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## Wagner Ranch holds biggest ever Makers' Faire

By Sora O'Doherty



Photos Sora O'Doherty

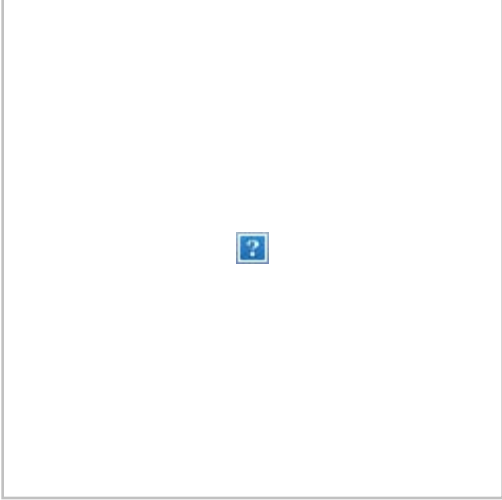
engineering and design camps and classes in Walnut Creek.

James Strickler, a retired entrepreneur and inventor, works as a substitute teacher and volunteered at the faire. Holding a doctorate from Cornell in engineering/physics, he offered a variety of activities, including working with pieces of "Olive," an olive tree that had to be cut down. Students sanded the pieces to make pendants, key chains, and other items. At his table, students could also construct dodecahedrons. Strickler noted that there are a lot of brilliant students in Orinda, and the goal is to keep them challenged and leverage that to have them help other students. His philosophy is, "A teaching standard is not a speed limit."

Anagnost spoke of the development of the event. "It's amazing," he said. The first year was just a few tables for two grades, and it has grown tremendously, now offering a plethora of tables and time for all 19 classes of students to cycle through. "Parents bring amazing ideas," he added, "and Megan [Natal, fourth-grade teacher at Wagner Ranch] is a super star."

Natal said that the faire is now a hybrid of company reps, parents and volunteers, including former teachers and former students. The faire, she summed up, "gives kids a chance to create and build, and use the sense that, if something doesn't work, try again. It teaches perseverance."





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