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Big Fun Won at Wagner Ranch Auction

Submitted by Julie Oxner



From left: Patrick Ahern, Gina Ahern, Rosemary Bullock, Tracy Gong, Kim Fineman, Susan Vandergrift, Mia Blackler, Andrea Persinger, Phil Simon, Whitney Simon, Courtney Brothers & Julie Oxner Photo provided

Wagner Ranch is one of the only elementary schools to still host an annual auction. This year there was a focus on parent parties and kid parties as a means for fundraising while also building community relationships. The moms (and a couple of dads) pictured had a great time with one of the prizes. On Saturday, May 14th, 12 people hopped on a party bus at the Old Orinda Library after enjoying mimosas and muffins. The group then went to Concannon winery, Red Feather Winery, and White Crest Winery. The participants enjoyed boxed lunches from Orinda's Table 24.

Saklan Spring Arts Festival



Saklan Valley School, a small private school very appropriately located on School Street in Moraga, celebrated its students and their artistic productions during the annual Spring Festival. Wednesday, May 18, featured art exhibits, musical performances, interactive tables and more.

S.Braccini

A group of 2nd grade students in a courtyard where art production is displayed

Photo Sophie Braccini

Acalanes Student-Scientists Take International Prize

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He and Feddersen tried to develop a drug or material that could combine with radiation to increase its lethal effect on tumors.

"We used tin metal, with no special isotopes. We used tin because it's not toxic, it has the electron binding

properties that allow it to create secondary radiation, and it's a soft, malleable metal," said Marggraff.

The \$75,000 Gordon E. Moore Award, given in honor of the Intel co-founder and retired chairman and CEO, sent Marggraff and Feddersen

into a tornado of media attention.

"This is like nothing I've ever experienced before. It's not quite as scary as I thought it would be. It started before we won; the camera operators knew, like, two days before we knew! From there, it just got cra-

zier and crazier," remembered Marggraff.

Feddersen said they didn't see it coming.

"The team that got first at State, where we got second, was just two booths away from us in L.A. We saw that and thought, 'Maybe, just maybe, we could win fourth,'" he said.

The awards were announced in a grueling fashion, with numerous fourth place awards given in each of the 17 categories.

"It goes on forever," Feddersen recalled. "Everyone is squirming in their seats. When we won, it was wild. The atmosphere was electric. It still hasn't quite sunk in."

Which doesn't mean the students are not looking to the future. "Our award comes with opportunities," Marggraff said. "We'd like to move to real cancer cell testing; possibly animal testing. The night before we won the prize we sat down and discussed it. I have no doubt it would be worthwhile to advance the project as much as possible."

"We're going to want to stay together, especially for the provisional patent and developing future research," Feddersen agreed.

The back-story—their long-time collaboration—also holds indications for what lies ahead.

"I've had a lot of ideas over the years," Marggraff said, "and Matt, every time, is the best person I can speak to. With this project, we both started researching and got really excited. As far as I'm concerned, this is a project we both developed."

He said the partnership is successful because he and Feddersen are different. He likes biology and chemistry. Feddersen is talented when it comes to applying math to science.

"He sees flaws and opportunities that I would miss. It makes it possible for us to combine our ideas and find things that wouldn't have been possible if they came out of a single field of view," Marggraff explained.

"We've been friends since fourth grade," Feddersen added. "We've had conflicts over the years and there have definitely been stressful times. Sparks will fly, but overall, it's a good mix. It's pretty equal."

They are also united when it comes to their teacher, Jay Chugh, who led them to and through the science fair.

"He doesn't like the rote, fact-based learning. He's a proponent of hands-on, project learning. He's had us do a lot of lab projects where we come up with the questions and ideas ourselves," said Feddersen.

"He's been absolutely fantastic," Marggraff exclaimed. "His teaching style is to inspire and motivate. Students don't realize how important that is. I think it boils down to conversation and discussions in class.

He gets students to talk, to solidify ideas and to advance questions."

Jay Chugh has taught science at Acalanes for eight years. He's learned to never underestimate his students.

"Blake is by far the most genuinely curious student I have ever taught," Chugh said. "His zest for science is contagious, it's unparalleled. Because of that, he is the brain trust of the whole operation."

"Matt is the strongest possible co-pilot. He's equally bright, and verbal; being able to speak articulately about the project contributed to them doing so well."

Chugh is exceptionally proud of the fact that his students, unlike most of the other teams at the competition, won the award without the assistance of professional scientists, or even a class devoted to preparing for the science fair.

"As a teacher, this is as good as it gets. Luckily, for me, no matter what happens in the future, I'll always know I helped two students get to the International Science Fair—and win!" he said.

Feddersen, asked to consider the larger implications of the project, had plenty to say about cancer and the three criteria the judges identified in selecting the winners: projects had to demonstrate innovation in science, contain an original idea, and have application for real world improvement.

"One of the things we showed our judges was a map about radiation treatment in Africa: many of Third World countries have limited access to equipment. We showed that the ratio of equipment to patients is 1 to 500 in LA. In Africa, it's 1 to 1 million at the low end, and up to 1 to 10 million at the high end," Feddersen explained.

Their project, if developed, would improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of radiation treatments that are largely expensive and inaccessible to Third World cancer patients.

"We both have relatives with cancer. It's something you don't think will happen to you, but it affects so many people," Feddersen said.

He called the financial award "fortuitous" and will no longer have to take out a student loan to attend the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana next year.

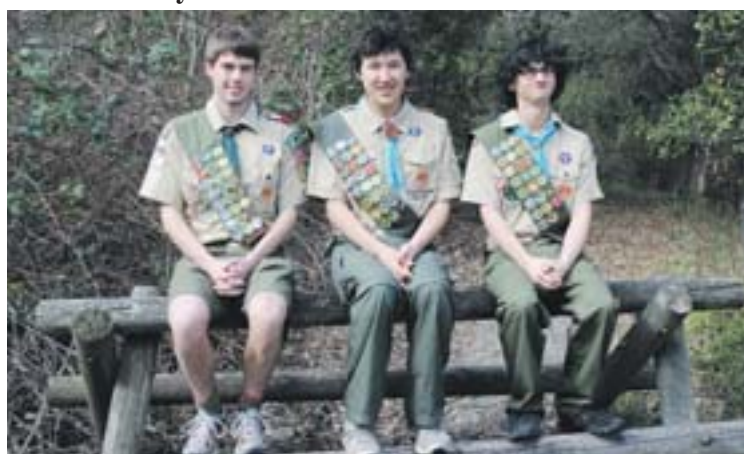
Marggraff, too, will apply his \$37,500 share towards tuition at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

They both said they plan to continue working together, even though geographic distance will make it tricky.

Fortunately, these two young men are masterful at coming up with simple ways to solve complex problems.

Eagles of Troop 241

Submitted by Laura Kaufman



From left: Ian Lundgren, Harrison Kim, Ted Kessler Photo provided

Lafayette's Troop 241 added three new Eagle Scouts to its ranks at a special Eagle Court of Honor held on May 1 at the Lafayette United Methodist Church.

Ted Kessler, Harrison Kim and Ian Lundgren achieved the highest rank in Scouting. All three are seniors at Acalanes High School.

For his Eagle project, Ted Kessler designed a curved fence to protect hikers and bikers from an eroding cliff above Las Trampas Creek in the Lafayette Community Park.

Harrison Kim replaced a retaining wall at the Lafayette United Methodist Church, installing a sup-

porting post and 72 feet of top boards. Ian Lundgren worked with the Lafayette Parks and Recreation Department to create a new picnic area on the Silver Springs trail in Lafayette.

The Court of Honor was presided over by Troop 241 Scoutmaster Bradford Prescott, M.D., and Unit Commissioner Phil Chernin. Keynote speaker was Acalanes High School Social Sciences teacher Michael McAlister. Vice Mayor of Lafayette Carol Federighi presented each boy with a proclamation of their own Eagle Scout Day.

Campolindo Grad Night 2011

Join us for a Special Preview Thursday, June 9th - 7-9:30 pm

Somewhere Over the Rainbow, Dreams Really Do Come True

Wizard of Oz

Grad Nite

You'll get a feeling you're not in Campolindo anymore!

A Night of Spectacular Feats and Genuine Magic

Beware a storm blowing up - a Whopper!

Enjoy Sentimental friends

June 10th, 2011

Tap your heels together and Follow the Yellow Brick Road!

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