

# Lamorinda Schools

## Students Study Ecological Impacts in OA Summer Class

By Jennifer Wake

Future Orinda Academy (OA) junior Annika Hagelin has always been interested in environmental issues. When she signed up for OA's Ecology of the San Francisco Bay Area summer class, she liked that it would get her outdoors. She got out, all right, and then some.

Since beginning the course on June 22, Hagelin and other students in the summer ecology course have gone to Pt. Reyes, Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Mt. Diablo, The Marine Mammal Center, Muir Woods, as well as Alameda and Fremont to the Bay.

Course instructor Vicky Guarracino – who taught environmental science, earth science and middle

school math at OA for seven years – chose these locals because they were so vastly different from each other.

"We went to Pt. Reyes to not only talk about the ever changing geology of our area by experiencing walking on the San Andreas fault, but to also talk about how these changes have influenced the soil, the plants and the animals that call Pt. Reyes home," she said. "We went tide pooling in Fitzgerald Marine Reserve to do a species account of the area. We created one meter by one meter plots and took an account of all the species in that plot. We wanted to check the levels of biodiversity."

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Guarracino hoped to impart to students that humans are a part of the ecosystem, not merely living in it. "We play a part in not only the productivity but the ever present destruction of our ecosystem," she said.

Hagelin enjoyed learning about plant life along the Oakland Estuary in Alameda, and was surprised when she saw the San Andreas Fault Zone up close. "You could see so dramatically where the land has moved," she said. "It's al-

ways interesting to know more about what is being done and what needs to be done to protect these areas."

For Guarracino, it's important for us all to know our role and understand what surrounds us, so our impact is less severe. "If we understand and make connections to our surroundings, we will be less likely to destroy it, and find ways to conserve it."

## Science in the Kitchen ~ Easy Experiments for Kids

By Jonathan Winter



Brothers Jefferson and Jonathan Wake create CO2 using vinegar and baking soda  
 Photo Jennifer Wake

Many people know that mixing baking soda and vinegar creates a reaction. This is a very popular experiment in schools because these ingredients are pretty safe to work with. But did you know there's more going on in this experiment than just fizz and bubbles? Here is a two-step experiment that helps you notice more.

### 1. Gather these supplies:

- Vinegar
- Baking soda
- Measuring spoons and measuring cup
- A thermometer (helpful but not essential)
- A resealable plastic bag (sandwich size or larger)
- A candle and something to light it with

### 2. Start your experiment: Step 1

Pour one ounce (1/8 cup) vinegar into the bag. (Be careful not to splash it in your eyes or it will sting and you'll need to rinse them with water!) Tip the bag so the liquid is in the corner and set the thermometer in. Wait a moment and then read the temperature. Pour in one teaspoon of baking soda and quickly seal the bag. You can leave the thermometer in the bag if it will fit. Is the bag inflating? You can let some gas out if it looks like the bag might pop. Check the temperature again.

### 3. What happened?

The mixture of baking soda and vinegar actually created two chemical reactions. The first was the creation of carbonic acid as the two ingredients were mixed. Then this weak liquid acid turned immediately into a gas. As the gas formed, it used up heat around it and the liquid cooled down (an endothermic reaction). Even without a thermometer you can probably feel that the bag is colder. You just created a cold pack!

### 4. Continue your experiment: Step 2

With adult help, light the candle. Carefully open the bag and gently pour the invisible gas over the candle flame. Be careful not to actually pour the liquid on the flame. It may feel silly, like you are pretending to pour something out, since you can't see it, but the gas in the bag is heavier than the surrounding air and you can pour it even if you can't see it.

### 5. What happened?

The gas you just made is carbon dioxide, or CO2, the same ingredient that is used in fire extinguishers. CO2 stops oxygen from getting to the candle flame. Since fire needs oxygen to burn, the candle goes out. You just created a fire extinguisher!

Jonathan Winter has been a science teacher at Lafayette Elementary School in Lafayette since 2001. He lives in Moraga with his wife, children, numerous pets – and he experiments frequently in his kitchen.

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## Lafayette Resident Plays Tiger Lily



Lafayette resident Krista Marie Yu (pictured center) returned from her second year at Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama to perform as Tiger Lily in "Peter Pan" from July 10-19 as part of the Woodminster Summer Musicals at Woodminster Amphitheater in the Oakland Hills. Yu was excited to be back at Woodminster

to play her childhood dream role, and said she had a "wonderful time in Never Never Land with such a fun-loving cast." Future performances at Woodminster Amphitheater include "Singin' In The Rain" (Aug. 7-16) and "Brigadoon" (Sept. 4-13). For more info, visit <http://www.woodminster.com/>. Photo submitted by Kathy Kahn

## Orinda Idol Finalists Bring Music to Market



## After School Drama Club Presents "Wizard of Oz"



The Moraga group After School Drama Club will perform in "The Wizard of Oz" on July 24 at the Hacienda de las

Flores at 7 p.m. Pictured are Rachel Jackson (Lion), Marissa Monopoli (Scarecrow), Andrea Lucacher (Dorothy) and Saman-

thya Myatt (Tinman). For more information and reservations: [www.afterschooldramaclub.com](http://www.afterschooldramaclub.com). Photo Sophie Braccini

Photo Jennifer Wake

Photo A. Firth.

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Members of the Cal Shakes Camp celebrate at the cast party following their production of *Henry the IV, Part I*.

Photo A. Firth.

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