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## Community Service

### Party Puts Fun into Fundraising

Submitted by Elizabeth Siamas



From left: Audra Fraioli, Laura Lashinsky, Gina Hageboeck and Rachel Blatt  
Photo provided

Proceeds from the Lafayette Juniors' Feb. 28 007 Casino Royale fundraising party supported the 2014-15 beneficiaries, including Ruby's

Place, Boys & Girls Club of Diablo Valley, Las Trampas, Trinity Center Walnut Creek, and VESTIA.

## Troop 303 Honors Four New Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Deb Sitzmann



From left: Will Gittings, Jack Brovelli, Gunnar Davison and Cole Wirtz Photo provided

Orinda Troop 303 announced that Will Gittings, Jack Brovelli, Gunnar Davison and Cole Wirtz have achieved Scouting's highest rank of Eagle Scout.

The achievement was celebrated Dec. 7, 2014 at Saint Stephens Episcopal Church. Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer presented each Eagle Scout with a proclamation noting their accomplishment and a "day in their honor."

To earn the rank of Eagle Scout a candidate must earn a minimum of 21 merit badges including 13 Eagle required badges, demonstrate leadership and complete a service project to benefit the community. During their scouting experience with troop 303 these four scouts accrued a total of 680 miles hiking, 227 nights camping and dedicated 352 hours to community service.

Jack Brovelli, a senior at Athenian School, installed a new 300-foot redwood rail fence with signage for St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Orinda to discourage illegal mulch dumping on the church property.

Gunnar Davison, a De La Salle High School senior, restored the playground for the Northern Light Charter School in Oakland. The 162 hours of work by scouts and friends with par-

ent oversight was coordinated by Davidsen and included the removal of all the old bark from the playground area.

Miramonte High School senior Will Gittings remodeled the rose garden at Sleepy Hollow Elementary School in Orinda. The remodel included replacing fence posts, framing, fencing, two gates, stairs, and parts of a retaining wall.

Cole Wirtz, also a Miramonte senior, recoated a playground black top surface and painted a 40-foot diameter map of the world on the surface for enjoyment of the kids at the Northern Light Charter School in Oakland. Due to the nature of working with asphalt sealant, and paint, his project took over 140 hours of work on eight separate visits, and involved the participation of 14 other scouts during these multiple work days.

These four young men join the less than 4 percent of all scouts who achieve Eagle Rank. Troop 303 meets every other Monday night at St. Stephens Episcopal Church. The troop has 65 scouts of all ages. To learn more about the troop visit [www.bsatroop303.orinda.com](http://www.bsatroop303.orinda.com) or contact scoutmaster Jim Brovelli (925) 997-8437.

## Documentary Screening Brings Baha'i Institute for Higher Education into Focus

Submitted by Chris Palmer



Audience members tweeted the Ayatollah for justice March 13 following a screening of "To Light a Candle" at Lafayette Library.  
Photo provided

Approximately 80 people attended the Lafayette Library screening March 13 of journalist Maziar Bahari's new documentary, "To Light a Candle" – a film about Iran's Baha'is and their commitment to spreading knowledge. A panel discussion following the film included scholars Niknaz Aftahi and Fares Hedayati, Baha'i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) graduates who were accepted into the graduate schools of architecture and engineering, respectively, at UC Berkeley.

After Iranian authorities outlawed higher education for Baha'i youth in 1987, the community formed the BIHE, a highly innovative underground university. With standards so high that over 80 Western graduate schools (including UC) accept their credentials, according to Dr. Farhad

Sabetan, moderator of the panel, they also operate as a community, leaving no one behind.

Aftahi and Hedayati described their BIHE experience, recounting how classes were held in living rooms and basements, how they would arrive, singly or in pairs, over the course of an entire morning, so as not to attract attention, and would receive the most intensive education under the most primitive of conditions, returning to their towns and villages across the country to read and study.

According to Dr. Tina Edraki, of the Lafayette Baha'i community, instructors and students operate under constant threat of arrest and imprisonment and many languish in prison today.

The campaign "Education is not a Crime," under which the film was

shown, seeks to draw attention to BIHE and to the systematic persecution and resilience of the Baha'i community in Iran. It also seeks to expand the network of Western universities that recognize BIHE certificates.

The campaign's website, <http://www.educationisnotacrime.me> asks students to record and submit interviews reflecting on the theme of "Education is not a Crime," and to tweet Ayatollah Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani, to put them on notice that the world is watching. Several young audience members stayed after the presentation to record their reflections and to tweet authorities in Iran that "#educationisnotacrime." The event was sponsored by Lafayette's Baha'i community.

## Community Service

### Orinda Troop Honors Two New Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Kim Laughton



Mark Laughton and Jack Kovalik Photo provided  
Orinda Boy Scout Troop 237 held an Eagle Court of Honor Scouts – Jack Kovalik and Mark Laughton. Both are graduating sen-

iors at Miramonte High School. Their scoutmaster is Eric Jorgensen.

For his Eagle service project, Kovalik sourced, funded and installed a trophy sports information case for the Miramonte High School men's baseball and women's softball teams. Laughton's Eagle service project involved painting and beautifying the blacktop play area at Markham Elementary School in Oakland in support of Playworks ([www.playworks.org](http://www.playworks.org)) to facilitate productive recess and after school programs at the school.

## Baskets Galore Go to Good Cause

Submitted by Sue Renno



Photo provided

Lafayette United Methodist women recently filled Easter baskets with bunnies and candy to be given to 100 children served by the Contra Costa Food Bank. Lafayette dentist, Dr. Andrew Ferrier, supplied toothbrushes and CVS Moraga donated the baskets.

## Junior Girl Scouts Learn Critical First Aid Skills

Submitted by Shirley DeFrancisci



Photo provided

Members of Junior Girl Scout Troop #31300 from Camino Pablo Elementary School in Moraga were recently taught critical first aid skills by healthcare experts and Moraga residents, Kim and Barry Sutherland. Kim Sutherland is a highly-experienced Neonatal Intensive Care Unit nurse at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in Oakland, and Barry Sutherland is the CEO of Norcal Ambulance.

The fifth-grade girls received a comprehensive tour of a state-of-the-art ambulance in the Norcal fleet. The brand new ambulance is one of the few of its kind in the Bay Area that can isolate a potential Ebola victim. In addition to practicing first aid, the girls learned how to perform life-saving compression breaths on CPR mannequins.