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.

Tech Trek and Scholarship Winners an Inspiration

Submitted by Sandy Fox-Sohner, Mary Ann McLeod and Sally Swanson

Scholarship Award winners, from left: Karen Trang, speaker Dr. Marinda Wu, Linda Phung, Samantha Garcia, and Emma Patton.   Photos provided

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) – Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (OML) Branch sponsored six tech trek and scholarship awardees, who wowed an audience with their passion and drive at a April 27 celebration and awards meeting. Marinda Wu gave an inspirational presentation by about the challenges she faced as she pursued her Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry at a time when few women were entering such fields. Prior to her presentation, these outstanding young women spoke about their work, their talents, and their dreams for the future.

Jane Fong of Orinda Intermediate School is a builder who wants to create safe buildings to save lives; Dara Kazmierowski of OIS loves biology and is focused on a career in science or medicine; Ally Scarpitti of Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School has been a passionate "techie" since she was 5 years old and helps family, friends, and even neighbors with technology challenges; Sharon Yuan of JM is a curious, big thinker who loves many areas of science including computer programming, biology, and medical science; Claire Gallagher of Stanley Middle School exudes enthusiasm for math and science and hopes to build a robot that can explore the ocean so she can combine being an engineer and an oceanographer; and Sofia Elise West of Stanley is interested in engineering and math, with a possible career in chemical engineering or veterinary medicine. She built a hovercraft for a science fair.

The six Lamorinda middle school girls will attend the Grace Hopper Tech Trek camp on the Stanford University campus in July. Since 1998, AAUW OML has sent 59 girls to Tech Trek camp. This year, science, math, and technology teachers at local intermediate schools nominated 40 girls for Tech Trek camp.

In addition to these six award winners, the following four young college age women were acknowledged for their academic achievements and passion for the sciences with scholarships: Karen Trang ($5,000 award from the Gayle Ulkema gift), Saint Mary's College; Linda Phung ($5,000 award from the Gayle Ulkema gift), Miramonte High School; Samantha Garcia ($800 from the AAUW-OML), Campolindo High School; and Emma Patton ($800 from the AAUW-OML), Miramonte High School.

For more information about AAUW-OML, visit http://oml-ca.aauw.net/.

Tech Trek Scholarship winners, from left: Sharon Yuan, Claire Gallagher, Sofia Elise West, Dara Kazmierowski, Dr. Marinda Wu, speaker, Ally Scarpitti, and Jane Fong.

Cookie Sales Help Dogs and Cats

Submitted by Shannon Cahoon

Photo provided
Lafayette Brownie Troop 32146 recently presented a check from cookie proceeds donated to ARF.

From Front Page

A Wise Neighborhood

The first community project was finished in 2012. "Five of us worked on our yards. We raised the height of low limbs on oak trees and we got rid of dead pine trees," said Green. Brush was cleared and highly flammable plants were removed along sides of roads. The following year, the community realigned and renovated the emergency evacuation path behind Sleepy Hollow Elementary School.

Sleepy Hollow recently became the first neighborhood in Contra Costa County to be recognized by FireWise Communities/USA, a project of the National Fire Prevention Agency. The program is a nationwide initiative that recognizes communities for taking action to protect people and properties from the risk of fire in wildland and urban areas.

Deb Stephenson, the Sleepy Hollow FireWise Community representative, said that there is still much more to be done.

"I remember the Oakland Hills fire," she said. "And my kids went to the Sleepy Hollow school. We need to build awareness of what individuals can do, and I will continue to get the word out to help bring our properties up to speed."

For information on how your neighborhood can qualify as a FireWise community, contact Lamorinda Emergency Preparedness Director Dennis Rein at (925) 698-4575 or drein@mofd.org.