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Lamorinda Schools

How to Survive Being the Parent of a College Freshman: Two Simple Rules

Submitted by Janice Wood

(Janice Wood of Orinda read the article entitled *After the Dorm Drop*, submitted by Jamie Anderson, in our September 15th issue and it struck a chord with her – in this article, she continues the dialogue.)

So you've dropped your brand new college freshman off at her/his new school. You might think that your job is done. In truth, it's just begun. To help you make it through, there are a few simple guidelines for your own responses to your college freshman's problems.

They will have issues adjusting to academic rigor, creepy roommates, and general troubles while learning how to live on their own for the first time. Remember they are young, strong, and smart or they wouldn't be there. It's you I'm concerned about, you and those sleepless nights you will spend worrying about your kid's well being.

When my son and my daughter (now in their 30s) first went to college I was so excited for them. We bought really cool, colorful sheets, pillows, comforters, little refrigerators, fans, extension cords, and nice new clothes; everything they needed to make them happy and comfortable in their new environment. The hardest thing for me was to change the way I parented. It took me a long time to come to the conclusion that I needed to figure out how I could both help them and keep my sanity.

I developed two rules. One for them and one for me. The first is for the student: "The Call Back Rule." And for the parent, "The Reassurance Rule."

Don't be surprised when your young adult calls you at 10:00 p.m., unloads all her worries (which may include financial aid, unreasonable

professors, dire predictions of flunking out, roommates bringing in boys, and illness). My kids would talk, cry, or whine for an hour or so.

I'd get to bed at 11:30 p.m., unable to let go and sleep. Their troubles firmly clutched to my heart, I would lie awake for hours. But here's the kicker. I'd call them three or four days later to see how things were going. The usual response was, "Oh, I talked to the professor two days ago (or the R.A., or the counselor, etc.) and everything is okay."

This is when you tell them "The Call Back Rule." As soon as the issue is resolved, they must call to tell you. Otherwise, you are dragging around your kid's problems, when they themselves have already stopped thinking about it. And remember this: At 10:00 p.m. when you are settling down for the evening, college students

are just getting ready to go out for the night.

The other rule, "Reassurance," is what they need. No matter the problem (except for incarceration, pregnancy, or entering rehab), the answer is "I know you can do this," or "What do you think you should do?" Also in some extreme cases, "I have some advice. Do you want to hear it?" That covers most everything. What they really need to hear is that you know they can solve the problem. If it's extreme, most colleges have great counseling departments that are virtually free. Let them know you are there, but encourage your student to solve it himself.

My mother used to say, "No one every listens to me. I've got all this wisdom and no one listens." I feel the same way, but a parent's job is to help them get through it, not to fix it for them. That's their job.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Acalanes Union High School District
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
Wednesday, October 20, at 7:30pm

Orinda Union School District
OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
Monday, November 15, at 4pm

Lafayette School District
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
Wednesday, October 13, at 7pm

Moraga School District
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
Tuesday, November 9, at 7:30pm



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Can AUHSD Afford to Be a Leader in Green Technology?

By Diana Stephens

The Acalanes Unified High School District's Governing Board was informed of changes that may impact its decision to install solar panels at Acalanes, Campolindo, and Miramonte high schools. Neal Skiver, an energy and power financial advisor for Bank of America, reviewed the original lease agreement option and explained that it was no longer feasible due to market confusion as tax benefits have proven

smaller than expected. He proposed a second option using Build America Bonds, which allows tax-exempt entities to save on borrowing costs. The bottom line is an increased cost of nearly \$1 million to the school district.

Option Two was presented in general terms, but included the benefit of the District owning the equipment at the end of the 16-year financing term. When the conversation turned

to manufacturer's warranty protections, and the installation contractor's maintenance agreements, the Board expressed its discomfort with the changes and lack of specific information.

Underlying much of the presentation was a sense of urgency. Tax benefits are expected to change after the first of the year, and it is anticipated that they will be less beneficial.

Tom Mulvaney was the first board member to express his skepticism. While he voted to move forward on the project last spring, he said, "I feel uncomfortable obligating the community to 2026." He asked for a presentation that details the bidding, financing, and possible construction changes.

Kathy Coppersmith was relieved to hear fellow board members state their concerns, as she has been uncomfortable with certain issues all along. She pointed out that at Acalanes High School, the solar panels were to be installed on platforms in the parking lots, which she felt could impact the al-

ready overcrowded situation and lead to more fender benders as students negotiate around the structures. The negative visual impact and the community's reaction to the structures were additional concerns.

In general, the Governing Board was supportive of the idea of renewable energy, protecting the District from rising energy costs and the impact of potential peak day pricing. The consensus was, however, that there was too much information to process and more due diligence is needed. Board President Vanessa Crews asked for the community to be given an opportunity to give its feedback and an independent consultant to provide additional expertise.

The consultants asked for and were granted another opportunity to present their plan. Richard Whitmore concluded the discussion by saying, "We let time structure pressures influence us the first time, we need more time for subcommittees to study these issues thoroughly."

Girl Scouts Climb 40 Flights of Stairs to Fight Cystic Fibrosis

Submitted by Heidi Felt



Pictured with members of the Cal Rugby team are (from left): Olivia, Emilie, Katrina, Madeline, Asiana, Adriel, and Cecelia. Photo Virginia Price

The Girl Scouts of Lafayette Troop 32790 recently participated in the Cystic Fibrosis Climb for Life. The girl scouts organized their own team and joined with over 100

other climbers, including the Cal Rugby team, to climb up the 40 floors of One Sansome Street in downtown San Francisco. Funds raised by the climb went to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation to help find a cure for the nation's number one life-threatening genetic disease. Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is an inherited disease that affects the lungs and digestive systems of about 30,000 children and young adults in the United States. The girls selected this particular charity because CF is a disease that affects other kids. Climbing the stairs was hard work and put the girls out of breath, but all agreed that it gave them an appreciation for what it must be like to have this terrible disease. Although tired after the climb, the girls felt good about making a difference in the lives of the kids who live everyday with CF.

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Publishers/Owners: Andy Scheck; andy@lamorindaweekly.com, phone 925-330-7916
Wendy Wuerth-Scheck; wendy@lamorindaweekly.com

Editor: Lee Borrowman; lee@lamorindaweekly.com

Advertising: Wendy Wuerth-Scheck; 925-377-0977, wendy@lamorindaweekly.com

Staff Writers: Sophie Braccini; sophie@lamorindaweekly.com
Cathy Tyson; cathy@lamorindaweekly.com
Andrea A. Firth; andrea@lamorindaweekly.com
Sports Editor: Caitlin Graveson

Contributing Writers: Dean Okamura, Cynthia Brian, Linda U. Foley, Conrad Bassett, Susie Iventosch, Moya Stone, Roslynn Aragoness Stenzel, Lucy Amaral, Alex Crook, Justine Sgalio, Chuck Nan, Alex Kozela, Bryant West

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- Crowds Come Out for Art and Wine

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