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# Lamorinda Schools

Lafayette Elementary • Los Perales • Miramonte • Orinda Academy • Orinda Intermediate • Saklan Valley School • Sleepy Hollow • Springhill • Stanley Middle • St. Perpetua School • Wagner Ranch

## Daisy Scouts Discover the Underworld

Submitted by Papa John Kiefer



It was one of those recent sparkling afternoons, as the 'Daisy' Scout troop 30960 gathered at 'Papa John' Kiefer's home in Springhill Valley for an adventure into one of Lafayette's nature free-ways, otherwise known as Reliez Valley Creek. All were appropriately attired in knee boots, galoshes or tennies. One first grader sported unofficial scout foot ware with a 'daisy' pattern. As wildness and screams emanated, echoes filled the air from exuberant kids splashing the creek water passing through a six foot pipe beneath the road. (Encourage our children to play in our creeks, learn of the natural world and experience its pleasures and risks at an early age. There, they can have a magical experience building forts, exercising creativity, and living out their fantasies, to better know who they are.) Photo submitted

## Jack's Day at Camino Pablo Elementary

By Sophie Braccini



Principal Neil Jennings with Jack, sporting their "Team Jack" T-shirts Photo Kim Zombsch

On May 29, the entire staff at Camino Pablo wore "Team Jack" T-shirts to show the first grader their support and celebrate his courage before leaving to spend three months in a Delaware hospital. "Jack was born with a condition known as 'Metatropic Dysplasia.' It is a rare dwarfing condition that is mainly characterized by wafer thin and soft vertebrae causing severe twisting of the spine," explains Jack's mother Kim Zombsch. "This summer, Jack will undergo two surgical procedures at duPont Children's Hospital. Jack is aiming to come home by the end of August to return to Camino Pablo as soon as possible!" Jack is very upbeat about this surgery but he will miss his friends and active lifestyle in Moraga the most. If you'd like to drop Jack a card (he's really looking forward to getting mail), send to: Jack Zombsch, patient, duPont Hospital for Children, 1600 Rockland Road, Floor 3C, South Wilmington, DE 19803.

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## Family Focus

### Modeling Effective Communication for Your Child

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

We have all seen parents who have been out of control with their anger and frustration. Hmm, come to think of it, many of us have probably been one of those parents at one time or another! But there is never an excuse to insult, ridicule, or verbally attack another person just because we are at our wit's end.

Unfortunately, some parents cross over this line when they become angry. They sound off and it doesn't matter who is at the receiving end of their ire. What does this behavior communicate to our children (not to mention to the unfortunate recipient)? Our children may learn that it is all right to express themselves in disrespectful and inappropriate ways. They may learn that it is all right to let their anger fly instead of employing self-restraint. And they may learn that what matters most is their need to vent, and that the feelings and rights of others are not nearly as significant as their own.

One parent in the Lamorinda community developed a reputation for constantly threatening teachers and school staff that she would take

her complaints directly to the school superintendent. Unfortunately, her child was often present when she sounded off. What she didn't realize was that she eventually lost credibility and good will among school personnel because of her abrasive conduct.

There is always a better way to express ourselves if we take the time and make the effort to do so. It helps to think ahead and formulate ways of communicating clearly and emphatically so that we don't run the risk of being disrespectful. I often recommend writing down in advance what you want to say so that you have a rational and constructive reference. Think of how to express your feelings in ways that avoid assigning blame and are solution-oriented.

As Dr. Dorothy Stewart, Executive Director and owner of Old Firehouse Schools explains, "Parents need to understand their role in helping their child navigate through the social world of childhood. It is important for parents to ally themselves with those who take care of their children, such as teachers, coaches, and principals. Social or-

ganizations such as Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts want parents who are supportive. Parents also need to realize they are providing their children with a model of how to negotiate effectively in the social world."

In our small community, word spreads quickly when parents behave aggressively and negatively. In addition to setting a bad example for their children, parents with a reputation for verbally attacking those who take care of their children - teachers, coaches, service providers, babysitters, -- may find many doors shut to both them and their child.

At the same time, it is never too late to change how we react to situations and people when we feel angry and frustrated. Not only will we be more personally effective, but we can also provide our children with a positive model for communicating with others.

Margie Ryerson, MFT, is a marriage and family therapist in Orinda and Walnut Creek. She can be reached at 925-376-9323 or margierye@yahoo.com

## Girl Scouts Honored with Silver and Gold Awards

Submitted by Thama Brentano



Photo provided

The Orinda Moraga Girl Scout Service Unit recently honored 31 girl scouts who have earned their Silver or Gold award.

The Gold Award is the highest award that a Girl Scout may earn. In addition to reaching several other milestones, each girl was required to design, plan and implement a Gold Award Project that meets an expressed need in the community, and will have a lasting impact on society. The scouts each spent a minimum of 50 hours designing and executing their projects.

The Silver Award is the second highest award in Girl Scouts and the highest award that can be earned by a Cadette Girl Scout. After reaching several milestones related to their project, each girl was then required to design, plan and carry out a Silver Award Project that took a minimum of 40 hours (per girl) to complete.

### Gold Award Recipients:

Troop #30189, Leaders Kappy Dye, Debra Hughes, and Colleen Stagg,

### Campolindo High School

Emily Gerst's project consisted of a donation drive for Shelter Inc, which she organized and facilitated for two months last spring. Jillian Hughes' project "Healthier Lives through Healthier Cosmetics" was a faire for middle school girls to learn about chemicals in products they use every day. Sarah DeMateo ran a musical workshop for the kids at the Shelter's Inc. low income apartments in Antioch. And Amy Stagg's project "Bringing Lacrosse to Inner City Youth" was based on introducing the sport of lacrosse to youth who would not normally have the chance to experience it.

### Troop #31562, Leader Brigitte Lossing, Miramonte

Amanda Bains created a sewing club as her project. The club named "sew4charity" recruited members from local schools, girl scouts troops, as well as community members at large.

### Silver Award Recipients:

Troop # 30346, Leader Janice Kjell,

### Campolindo:

Anastasia Chilimidos, Maren Kjell, Rachel Meadows, Elizabeth Mediat, and Alicia Glidden worked together on their Silver Award project to benefit the J. F. Kapnek Foundation.

### Troop # 30662, Leader Jaime Zafanella, Miramonte:

Tara Baghdassanian, Gabriela Blum, Jamie Fiero, Chelsea Godsil, Katie Latimer, Alicia Macler, Kathleen Stanaro, Sofie Woodlee, Anna Blain, Emelia Hildreth, Melanie Jones, Ashley Juarbe, Cecily Schmidt, Sophie Wegener, Leah Wolk, and Cassie Zafanella planned a special day-long event titled "iScout" aimed at encouraging middle-school aged girl scouts to stay in scouting.

### Troop #: 32905, Leader Marsha Harris, Miramonte:

Hanne Andersen, Grace Hilty, Selena MacDuff, Anne Odell, Hannah Swernoff, and Hayley Young planned a Dog Faire that was held in the Moraga Commons.

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