turn it in, or turned it in to the wrong teacher. We want to help kids avoid getting to the point of giving up. We can help these children by helping them learn to follow through and stop lecturing them on the morality of not following through. Remember they know what you are going to tell them, they just seem not to be able to get it done. And none of us wants to be trapped in that kitchen with the difficult question of what in the world are you doing in here?

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## Deadlines Approaching, Free workshop reveals 7 ways to slash college costs

Orinda —A free workshop is being held for the parents of high school freshman, sophomores, juniors, and seniors who will be college bound, at the Orinda Community Center. The workshop will focus on little-known ways of getting money for college, even if your earnings are in the 6 figure range, or the benefit students with great grades enjoy, ranging from merit based aid to private grants and school awards not all

students are eligible for. The class will include such topics as how to double or triple your eligibility for free grant money, the secret to sending your child to a private school for less than the cost of a junior college, how to save \$10,000.00 to \$25,000.00 your first year in school, and the single biggest mistake that 9 out of 10 parents make when planning for college.

The workshop date is Thursday January 15 and

will be held at the Orinda Community Center Garden Room located at 26 Orinda Way in Orinda starting at 6:30pm and concluding at 7:30pm. The workshop is being taught by Bay College Planners, the nation's leading experts on paying for college. Seating at the location is free, but limited by the size of the room. To reserve a seat, call 877-924-3726 or register on line at www.baycollegeplanners.com.

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**KINDERGARTEN**  
 Parent Information Night: Wednesday, Jan. 28, 6:30pm

**JUNIOR HIGH**  
 Presentation & Meet the Teachers: Sunday, Jan. 25, 12:00 pm

For a personal tour, call 925.284.1640 or email lladouceur@csdo.org

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For the third year in a row, the Children's Chorus from The Meher Schools in Lafayette delighted holiday shoppers with two spirited concerts at Broadway Plaza in downtown Walnut Creek. Selections reflected the true spirit of the season—love and sharing. The Chorus has 34 members in grades 2-5 and is directed by Terry Hogan Johnson.

Photo submitted by Ellen Evans