

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.

Campo Basketball Team Takes on Invasive Competitor

Submitted by Scott Hill



From left: Quinn Cuddihy, Hayden Hunt, Jack Eisner VB, Tom Caprio, Patrick Duryea JV, Dylan Richardson, Michael Navruzyan, Coach Graden Travis, Jordan Li, Madison Young JV, Scott Hill, EBMUD, and Aaron Hill. Photo Odessa Cuddihy

At the end of 2014 basketball season last week, the DFAL Champion Campolindo Boys Frosh Team had one more goal they wanted to accomplish, a community service project.

On Saturday, Feb. 22, the team along with their coach and a representative from the East Bay Municipal Utility District's Natural Resources Department joined forces to remove invasive weeds growing on the watershed near the Upper San Leandro Reservoir. Using weed wrenches the boys pulled French broom (*Genistamonspensulana*) a highly invasive weed that commonly grows to 10 feet tall. Native to countries around the Mediterranean French broom is thought to have been introduced to the San Francisco Bay Area in the mid-1800s as an ornamental. It spread throughout the region via prodigious seed production. A medium-sized

shrub can produce over 8,000 seeds a year. The seed pods explode open dispersing seeds up to 12 feet which furthers the colonization of an area. French broom displaces native plant and forage species degrading the habitat value for wildlife. Like the Campo frosh basketball team, French broom is a strong competitor. Left unchecked it will dominate a plant community forming dense monospecific stands.

Pulling broom with weed wrenches is effective for removal of small populations. The wrench removes the entire plant, eliminating re-sprouting. Weed wrench removal is environmentally safe and minimizes potential impacts to desirable native plant species. However, pulling broom with weed wrenches is labor intensive, the perfect way for a boys' basketball team to spend a Saturday afternoon.

The 13 New Eagle Scouts of Troop 204

Submitted by Brooks Pedder



From left, back row: Kevin Hull, Ben Westphal, Grant Smith, Chris Hansen (sitting), Grant Pedder, Marc Davis and Will McCandless; middle row: Michael Samaniego, Jack Hood, Sam Fraser and Nick Anderson; front row: Peter Goldie and Preston Tso. Photo provided

Lafayette Boy Scout Troop 204 will honor 13 young men who have achieved the Eagle Scout Award, the highest rank in the Boy Scouts of America from 1:30 to 4 p.m. March 15 at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. The Eagle Scout Class of 2014 is the second largest group in the history of the Troop and the Mt. Diablo Silverado Council to achieve Eagle. To attain the rank of Eagle Scout, a scout must earn his way up the scouting ranks - from Tenderfoot to Life Scout. As a Life Scout, he must be active in the troop for at least six months, earn at least 21 merit badges, serve in a Leadership position, show Scout Spirit, and plan, develop and give leadership to others in an approved Eagle service project helpful to any religious institution, school, non-profit organization or the community. In addition to requirements listed above, each of these Troop 204 Eagle Scouts has attended annual 50 mile backpacking trips, hiked over 500 miles, actively participated in annual Camporees, constructed and slept in snow caves and camped in the wilderness for over 100 nights.

The following is a list of their community service projects: Nick Anderson built wooden duck boxes and donated them to the California Waterfowl Association; Marc Davis developed an iPhone app for the Lafayette Historical Society; Sam Fraser collected preschool supplies for

the JF Kapnek Trust, a Lafayette-based organization that works to prevent the transmission of pediatric HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe and aims to open over 100 preschools for needy children; Will Goldie designed and assembled computer systems for impoverished schools in Afghanistan; Chris Hansen used donated wood from Ashby Lumber and built 50 drawers out of plywood; Jack Hood managed, fundraised, and ran a week-long science-based summer camp for underprivileged children along with his trusted volunteers; Kevin Hull rebuilt and refurbished a dilapidated deck at the Lafayette Community Center; Will McCandless wanted to do something to benefit the Lafayette Reservoir and worked with the ranger, Rod Tripp, to determine a suitable project and chose a fire danger sign to indicate the fire danger level and the associated restrictions; Grant Pedder constructed a 20-foot-long planter box out of cement blocks outside of the Lafayette School District offices at Stanley Middle School; Michael Samaniego collected 170 used soccer uniforms, cleats and equipment from teams throughout Lamorinda, Walnut Creek and Concord; Grant Smith restored the marquee in the Acalanes High School parking lot; Preston Tso worked on the Stanley Middle School tennis courts and rehabilitated them; and Ben Westphal restored the baseball backstops and benches at some of our local schools.

Moraga Valley Kiwanis Gives to MEF

Submitted by Steve Woehleke



From left, Bruce Burns of the Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club presents a check to Eric Andresen of the Moraga Education Foundation. Photo provided

The Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club recently made its annual contribution to the Moraga Education Foundation. MEF makes a significant local impact through raising funds to preserve and en-

hance educational opportunities for all Moraga public school students to build a better future. The Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club contributes to each of the three Lamorinda education foundations.

Two Former Girl Scout Leaders Given Volunteer of Excellence Award

Submitted by Tanya Parmelee



Gretchen Caulfield and Susan Barnes

Photo provided

Each year, Lafayette Girl Scouts Service Unit 326 recognizes those extraordinary leaders that go beyond their expected roles. Former leaders Gretchen Caulfield (Troop 32787) and Susan Barnes (Troop 32788) were each presented with the Volunteer of Excellence Award this past fall.

Caulfield co-led the troop for six years, going beyond basics to make sure the girls were a part of meaningful lessons and learning from activities - not just going through the motions to check off a badge. Through their fourth grade journey adventure, materials were presented in the best way to help better understand each section.

From the troop: "Gretchen...goes the extra mile to ensure that things are done the right way

with the maximum amount of fun for the girls."

With Barnes' leadership and mentoring, the girls not only gained invaluable experiences and memories over the years, they topped off fifth grade by organizing and hosting a successful 2013 father/daughter dance. Barnes made sure the 18 girls of both fifth grade troops were able to see how individual jobs fit into the big picture. Each girl had to share her part, solicit input and report back with results.

Thanks to these inspiring and determined women, Burton Valley School's 2012-13 fifth grade troops bridged to Cadette status at the end of the school year. Girl Scouts of Northern California will be formally recognizing award recipients March 8 in the Alameda offices.

Container of Love Destination: Zimbabwe

Submitted by Robin Freeberg



Much needed wheel chairs destined for Zimbabwe fill half of a 40-foot container at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. Photo provided

Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church has created space on their campus for a 40-foot shipping container bound for Zimbabwe. This "Container of Love" will be on campus for the month of March and will be filled with items to help children who have been victims of the HIV epidemic in Zimbabwe. Half of the container will be filled with much needed wheel chairs and the other half will be divided between donations from Mother of Peace Orphanage and the JF Kapnek Trust. Needs

range from school supplies and sporting equipment (basketball, soccer, baseball, etc.) to everyday necessities including batteries and toiletries. Donations may only be dropped off on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to noon, and Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to noon at 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Go to LOPC.org to see what specific donations items are needed. Contact robin@LOPC.org or call (925)283-8722, ext. 250 for more information.

Correction: In the Feb. 26 *Lamorinda Weekly* story, "MOFD Updates GIS Evacuation Maps," the date the Moraga-Orinda Fire District began its mapping was 2005-06 and the program was initially tied to Cal Fire, not California Fire Safe, as reported.