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# The Peter Pan Foundation makes a difference through music and service

Submitted by Gina Campo



Photos courtesy Peter Pan Foundation

The Peter Pan Foundation is a nonprofit group in Lafayette, whose mission is to spread light, love and joy every day throughout the Bay Area at a dizzying pace, like when 10 princesses knocked on the door of a little girl with cancer, just to host a tea party to brighten her day.

This is all in a day's work for the foundation, which has had a busy few months: throwing a Super-Hero Christmas party for foster kids; being "knighted" by the St. Baldrick's Foundation for seven years of performances at the annual Children's Hospital shave event; helping the San Francisco chapter of Make-A-Wish fulfill wishes; offering special performances for kids with sensory issues, the deaf community, casting a Cinderella in a wheelchair in its upcoming spring benefit musical, and raising hundreds of thousands of dollars donated to worthy causes over the past 10 years.

"We inspire children of all ages to reach their full potential

by building confidence, character and creativity through music and theatre, while instilling the value of community outreach and philanthropy," said founder Leslie Noel.

While the goal is to bring music and magic to all audiences, the performers benefit as well.

"Performing as Spiderman in the Easter Seals Bay Area event was my favorite event I've ever done," exclaimed teen Garrett Hannigan of Walnut Creek. "The kids were so amazing and kind and loving, as were the rest of our super squad. I'm always so humbled by these events and I hope that we never stop, because they are truly amazing."

This year the Peter Pan Foundation has partnered with the local Make-A-Wish chapter and has been helping present and fulfill wishes. John Jatoft of Concord, a father of a PPF member, stepped up recently to help present Jacob with his wish.

"As Batman, I was able to present our honorary hero with a spe-

cial trip to Disney World Florida and Universal Studios," said Jatoft. "Jacob was surrounded by family and friends and we enjoyed a magical moment where wishes come true. I felt like I was the one that was granted a wish by this special young man and his family."

The Peter Pan Foundation will present its annual original musical "Wish Upon a Star" over the Memorial Day weekend at Diablo Valley College, 321 Golf Club Road, in Pleasant Hill. The magical musical adventure includes princesses, villains, heroes and many other beloved characters sure to delight audiences of all ages.

The show features more than 200 performers in several alternating casts, with show times at 2 and 7 p.m. on May 26, 27, 28 with the younger casts performing at 10 a.m. May 27 and 28. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$15 for students, seniors and military and can be purchased at [www.peterpanfoundation.org](http://www.peterpanfoundation.org). Proceeds benefit UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland.



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# Wagner Ranch musical opens June 1

Submitted by Kim Tarantino



Wagner Ranch Elementary School will feature the ogre-iffic antics of Shrek, Fiona, Donkey, Lord Farquaad, as well as all the hilarious fairy tale characters that will come to life during the spring musical production of "Shrek Jr." Friday, June 1 through Saturday, June 2. For tickets, visit <https://wr-orinda-ca.schoolloop.com/>.

One of two Wagner Ranch Elementary casts of this year's "Shrek Jr." spring production.

Photo provided

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# Acalanes musical educator set to retire

... continued from page B1

When asked how he was able to fund all the activities, Dea laughed and said, "I just hold out my hand and the parents give me a check." Seriously, he added, "The parents in the Performing Arts Boosters have been very generous in funding and being there at concerts for help with logistics and chaperoning."

Dea also mentioned the Lafayette Partners in Education as a great source for funding and support.

Bruce Lengacher, the Vocal Music instructor at AHS who has worked alongside Dea for the past 10 years, said, "Norm is an icon in musical education in the state of California. He pulled the state out of the red in 2013 in smart and resourceful ways, and then worked to get all the musical organizations back together under one umbrella called the California All-State Music Education Conference. He's one of the most

efficient teachers I've ever seen. I consider him a great colleague and a friend."

After his Kauai vacation, Dea will return to the area and plans to stay busy in the musical education arena, judging festivals, giving clinics, and mentoring younger teachers. "I also hope to pick up my tuba again and play in some of the local bands," he said. "I don't think I'll have any problem keeping busy in my retirement."

### Some shared words about Mr. Dea

From Reider Martinsen, a senior in the Symphonic Wind Ensemble:

"Mr. Dea is one of my favorite teachers, and I've really enjoyed having Band with him for the last four years. I love walking into the band room because he greets me with a fist bump or a hug. He's a funny guy, too, which makes our class entertaining."

From SeoYoung Kim, a sophomore in the String Orchestra:

"All I know is that I'll really miss his interesting humor. I just want to know what his next Instagram user name will be."

From Janis Workman, parent of Kenny, a senior in the Symphonic Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble, Emma, a junior in the Symphonic Band, and Walter, a freshman in the Concert Band.

"Mr. Dea ... has a quick wit, but manages to see the good in each of his students. All three of my teenag-

ers are studying with Mr. Dea this year, and he has managed to convince each of them that they are his favorite. He will be dearly missed at Acalanes and in our family."

From Suzanne Everly, Acalanes Instrumental Music Boosters President and parent of Ryan, a junior in the Symphonic Wind Ensemble and in the Jazz Ensemble, and Kyle, a sophomore in college who played for Mr. Dea for four years.

"Both of my kids had the privilege of having Mr. Dea as a teacher. He encouraged them to challenge themselves as musicians, as well as individuals. Not only did he teach them to appreciate all different genres of music, but he also taught them the 'language' of music, self-discipline, accountability and being part of a 'team.' My children are better people because of having a teacher like Mr. Dea."