

## Glorietta Elementary School stages Disney's 'Mulan Jr.'

Submitted by Hillary Weiner



Photos provided



Based on Disney's Oscar-nominated film, "Mulan Jr." is a heartwarming celebration of culture, honor and the fighting spirit. In this story, it is up to the misfit Mulan and her mischievous dragon sidekick, Mushu, to save the Emperor from the Huns. Mulan defies the village matchmaker, taking up arms and disguising herself as a boy in order to spare her father from having to serve in the army. As the great battle with the Huns approaches, Mulan is forced to choose between revealing her true identity as a girl or saving all of China with her clever plan. With hit songs and a story packed with action, humor and heart, "Mulan Jr." brings ancient China to life with a modern sensibility.

This production of "Mulan Jr." is direct-

ed by music teacher Ron Pickett, with the assistance of parent producers Susan Jordan, June Lim and Melissa Matosian. There are two student casts, comprising approximately 65 students along with a student tech crew. The production is funded through parent contributions, Glorietta Parents Club, Orinda Arts Council and EFO.

"Mulan Jr." takes place at Glorietta Elementary School, 15 Martha Road, at 4 and 7 p.m. on Friday, May 12, and at 3 and 7 p.m. Saturday, May 13. Tickets for the Friday and Saturday performances (all reserved seating) will be available in advance online at [www.showtix4u.com](http://www.showtix4u.com). Tickets may also be available at the door prior to the show.

## Menge honored as Employee of the Month in Moraga

Submitted by Kevin Reneau



From left, Kevin Reneau, Rotary president, Gini Menge, Starbucks Manager Amanda Sargent, Chamber of Commerce President Wendy Schreck.

Virginia Menge, a popular barista at Starbucks Coffee, has been named the Moraga Employee of the Month for March.

Menge has served Moraga customers for the past 11 years and has been with Starbucks for 13 years. She serves in many roles for the coffee company including making coffees, cappuccinos, lattes and other specialty drinks as well as food items.

"Ginny is extremely popular with our customers because of her fantastic work eth-

ic and she always as a positive attitude and a smile on her face," said Starbucks Manager Amanda Sargent. "She gets to know all of our customers. We just love having her on our team."

In winning the award, the Moraga Rotary and Chamber of Commerce will award Menge a gift card to Safeway as well as a gift card. Menge will be presented with his award and gifts at an upcoming Moraga Rotary meeting at Saint Mary's College.

## OIS Teacher named OUSD's Teacher of the Year

Submitted by Jonathan Lance



From left: Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools Karen Sakata and Orinda Union School District's Teacher of the Year Susan Boudreau. Photo Terry Koehne, CCCOE

On April 18, Contra Costa County Office of Education Superintendent of Schools Karen Sakata visited the classroom of Susan Boudreau, at Orinda Intermediate School. Boudreau, a 33-year instructor, was recently named Orinda Union School District's Teacher of the Year. Boudreau has been teaching science at the Orinda school

for the past 25 years. Prior to her current position, she had taught biology and science in the West Contra Costa County Unified School District, at U.C. Berkeley, and at the Queen Elizabeth School (grades 6-12), in Devon, UK.

"The accomplishment of which I am most proud is making science more accessible to girls and to all students who are not part of the traditional white-coat scientist mold," says Boudreau, whose father is a particle physicist. "This compelling world of physics is incredibly male-dominated – from middle school onward, and outward to engineering, too. The under-enrollment of girls is a huge waste of talent for society and for their own lives and careers, with physics being a gateway to so much beyond STEM. I want to model and convey the message that science is a fascinating, powerful and relevant endeavor in which ALL are invited to take a part."

On the evening of September 28, the 22 Contra Costa County TOYs, class of 2017-18, including Boudreau, will be introduced and honored at the annual Teacher of the Year Dinner Celebration, held at the Concord Hilton. The 22 TOYs will be accompanied by their families, friends, and co-workers. The expected crowd of close to 500 will also include numerous other supporters of the program.

## Teens plan Mother's Day walk against breast cancer

Submitted by Reagan Tierney



Zoe Zabetian and Reagan Tierney at last year's event.

Photo provided

For the past five years, Reagan Tierney and Zoe Zabetian, Miramonte students, have planned an annual Walk Against Breast Cancer on Mother's Day to raise funds for the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center. It is a breast health center in Oakland that was named after an Orinda resident who died from breast cancer. Her husband and grandchildren live in Orinda now.

The girls started the annual event in 2013 for a school project. At the time, Reagan's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. She is now a breast cancer survivor. Over

the years anywhere from 150 to 250 walkers have participated. In total, the duo has raised more than \$12,000.

This year, the walk will take place from 9 a.m. to noon on May 14, Mother's Day, at the St. Stephen's trail at Bates Boulevard. It is a drop-in, so walkers may arrive at any time during the time slot. The walk is flat, two miles long, and perfectly suitable for families. Noah's Bagels, Peet's Coffee, and Safeway donate refreshments. The girls are hoping to make this year our biggest walk yet

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## Mothers' groups grow up with their children

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"There are six of us in the 'baby group' even now," Wilcox says, after more than 23 years and lots of changes. "We've managed to stay a group of good friends. We see each other four to six times a year still." Wilcox says the initial new mother bond, plus "a shared love of the outdoors, good books, museums, spirited discussions, and a good glass of wine" kept the group together. As a NICU nurse, Wilcox says she encourages the mothers whose children she cares for to reach out to other new moms when they leave the hospital. "It can be a lifeline," she says.

These Lamorinda mothers' children are now all grown, some with children of their

own, but many original mothers still stay in touch. "We didn't all go our separate ways," Dadasovich says. Babysitting co-op members from decades ago send Christmas cards or catch up at chance meetings across town. A group of former Lafayette Elementary School mothers who began walking the reservoir on Fridays when their children were young still find the time to bond over walks or day trips. Decades after the demands of a newborn, the terrible twos, the trying threes, the ferocious fours and the tricky teen years, social bonding...and the oxytocin it provides...is its own reward.