

Troop 204 completes '50-miler'



Photos Pepe Davis

Trek 3, from left: Naoto Watanabe, Ben Thiselton-Dyer, Jon Davis, Andrew Baxter, Ray Adams, Ryan Bea, Josh Gohres, and Nick Owels.

Submitted by Jenny Shepherd

Lafayette's Boy Scout Troop 204 completed its annual "50-Miler" backpacking trip in August. This has been a tradition of the troop for over 50 years. There were seven different treks totaling over 80 Scouts and dads hiking through the Hoover Wilderness and Yosemite. Each trek had Scouts aging in range from 12 to 17 years old, with older Scouts teaching younger Scouts how to hike, camp and have fun in the backcountry. The senior trek comprised eight recent Eagle Scouts. The trip builds teamwork, camaraderie and leadership while enjoying some of the finest backcountry vistas in the world. The Scouts saw many incredible sites including Mount Conness, Matterhorn, Cathedral Peak, Glen Aulin Falls, Hetch Hetchy Valley, and many lakes, meadows, forests, granite domes and spires.

Scoutmaster Tim Lee, who took over this year from retired Scoutmaster Tom Steuber, said, "This was one of the most memorable 50-Milers in recent history. While we negotiated a few more mosquitos due

to the rainy winter, we enjoyed perfect weather and incredible trails throughout the Yosemite wilderness. I appreciate the tremendous volunteer efforts by the parents, and I'm extremely proud of the Scouts for their accomplishments and the amazing time they had on the trip."

All Scouts safely returned from the wilderness and were greeted by their families at the traditional Welcome Home Picnic, usually involving the hikers' favorite foods. Many stories, both true and definitely exaggerated, were shared by Scouts and dads. This year was especially joyous as the boys supported their sister troop, Troop 402, on their first 25-mile trip starting the next day.

Boy Scout Troop 204 in Lafayette has been serving the community, providing leadership, and having fun in the outdoors since 1932. The troop meets at the old log cabin at First and School Streets on Monday nights at 7:30 p.m. Troop 402, the sister troop, is growing rapidly, and meets at the cabin on Thursday nights at 7:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining or learning more, please contact Jim Coyle at jcoyle8@yahoo.com.



Trek 3 takes a lunch break on the trail.

Local literacy nonprofit celebrates 20 years of service



Photo provided

BTSYA Volunteers Brigitte Jia, Chelsea Pelchat, and Jelina Liu at a Saint Mary's college event.

Submitted by Brigitte Jia

Be the Star You Are, a Moraga-based literacy and positive media message charity, will mark a major milestone on Sept. 9 – 20 years of serving the community, county, and country. Staffed with volunteers, no paid employees, and operated solely with the generous donations of individuals and businesses, the volunteers of this nonprofit host an award-winning international radio show interviewing authors and celebrities from around the globe, provide free books to children at events, ship supplies to survivors of natural disasters across the United States, perform pop-up concerts with other BTSYA volunteer musicians throughout Lamorinda and for seniors at Moraga Royale and Aegis, read books to children at the Moraga Faire, paint faces at Saint Mary's events and the Pear Festival, and help children write letters to Santa at the 5A Rent-a-Space Holiday party.

Bridgitte Jia has been a proud member and volunteer for this top-rated nonprofit for the past six years. "In my freshman year at Campolindo High School, I stumbled upon the opportunity to be a behind-the-scenes 'art coordinator,'" she said. "With the encouragement and enthusiasm of Founder and Executive Director Cynthia Brian, I soon spread my wings to become a

reporter on Express Yourself Teen Radio, brought to the airwaves under the auspices of the BTSYA charity. I quickly sharpened my communicative abilities, giving me the chance to grow from an awkward high school freshman into an open, articulate individual."

There are numerous opportunities for teens to get their community service credits while growing as people and leaders, Jia says. "Besides reporting on the thought-provoking radio broadcast, one of the most popular Be the Star You Are outreach programs is to become a writer on the Star Teen Book Review Team. To date, over 2,000 book reviews have been written and published. The BTSYA motto is: "Read, lead, succeed. To be a leader, you must be a reader."

Through Be the Star You Are programs, Jia says she found her voice and her leadership capabilities. "Because of my involvement with BTSYA, I am no longer afraid to talk to others about my feelings and opinions," Jia said. "As part of this organization, I've grabbed the globe by the horns and have been able to concretely change peoples' lives. The work I do alongside Cynthia and other members of our BTSYA family will stay with me for the rest of my life."

For more information, to volunteer or to make a donation, visit: <https://www.BetheStarYouAre.org>

Moraga students honored for volunteer service



PSVA and MSD volunteer service awards' recipients at the June 4 MSD school board meeting.

Photo courtesy MSD office

Submitted by Cathy Harrison

Moraga School District became one of the certifying organizations for the President's Volunteer Service Award in 2018. The program led by federal Corporation for National and Community Service since 2003 honors those whose service positively impacts their communities and inspires those around them to take action. Moraga School District also created a district-level volunteer service award program to recognize exceptional volunteers over the course of a 12-month period. More than a dozen MSD students were honored at a June 4 school board meeting. For more information on the program, please visit: <https://www.moraga.k12.ca.us/pvsa>.

Community Service:

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