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## OIS Students Named Winners at Local Writing Contest

Submitted by Cecilia Kilmartin



Photo Jennifer Lyons

Six Orinda Intermediate School students attended an awards luncheon hosted by the California Writers Club Mt. Diablo Branch May 10 after being named winners in a recent writing contest sponsored by The California Writers Club. The Club received 388 submissions – 100 more than last year – from 40 schools in Contra Costa County; the OIS students were six of 29 students to receive awards for their writing. The winners are pictured from left: eighth grader Lexi Reinecke, who won

third place for a short story; seventh grader Emma Rust, who won first place for her personal narrative; seventh grader Hannah Brown, who won first place for a new category this year—humor; seventh grader Katie Lyons, who won second place for her personal narrative; eighth grader Kiki Immel, who won first place for her personal narrative and also had an honorable mention for another submission; and seventh grader Blaire Murphy, who won third place, also for a personal narrative.

# TEEN SCENE

## The Balancing Act

By Youngjoo Ahn

Life is like a circus, and an entertaining circus needs a little bit of everything – elephants, acrobats, magic, and people! A fulfilled life needs to strike a balance between social experiences, school demands, and extracurricular activities. With all the opportunities we are afforded as teens, the sooner we learn the balancing act, the happier we will be.

### Elephants

What is a circus without elephants? When I think of this traveling extravaganza, elephants are first on my list. Elephants represent the necessities of living. It's important to prioritize the most important elements in your life. Before committing to any other activities, ask yourself: "Will this take away from my elephants?" Sophomore Sommar Ververka said, "Right now my biggest priority is lacrosse. It's my first year on varsity and my coaches expect a lot. Although I'd like to say that school is my number one concern, it just doesn't seem that way."

### Acrobats

At the show, it's incredible seeing people moving in ways that you didn't think were possible. Flipping, contorting, and flying through the air, acrobats may not be essential but they keep the circus exciting and thrilling. In life, it's good to have something that takes us out of our comfort zone, even if it means giving up something else. "School is my main focus, but lately, speech and debate tournaments have been a huge added interest," freshman Andrew Chow said. "Although I haven't had time to hang out with friends, I don't regret joining public speaking."

### People

Without people to clap and holler, there is no circus. Humans are social animals. In life, you need people to talk to, trust, have fun with, and lean on when the stress is overwhelming. Junior An-

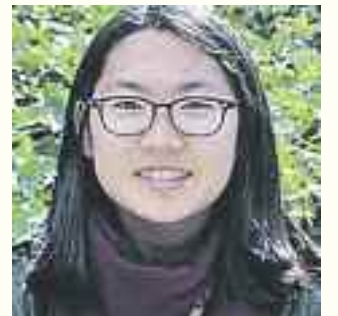
drew Bower commented: "I enjoy working with friends on school assignments and then we go out to eat afterwards as a reward for our hard work."

### Magic

Watching magicians is like watching kids eat candy for the first time. Magicians are the extra sprinkle on top of the cupcake. Activities that add pizzazz to your routine are the magic of your life. They're the last things you add on and often the first things you give up. Before adding to your already full plate, make sure you are juggling the rest of your circus well. "For me, Netflix is a never ending world of discovery," senior Jenny Li said. Junior Meghan Rogers' magical moments are drawing and writing in her spare time.

Balancing is all about knowing how comfortable you are with juggling. You can't do everything and balancing involves choosing and compromising wisely. To achieve success, we aspire to include the entire circus – elephants, acrobats, people, and magic. Pursue what you truly desire, then remember to build slowly on top of your main priority: your elephants.

*Youngjoo Ahn, a senior at Miramonte High School is the President of Club BTSYA, Host of Express Yourself!™ Teen Radio, and a fan of the circus, especially elephants.*



Teen Scene is YOUR voice. If you have something to say or have writing skills and want to be part of our Teen Scene team, email our Teen Coach, Cynthia Brian, [Cynthia@CynthiaBrian.com](mailto:Cynthia@CynthiaBrian.com).

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

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