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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

May Features LASF Art Shows

By Jean Follmer



Student art from one of last year's shows Photo provided by LASF

Lafayette's four elementary schools are excitedly preparing for their LASF Art Shows and Open Houses this month. Happy Valley, Lafayette and Springhill will host theirs on May 19th and Burton Valley's will be on May 27th.

Each year, the Lafayette elementary schools hold an Open House on the night of the LASF Art Show. It's an opportunity for parents to both visit their child's classroom and take in the many

mediums of incredible artwork their children create under the guidance of LASF art instructors.

Each school approaches the evening in its own way. "Burton Valley's LASF Art Fair is always done the same night as the Open House. The artwork is displayed in our auditorium so parents can come and see the artwork in between (visits to) the open classrooms. Our fifth graders also sell pizza, Caesar salad and dessert that night," said

Burton Valley PTA President Dana Fillinger Ashburn. Happy Valley coordinator Shannon Tague said her school will hold a family BBQ prior to the LASF Art Fair and Open House. At Springhill, music is included on the evening's agenda. In addition to student choral and instrumental performances in the amphitheatre, talented principal Bruce Wodhams always captures the crowd by singing while playing his acoustic guitar.

As part of the annual art fairs, LASF hosts a program called "Luck of the Draw." To begin with, each child in the school picks the piece of art he wants displayed and names are drawn from each grade. The lucky "winners" have their works complementarily framed by Fastframe of Lafayette owner, Anthony Ruiz. The artists enjoy the experience of "opening night" at Fastframe before the artwork rotates to various venues throughout the City of Lafayette.

LASF Communications Chair and incoming President Maureen Bagley is particularly fond of the art program at LASF. "I came

to be involved with LASF through the art instruction in my child's kindergarten class. Here they were at only five years old using very advanced terminology to describe their art," said Bagley. Bagley said the kindergartners were using terms such as "landscape" and "perspective" appropriately and it impressed her tremendously.

Stanley Middle School will host its Open House on May 20 but it is not in conjunction with the LASF Art Fair. "The art projects they do are tied more to the curriculum - such as Egyptian sarcophaguses - and are displayed in the classrooms," said Stanley PTA Vice President Doreen deRoque.

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Two Odd Couples at Miramonte

Submitted by Anna Radoff



James Dawson and Eric Severson as Oscar and Felix



Maddie Fischer and Torie Laher as Florence and Olive

What would you get if you tried to force an eccentric, emotionally-unstable neat-freak and a laid-back, artsy slob to live together in the same apartment? The answer is simple -- a truly odd couple! Many theater fans are familiar with Neil Simon's comedy The Odd Couple, a play that explores what happens when the uptight Felix Unger, left by his wife after fourteen years of marriage, is forced to move in with his long-divorced buddy Oscar Madison. What begins as a mutually-beneficial relationship soon turns to

chaos, complete with revamped rules for apartment cleanliness, a double-dating disaster, and even flying pasta. Yet in the Miramonte Players' unique upcoming production of The Odd Couple, the hilarity doesn't end with Felix and Oscar. Meet Florence and Olive, the female counterparts of the two men who act out a parallel universe in Neil Simon's lesser-known Female Odd Couple. Watch what happens as the world of Florence (played by Maddie Fischer) and Olive (Torie Laher) flows into that of Felix (Eric Severson) and Oscar

(James Dawson) in one seamless night of absurdity and laughter. On May 19th, 20th, and 21st in the Miramonte High School Theater, join the Miramonte Players as they reveal their own student-produced adaptation of this Neil Simon classic. Performances begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets purchased online via the MHS webstore are \$5 for students, \$7 for adults, or \$8 for students and \$10 for adults when sold at the door. For additional information, please visit the Miramonte Website at <http://miramonte.acalanes.k12.ca.us>.

Pennies for Peace

Submitted by Monica Chappell



2nd graders at St. Perpetua School

Photo provided

St. Perpetua School second graders have joined hands with tens of thousands of other school children around the world who share the vision and dedication to empower communities through education in remote areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The students are embarking on a Pennies for Peace campaign to broaden their cultural horizons and become members of a global family dedicated to peace.

How can a penny bring peace? It doesn't buy much in

Lafayette. But in the villages of Pakistan and Afghanistan, it can buy a pencil, start an education, and transform a life. That pencil can empower a child to read, write, and learn. The Pennies for Peace program goal is to encourage children, who are ultimately our future leaders, to learn the value of philanthropy by collecting pennies for global peace.

St. Perpetua second grade students have studied the cultures of Afghanistan and Pakistan and are working together in their Peace for

Peace campaign while coming to understand their own capacity as philanthropists - one penny at a time.

Second graders have visited other classrooms, as well as the Student Council, to talk about the needs of students in Pakistan and Afghanistan and how their project can help these children. They have made posters for the school hallway and a display for the front office area. The pennies that St. Perpetua second grade students collect can add up to make a real difference.



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How Six Figure Income Families Get Thousands of Dollars in Free Money For College

Local man teaches free workshops
to help parents save thousands in process

Moraga---East Bay parents that are planning on sending a child to college in the next few years, but aren't quite sure how to pay for it can now rest a little easier. Gerna Benz of Bay Area College Planners has been educating families in the community for over 15 years.

'It's really sad, but most parents that we talk to have done real well financially, but never found the time to save for college, and now they're facing a bill of \$18,000-\$45,000 a year, and they don't know who to turn to,' he says. 'Further, most of the time, all they hear is to not even bother applying for any aid because they make too much money. However, most of the time, that is simply not true even if they make a six-figure income.'

Gerna would know, because his group has worked with over 1400 families in the last 10 years ranging from single moms to corporate CEO's, and they say they can help anyone get through the process and save a bundle.... no matter how good of a student they have or how much money they make.

'I got started in this because I was a very good student, but no one told us anything about how to access money for college, or even how to pick a career...so I didn't go right away. But, I vowed that I would learn the process and devote my time to helping families not fall into the same trap that we did. 'Simply put, we show parents the truth that they aren't hearing anywhere else about how the college process really works and save thousands of dollars in the process.' Lamorinda parents will have an opportunity

to hear Gerna speak. He is teaching his class 'How to Give Your Kid a 4-Year College Education Without Going Broke!' on Saturday May 29th at the Moraga Library located at 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, CA 94556 from 11:00am-12:15pm.

'We'll discuss everything from the greatest myths about the college process, to how to send your student to a fancy private school for less than the cost of a junior college...it'll be like learning how to get a brand new Lexus for the price of a used pick up truck,' he grins.

Topics will also include why private scholarships and 529 plans are a waste of time, how to double or even triple the amount of free money you receive from each school, and how to avoid the one mistake that will kill your chances of getting any money at all that almost every other parent will make this coming January, and much, much more.

'They will learn a ton, and I do my best to make the class fun,' he says. 'It's like I'm giving them a super bright flash light to navigate a pitch black cave, while all the other parents continue to stumble around blindly! 'Don't forget: the class is totally free, but seats are limited. Also, we are not sure when we will be teaching these classes in the East Bay again since my June and July calendars are already filling up, so come on out and see me.' You can reserve a seat online at www.baycollegeplanners.com or by calling our 24 hour reservation line at (877) 924-3726.