

# The Future of Garbage and Recycling

By Sophie Braccini



Mixed-Waste Processing



In-Vessel Composting



In-Vessel Digestion



Compressed Natural Gas Trucks

Lamorinda recycles about 65 percent of its garbage today, mostly due to efforts by residential users. By 2020, the State goal is to recycle 75 percent of waste, and to include businesses in a mandatory program. The agency that manages waste collection and recycling locally, Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority (CCCSWA), recently launched an outreach campaign to explain these goals and seek customer input.

CCCSWA's contracts with Allied Waste and Valley Waste Management will expire in February, 2015. The agency has engaged in a lengthy process that will lead to the signing of new contracts with service providers and community input is being sought.

"We cannot do it without the feedback of the community," says CCSWA Program Manager Lois Courchaine. CCCSWA has already held a series of presentations in its service area, and an online survey is available at [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org). Waste no time - the survey closes October 1.

Residents can't meet the State's new goals alone, according to Courchaine. "If we want to improve the quantity of what is recycled, we must

have businesses' participation," she says.

"Today businesses generate approximately 50 percent of the materials being disposed, and in our CCCSWA service area their recycling rate is only 23 percent." Courchaine does not blame businesses for the poor performance; CCCSWA used to propose a list of more than 20 different haulers, many offering only niche recycling that made recycling just too cumbersome.

CCCSWA recently reduced the number of accredited providers (six now) that can haul business recyclables, making it easier to organize. Courchaine says new technologies will help make recycling easier for everyone, such as mixed waste processing or 'in-vessel' composting.

The CCSWA is governed by a Board of Directors composed of two representatives from each member agency. Lamorinda's representatives are Lafayette Mayor Carol Federighi and Council Member Mike Anderson; Moraga Council Members Karen Mendonca and Dave Trotter; and Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer and Council Member Victoria Smith.

## Project Happiness: Happiness is a Skill Teens Can Learn

By Sophie Braccini



Randy Taran Photo provided  
Middle School Dean Kim Parks, of Saklan School in Moraga, wants students to be happy — not only because she cares on a personal level, but because when they aren't happy, they can't work very well. Looking for resources in this area, Parks met producer, director and co-author Randy Taran who created "Project Happiness," which offers tools and curriculum to help kids discover lasting happiness starting from within. For the past two years Parks has incorporated Taran's findings and tested her curriculum at Saklan.

"There is an epidemic of stress, every teacher has to deal with it," says Taran in an interview with Microsoft's Daily Edventures, "but there are ways for each student to be better equipped to access the happiness I feel we were born with."

According to Taran, studies show that 50 percent of happiness is a genetic trait, but 40 percent comes from intentional activities and thoughts. "Happiness is a skill set that can be practiced," she says.

The mother of a teenage daughter who had difficulty dealing with school and social stress, Taran looked for tools to help her, but only found resources for adults and college students, nothing for middle and high school kids. Through Project Happiness, she says young people have a chance to look within, to find what their strengths are, tap into those,

learn compassionate communication and learn conflict resolution.

At Saklan, Parks has been using the Project Happiness tools and curriculum with the eighth grade leadership class. "The approach is very hands-on and pro-active," says Parks. "The first weeks we start by discussing long term happiness. At first the students speak about playing games or going to parties, but we dig deeper to find what they think will be lasting in their lives." The leadership class works on other aspects, such as the boomerang effect—how what we do affects others and comes back to us—or 'monkey thoughts,' the negative self-talk.

"We teach and practice coping skills," says Parks, "and the students also apply the values we've explored with younger grades and choose a community service project that has meaning for them."

On October 11, Taran will present the project that started it all: an award-winning documentary showing the quest of three groups of kids, one from California, another from Tibet and a third from Nigeria, all looking for what it means to be happy and the skills that can be developed to increase happiness. The documentary records the quest of the students who interviewed people all over the world, from the Dalai Lama to George Lucas, Richard Gere to neuroscientist Richard Davidson, about the nature of lasting happiness. They also engaged in discussions and kept journals.

"They came out of that journey better equipped to own their skills and to access their happiness," says Taran.

After the movie, Parks and Taran will discuss ways to incorporate Project Happiness findings into the school curriculum and into the home. The free presentation will begin at 6 p.m. October 11 at the Holy Trinity Serbian Church, 1700 School Street in Moraga. For more information, visit [www.projecthappiness.org/community/events/](http://www.projecthappiness.org/community/events/).

# Trouble with the Curve

By Derek Zemrak



Amy Adams as Mickey and Clint Eastwood as Gus in Warner Bros. Pictures' drama *Trouble with the Curve*.

Trouble with the movie! *Trouble with the Curve* is a baseball movie, and no one loves baseball movies more than I, but they are difficult to create for actors who are not baseball players and this problem is evident in *Trouble with the Curve*. *Moneyball*, *Field of Dreams* and *Eight Men Out* are successful baseball films.

*Trouble with the Curve* has more problems than just a lack of players. The problems include the script, lack of character development, and direction. Robert Lorenz (*Gran Torino*, *Letters from Iwo Jima*, *Million Dollar Baby*), longtime producing partner of Clint Eastwood, directed this film, which proves that a great producer is not necessarily a great director. The cast is stacked with talent: Oscar winner and Hollywood legend Eastwood, three-time Oscar nominee Amy Adams (*The Fighter*, *Doubt*, *Junebug*), three-time Emmy winner Justin Timberlake (*The Social Network*), and Golden

Globe and Emmy winner John Goodman (*Rosanne*). This is an impressive ensemble cast that does not click because the director was unable to pull them all together. A few scenes with the older Eastwood were painful to watch.

The movie focuses on aging baseball scout Gus (Eastwood), who is struggling to find the next big superstar. His eyes and health are failing, but he does not give up. Gus' estranged daughter, Mickey (Adams), comes to lend her support and love. She also meets Johnny (Timberlake), a former baseball player whom Gus scouted years ago.

*Trouble with the Curve* is rated PG13 and is a long 111 minutes.

Derek Zemrak is a Film Critic, Film Producer and Founder of the California Independent Film Festival. You can follow Derek on Twitter @zemrak for the latest Hollywood news.

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### ASK SAM

Samira Davi is a Nurse Liaison for ManorCare Health Services in Walnut Creek. Samira has over 10 years of experience working in health care in Contra Costa County, which has gained her a wide view of what is important to the health care consumer. She will be posting common questions and comments in each issue of the Lamorinda Weekly. You are welcome to contact Samira directly at 925.270.8766

## What actually happens in a Post-Acute Rehab Center? How is this different than a "Nursing Home"?

This is the most common question I hear. So many of our patients are young, active and eager to return home. Most of the patients I see are getting ready to have an orthopedic or cardiac surgery. When their surgeon recommends post-acute rehab as part of their recovery, fear often sets in—that's when my role starts. I coordinate with surgical offices to facilitate pre-op and pre-admit counseling sessions. Here we are able to discuss the details of post-acute rehab, and ideally arrange a tour of one of our Walnut Creek rehab centers. It is crucial that you feel safe and comfortable in a rehab center.

At the core, post-hospital or post-acute care is designed to improve your transition back to the community. As a post-acute patient, you no longer need the acute care setting of the hospital which includes around-the-clock physicians, surgery, emergency and ICU services, but still need a high level of clinical and rehabilitation care to hasten your recuperation. This may include skilled nursing, rehabilitation, dietary management, social services and discharge planning. All of your care is directed by your physician, and our team will be in regular contact with you, your family and your physician(s).

What you can expect are state-of-the art facilities with the most advanced clinical and therapeutic techniques. Our treatment plans are designed to maximize independent functioning and improve physical and psychological well being to help you transition back to your life. You can expect to be treated with respect and dignity, and to experience your recovery along side other patients with similar recovery needs.

Admission to a post-acute rehab center is coordinated between the hospital and the rehab center. Your insurance is verified, medications and treatments are ordered, and transportation is coordinated. I encourage patients and families to take the time to tour a few post-acute rehab centers prior to surgery or, in the case of an unexpected hospitalization, prior to discharge from the hospital. Once you visit our two Walnut Creek rehab centers, you'll see how we are different from the traditional "nursing home".

For more information please visit [www.manorcare.com](http://www.manorcare.com).  
For a short video visit us on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/hcrmanorcare](http://www.youtube.com/hcrmanorcare)

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