

Moraga Rotary named 'Outstanding Club' in Northern California District

Submitted by Gary Irwin



Three recent presidents of Moraga Rotary accept the recognition banner of "The Outstanding Club of the Year," from left: Club presidents Ron Mucovich, Dianne Wilson, and Kevin Reneau. Sitting: Cliff Dochterman, former Rotary International president and current Moraga Rotary member. Photo provided

Rotary Club of Moraga was recognized as "The Outstanding Club of the Year" at the Rotary District 5160 awards dinner held recently in Woodland, Yolo County. This District consists of 72 individual Rotary Clubs ranging from Berkeley and San Ramon in the south to Weed near the Oregon border, with four clubs in Lamorinda. This award has been given annually to the Outstanding Club since 1994, when it was created by Cliff Dochterman when he was serving as worldwide president of Rotary International, and has been passed along each year to the winning club. This award honors the recent achievements of Moraga Rotary under club presidents Kevin Reneau, Dianne Wilson, and Ron Mucovich.

One factor contributing to Moraga Rotary winning this award was the successful fundraising, design, and completion of the All-Access Playground at the Moraga Commons, which achieved wide community support and is regarded as the largest privately funded gift to the town of Moraga. Donations in excess of \$350,000 were received from more than 200 foundations, companies, individuals, and other organizations, including several service clubs and grants from The Rotary Foundation. The project has brought many segments of the local citizenry to work together, and the playground has been overwhelmingly accepted by children and parents.

The creative playground equipment enables special needs youngsters the opportunity to play with other children, and it serves children from many Bay Area communities.

The current major international project of Moraga Rotary is building a critically needed children's home in Sierra Leone, Africa, for children orphaned due to the outbreaks of ebola. Each speaker at Moraga Rotary last year was presented a backpack to be given to an orphaned child in Sierra Leone to enable them to attend school. Moraga Rotary has raised about \$200,000 for the project, much of which came from local community groups and individuals. Already the kitchen to serve the orphanage has been constructed.

Moraga Rotary has served the community for more than 50 years through sponsorship of 14 Odyssey of the Mind teams, scholarships awards to Campolindo High School and Saint Mary's students, exchange students, sponsoring Interact and Rotaract Clubs at Campolindo and Saint Mary's College, donations to Moraga Education Foundation, and the Field Day for third-, fourth- and fifth-graders. The Club also helps or donates to Monument Crisis Center, Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, RotaCare Free Clinic, books for the library at Juvenile Hall, assistance to fire and flood disasters, and many other community and international service activities.

Rotary Club of Moraga is a local service club within Rotary International, one of about 33,000 Rotary Clubs in about 200 countries. Regular meetings are held on most Tuesdays at the Moraga Country Club. For further information, call Debbie Koo at (925) 376-9137, or check out moragarotary.org.

Lafayette Garden Club supports Miramonte High School horticulture program with dollars and muscle

Submitted by Marcia Raos



Photo provided

The Lafayette Garden Club has been a strong supporter of the Miramonte Horticulture Program and this summer donated \$2,000 to the horticulture program for the creation of their contemplative garden. The donation came from proceeds of the Garden Club's May garden tour, titled "Artful Gardens." Five gardens in Lafayette and Orinda were open to the public May 12 for viewing, with over 500 residents visiting the gardens that Saturday.

Lafayette Garden Club members again supported the school Oct. 13 and worked with the horticultural program instructor, Chrissy Orangio to build their new 6-foot by 12-foot greenhouse at Miramonte High School property. The greenhouse will be

used by students of the horticulture program to propagate plants for planting this spring and throughout the school year. According to Orangio, the students started right away with their propagation efforts the Monday morning following the installation.

Lafayette Garden Club members Laurie Callaway, Linda Mizes and Linda On along with Greg Ow and Joe Dylewski, and contractor Omar Rodriguez, joined Orangio and Mike Davis from Miramonte to complete the installation in six hours.

Orangio states that "The green house will go a long way in the years to come to support our student's Horticultural efforts. We are very grateful to the Lafayette Garden Club for their support."

Local NCL Holiday Giving event

Submitted by Cheryl Bjornson



Photo provided

Over 100 Ticktockers from the Lamorinda Chapter of National Charity League came together on Sunday, Dec. 2 for its annual Holiday Giving event in support of Monument Crisis Center. The young women assembled 85 large boxes of non-perishable

food, 400 toiletry bags for teens and 18 fleece blankets. Members of the Lamorinda NCL chapter graciously donated all of the thousands of items that filled the food box and toiletry bag donations for Monument Crisis Center.

Local students participate in 'Kindness Matters' competition

Submitted by Robert Murtagh



Orinda Intermediate School, from left: Tyndall Beaham, teacher Susan Weiss, Grace Wood, Tanith Brooks-Williams, Amelia Adams-Brace and Lion Bob Murtagh. Photos provided



Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, from left: Lion Bob Murtagh, teacher Moose Wexler, Penelope Gates, Chance Newby, Sophia Ahrens, and Principal Joan Danilson.



Stanley Middle School Principal Betsy Balmat, Paige Carpenter, Molly Breznikar, Michael Balmat, and teacher Robert Anke.

This year, more than 200 students in the Lamorinda area submitted artwork for an international competition conducted by Lions clubs in over 200 countries. Pictured are the winners from Orinda Intermediate School, Stanley Intermediate School and Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. This year's theme, "Kindness Matters," complements the local iKind program. The posters, which are on display at Lamorinda libraries through December, are amazing and graphi-

cally imagine what kindness looks like.

This is the 15th year Lamorinda schools have participated in this contest, which is open to students ages 11-13. The Lions are grateful to the dynamic art teachers in our three intermediate schools who were able to elicit this level of creativity.

For more information about Lions or the Peace Poster Contest contact Bob Murtagh, (925) 283-1841.

Community Service: We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions may be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.