

Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions can be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Lafayette Garden Club Awards Grants

Submitted by Sharon Hunter



Photo provided

The Lafayette Garden Club is happy to announce that the funds generated by the 2010 Gardens for Gardeners Tour in the amount of \$8000 have been given to the following grant recipients:

- Kim Curiel, Burton Valley School
- Gailene Nelson, Lafayette School
- April Raffel and Bruce Wodham, Springhill School
- Kim Stern, Happy Valley School
- Monette Meo, St. Perpetua's School
- Patrice Hanlon, Heather Farms/Springstone School
- Mary Fuchs, Lafayette Senior Services
- Mary Bruns, Lafayette Spirit Van

These funds were raised in order to benefit area schools and Lafayette Seniors' garden education projects.

Crisis Center Gets Birthdays from Girl Scouts

Submitted by Britta Glade



Photo submitted by Barbara Boster

Sleepy Hollow Elementary School Brownie Troop #573, led by Michelle Lehman and Jacquie Childers, celebrated the 99th birthday of the founding of the Girl Scout organization in style this year. The 22-member troop assembled "birthdays in a bag" to bring to the Monument Crisis Center for distribution. The Monument Crisis Center provides assistance and resources to low income and at risk families in the Contra Costa County. The bags, which included all the ingredients for a fun birthday party, will be given to children who might not otherwise have the means to celebrate their birthdays.

Springhill Students Collect Soles 4 Souls

Submitted by Roxie Maisano



Photo provided

5th grader Ella Maisano at Lafayette's Springhill Elementary started a shoe drive for Soles 4 Souls, which will be distributing shoes to victims of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. For those wishing to help Japan by donating to Soles 4 Souls, gently worn or new shoes can be dropped off at any Sports Chalet before April 10. Pictured (from left) are 5th graders Clare Fontstein, Fiona Burrows, Alex Trux, and Ella Maisano.

Lamorinda Schools

Miramonte Students Go Bolivian

Submitted by Doreen Wagner



Photo provided

Miramonte teacher Doreen Wagner took 58 students from her Spanish class to Peña Pacha Mamá in San Francisco in early March. The field trip has become something of a tradition.

Peña Pacha Mamá is a Bolivian restaurant; through the years the owner has served up a night that students don't soon forget – those who attend the event tell the younger students about it, giving

them something to look forward to when they reach Spanish IV.

On March 3rd, the students started with a typical Bolivian dinner of empanadas, papas (potatoes of different colors), chicken, and fried plátanos (bananas). After dinner, they listened to Bolivian music made with flutes, drums, and a special Bolivian guitar. There was also a flamenco dancer; some of the students were given a chance to try their hands (and feet) at the exciting dance. Finally, because it was the beginning of Carnival for Bolivia, about eight men came in dressed in peasant clothes and playing different types of flutes. They explained, in Spanish, the history of the flute in Bolivia. The evening ended with all of the students dancing to Bolivian music.

LPIE Science Fair Season

Submitted by Janet Estee (LPIE Communications Co-Chair, K-8 Science Advisor)



The best part of the bee display, according to Lafayette Elementary first grader Cynthia Lindgren, was "seeing the bees and learning about the honeycombs that they made."

Photo courtesy of Matt Fabela

The Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE, formerly LASF) science fair season is in full swing. Lafayette Elementary was the first LPIE science fair on the agenda this year. The successful season will culminate on March 31st with the always impressive Stanley Middle School Science Expo.

Each K-5 science fair boasts its own unique theme and style. "Going green" was a resounding theme this year and Springhill was certainly a standout on March 2. One week's worth of lunch waste was showcased in the form of a plastic dress worn by Springhill mom, Nanette Heffernan,

and Sophia McAdam's collection of school lunch food discarded as trash.

The fair at Lafayette Elementary School (LES) drew such a crowd that one parent exclaimed, "Next year it (the fair) will have to be held at the Coliseum." Fifth grade class projects, "Are you Smarter than a Fifth Grader," PowerPoint presentations, and enzyme experiments, focused on the wonders of chemistry. "At the LPIE-sponsored science fairs our students can authentically explore an area of interest, learn about the scientific process, and present their findings. It is evident that the science projects were sparked by our

students' natural curiosity. Well done," said Fred Brill, Lafayette School District Superintendent.

"As our dependence on technology grows, we will need to educate students to be critical thinkers with a firm foundation in science principles," according to Jonathan Winter, Science Specialist at LES. Fair exhibitors allowed students to have fun while learning core science concepts. Camp Galileo explored centrifugal force, Mt. Diablo Bee Association shared queen bees, and LPIE Science Instructors examined oil spill clean-up. "As a biotech company we appreciate the value of strong programs in science education," said Edward Lanphier, Sangamo's president and CEO. "We are very proud of our employees, Janet Estee and Sal Orlando, and their involvement in bringing the excitement of biotechnology to local schools and are pleased to support them in this endeavor." The Sangamo team will step it up a notch from the Strawberry DNA Extractions at K-5 fairs and extract cheek cell DNA at the Expo.

The science fair season will close with a bang on March 31 with the Stanley Science Expo, one of the best in the Bay Area, with NASA Dr. Margaret Race's *In search of ET - How it's really done!*, Lawrence Livermore National Lab's *hydrogen powered cars*, Google views, Global Vicinity's *3D Magic of Xbox Kinect*, and PG&E's *electric Sedan VOLT*. On March 31st, science will take center stage at Stanley.

JM Dances to Defeat ALS

By Sophie Braccini



Photo Andy Schreck

The Leadership Class at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School recently organized a "Dance to Defeat ALS" – a fundraiser supporting the ALS Association's research efforts to find a cure for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Entry to the dance, and a pink ALS wristband, was gained by students or parents making a donation to the ALS Association.

The Leadership Class at Joaquin Moraga (JM) is composed of 19 students. As part of their curriculum, the students decide on projects they want to support. One of these students, Oliver Ousterman, lost his father to

ALS four years ago. "There are medications to help slow down the process," said Ousterman, "but nothing has been found yet to stop it."

Jerry Gruen, who teaches the Leadership Class, explained, "Often referred to as Lou Gehrig's Disease, ALS is a progressive, fatal, neuro-muscular disease that slowly robs the body of its ability to walk, speak, swallow and breathe. The life expectancy of an ALS patient averages two to five years from the time of diagnosis." Every 90 minutes someone in the United States is diagnosed with ALS, and every 90 minutes someone will lose the battle against this dis-

ease. ALS can strike anyone, anywhere in the world, and has no racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic boundaries.

For the Leadership students the project was an opportunity to learn about ALS, how to make event planning decisions, and how to raise money. "We decided on a Hawaiian theme for the dance and made all the decorations," explained one of the students, "in order to save money, (another student) burned a CD with songs that others submitted; that way all the money collected from the dance can be donated."

The Dance to Defeat ALS raised \$4,000 for the ALS Association.

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