

# TEEN SCENE

## Orinda Teen Advisory Council WANTS YOU!

By Natasha Morsey

Did you know there is a group of young student leaders in Orinda who meet to create community events, plan service projects, and advise the City Council about issues important to teens? Known as OTAC, the Orinda Teen Advisory Council is organized by Orinda youth in grades six through twelve.

Co-Chair of OTAC, Alex Glaser, a senior at Miramonte High School, commented that the council decides “what teens can do for Orinda and what Orinda can do for teens.” The official youth-written mission statement states: “This city-sponsored teen committee provides input to the city council about teens and focuses on the involvement of teens in the community through community service, programs, and fundraising.”

The OTAC wants more input from junior high students and is involving Orinda Intermediate School. Members of the council have already visited OIS to make a leadership presentation. The Principal of OIS, Michael Randall, advertises the importance of the council on his weekly podcast.

“The OIS students are the future of OTAC,” says Haley Cassriel, a senior at Miramonte and co-chair of OTAC. Council member and Treasurer, Devin Stein, was drawn to help on the council while he was in middle school. “I was at OIS in 8th grade when I attended a council meeting with a friend,” says Devin, now a high school junior.

The opinions expressed in Teen Scene are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

Glaser said that many of the events are created for OIS students. OIS students are important on the council because they have suggestions and perspectives that older students may not consider. For example, kids in junior high do not have drivers’ licenses. Transportation options must be discussed and they may have earlier curfews or different restrictions than older teens.

OTAC hosted a fun Harry Potter themed movie night featuring a unique dish served by Loard’s Ice Cream. Thinking ahead to next April, OTAC is collaborating with the Lafayette and Moraga councils in the hope of presenting a “Battle of the Bands” with profits targeted at supporting local high school sports teams.

Volunteering at OTAC has influenced members’ possible career choices. Cassriel says she is interested in public health administration because of OTAC. Glaser is also considering a major in which she can use the skills she learned working with the council.

Orinda Teen Advisory Council invites students from junior high and high school to join them. Monthly meetings take place on the first Monday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at the Orinda Community Center. Participation also fulfills community service requirements. For more information, go to <http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us>. Join the fun and help plan the future events of Orinda youth.

## The Play’s the Thing

Miramonte High School drama department presents two contemporary plays: *Rabbit Hole*, by David Lindsay-Abaire, and *Marvin’s Room*, by Scott McPherson. Both plays focus on family relationships as they cope with sudden tragedy. *Rabbit Hole* performances are November 15 and 17 at 7:30 pm. *Marvin’s Room*: November 16 and 18 at 7:30 pm. Show venue is the MHS theater, 750 Moraga Way, Orinda. Tickets are \$7 per show, or \$10 for both and can be purchased at the door (or online at [www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte](http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte))

The Campolindo High School production of Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing* runs Dec 2nd and Dec 3rd at 7:00 pm (doors open at 6:30 pm). Tickets can be purchased online at the Campolindo Web Store (<http://campolindo.revtrak.net/tek9.asp>) starting November 8th or at the door before each show. Suggested donation is \$5 per student and \$10 per adult. The play is a comedic tale of sassy characters who fall into love despite their bravest attempts to escape Cupid’s arrows. Campo’s modern adaptation sets the play in LEO’S, a chic 1960’s-style club.

The Acalanes Drama Dons’ performance of Sarah Ruhl’s *Eurydice* was held November 2nd to 5th.

C.Dausman



Rehearsal at Miramonte High School

Photo Cathy Dausman



Rehearsal at Campolindo High School

Photo Cathy Dausman

## Successful Debate for JM Students

Submitted by Don Read



The JMIS Debate Team

Photo Fei Lin

The Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JM) Debate team recently competed in the JM Fall Invitational Debate Tournament. JM hosted eight teams comprising more than 150 debaters. Participants included Orinda Intermediate, North Creek Academy and Dorris-Eaton from Walnut Creek, and Piedmont Middle; one school came all the way from Eugene, Oregon to compete in the event.

The JM debaters, who spent about five weeks preparing for the tournament, did extremely well. The mostly rookie team took 2nd place in total wins and 3rd place in win percentage. Earning individual trophies were Ming E. in 5th place, Ivan G.-S. in 7th place, and Patrick H. in 8th place.

The team has recently tackled topics such as school uniforms, a new national anthem, food trucks, and drilling in the Arctic.

The debate season began in September with a Kick-Off Jam-boree. There are five league tournaments, and a national championship held at Claremont-McKenna College in April.

## Students Get an Earful From Celebrated Musician

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

As part of San Francisco Performances’ outreach program, Dr. Vijay Iyer, renowned musician, dropped in on two Stanley Band classes last week. The students were on their best behavior to meet Dr. Iyer— he’s a famous Jazz Pianist with undergraduate degrees in Math and Physics from Yale, a Master of Science degree in Physics from UC Berkeley and a Doctorate in Technology and the Arts, also from UC Berkeley. He started playing the violin at age three.

All grown up now, he’s currently a New York based jazz pianist, composer and producer and is also a faculty member at the Manhattan School of Music, New York University and The New School.

The Stanley students were just happy he was in their classroom. Dr. Iyer’s advice: “Play rhythmically, don’t worry about the notes, they’ll come.” When asked by teacher Bob Athayde about his unique combination of a background in math and science and the messiness of jazz, Iyer replied, “There’s uncertainty in science – there’s always a degree of flexibility and noise – so I embrace that as part of the musical process.” Students also got the scoop on im-

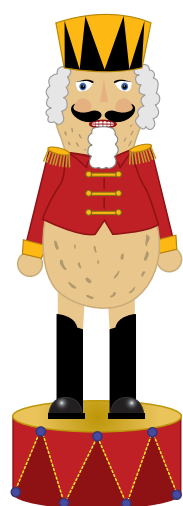
provising, “look for what’s close at hand and put it to use.”

Although clearly academically gifted, and one of the top jazz pianists of a generation, mastering electronic music and acoustic jazz, Iyer was very plainspoken with the students, suggesting that improvisation is all about, “Putting it together in small chunks that sound good.”

He’s released fifteen albums; the latest, in 2011 is “Tirtha,” the debut of a trio with guitarist –composer who goes by a single name, Prasanna and tabla player Nitin Mitta. A tabla is an Indian percussion instrument used in Hindustani classical music.

The visit was sponsored by San Francisco Performances Arts Education Program that is supported by foundations, corporations and individual donors. They work with artists and schools to bring internationally acclaimed artists to audiences of all ages throughout the Bay Area. While the kids were packing up as class ended, they were giddy, exclaiming it was “so fun,” “a ‘ten’” and “awesome.” It’s fair to say the program’s goal of opening student’s minds to the beauty and power of music was exceeded.

## NUTCRACKER CARES!

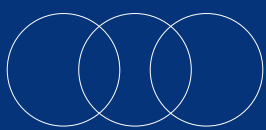


Campolindo Performing Arts Center

CAPA is donating proceeds from 2011 weekday student performances to fight child hunger in Contra Costa. Additional donations gratefully accepted: [contact capa@capadance.net](mailto:capa@capadance.net) (Please bring a jar of peanut butter to any show. Donation barrels & envelopes available at all shows)

**Fri Dec 9th 7pm w/Concerto**  
**Sat Dec 10th 2pm**  
**Sat Dec 10th 7pm w/ Concerto**  
**Sun Dec 11 2pm**

Tickets available online at [www.ShowTix4u.com](http://www.ShowTix4u.com) (click on California then CAPA Nutcracker)



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## OPEN HOUSE

FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS & STUDENTS DECEMBER 4 FROM 1 TO 4PM

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College Prep for Gr. 6-12