

Letters to the editor

Heartfelt thanks from a Stanley student

My name is Nick Dietsch. I am an eighth-grader who and has been attending Stanley Middle School since sixth grade.

When I came back this year, so many students were talking in halls about the new makeover at Stanley. We went through a whole year of construction and couldn't believe what we came back to. I want to thank the people who voted and passed the bond measure because it did so much for all of our schools. I knew that there would be a new building for the eighth-graders but I never came to the conclusion that they were doing a full tune up of the school.

When I say full tune up, I mean it. I was very glad to return to a school with; get ready for this list – TWO new buildings with classes for eighth grade science and history and sixth grade core, a newly resurfaced and painted black top, new monitors in every classroom, stairs leading into the gym, the eighth-grade eating area back was reopened. I couldn't believe all the improvements – there was new concrete in the hallways, a new layout of the office for better safety and access, there is an outdoor team sports courts for P.E., and we found several brand new water fountains.

Most of all, the biggest surprise was that they re-modeled every single student bathroom on campus, for boys and girls. On the first day, I was surprised to see all the changes that they made in terms of the landscapes but the second I walked into the new bathrooms, I was blown out of my mind. There was no smell, no overflowing urinals, no drawings on the walls, and no roof that was falling apart. Now, it is like a whole new world in there.

The furniture in the classrooms is dramatically nicer, more modern and more comfortable. There are high chairs and low chairs which is really convenient for kids who sit in the back. The new desks are movable which makes it a lot easier for changing the layout depending on how we are learning. Since I am a basketball player, I am really appreciative of the new basketball supply because we were so low last year. And it always helps to have a newly paved blacktop to play on. Yet another thing that I love is that the school district finished the construction of the student park and removed the portable.

All of these improvements make me feel better about my school and thank you again to everyone who had a piece of this.

Nick Dietsch
Lafayette

Steps to make a difference

Every day, more evidence arrives that Climate Change isn't just happening, but becoming a true, undeniable crisis. The Amazon is burning. Glaciers and snow packs are melting. Sea levels are rising. Temperatures are soaring. Animal habitats are shrinking. Droughts

are drier and storm surges are bigger.

Many in Lamorinda know the climate issues, but also want to know what they can do to address the climate emergency now in their own lives. The following are a few tips:

1. Eat like it matters: Eat less meat, especially beef. Livestock accounts for nearly 15 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Start small if you want: Try Meatless Mondays. Eating organic also helps. Organic agriculture uses up to 50% less fossil fuel than conventional agriculture. Too expensive? Start with a few fruits or veggies. You'll find organic produce at Lamorinda grocery stores such as Diablo Foods, Safeway and Whole Foods, as well as at local farmers markets.

2. Choose clean transportation: Transportation is the biggest source of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in the United States. Drive less, carpool, bike or walk. Turn your car off while in line waiting for your kids to exit school. And the next time you buy or lease a car, consider choosing an electric, hybrid or more fuel-efficient model.

3. Save energy at home: For little to no cost, Moraga (and Lafayette) residents and businesses can switch from PG&E to MCE, a renewable, carbon-free energy provider. Call PG&E for details. And while on the phone, ask PG&E about a free home energy audit.

4. Just say no to plastic: If we don't slow plastic production, by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans. Instead of buying water or other beverages in single-use plastic bottles, carry a reusable bottle. Make your own tea or lemonade.

Minimize the number of plastic bags you use at the grocery store: Try bringing your own reusable bags for produce and to take home all your groceries. Other ideas? Divest from fossil fuels, volunteer for climate-focused organizations, and vote, vote, vote.

This could be THE most important step you take to combat climate change. From town and city councils to state and federal governments, vote for candidates who pledge to take decisive actions to confront the climate crisis. If you live in Contra Costa County and need help with when or where to vote, even to confirm if you're registered to vote, visit www.cocovote.us.

Dean Mayer, Moraga
Chris Rauber, Lafayette

Time for Express Commuter Bus Service to SF

Moraga and Orinda should collaborate and arrange for express commuter bus service to SF. I envision parking at the shuttered OSH parking lot, from which the bus would depart. It would make one stop at the existing bus stop at the Holy Shepard Lutheran Church at 433 Moraga Way. Perhaps commuter parking could

be arranged at that church as well as at the adjacent St. Mark's United Methodist Church. There would, of course, be a number of details that would need to be worked out. I note that SamTrans recently began providing commuter busses from Foster City to SF. AC Transit of course continues to provide popular trans-bay bus service and also has bus service from Hayward BART to Hillsdale Mall in San Mateo.

This proposal would reduce congestion and greenhouse gasses. Subsidies might be provided by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, whose mission includes "reducing traffic congestion." Moraga and Orinda might also contribute subsidies from the discretionary portions of their general funds. CCTA's most recent express bus study was completed in 2001, long before BART service in Lamorinda became of limited utility due to insufficient parking and overcrowded trains. Our local governments should make this happen.

Nick Waranoff
Orinda

Global Youth Climate Strike on Friday, Sept. 20

It's a call to action by Greta Thunberg, a Swedish teenage climate activist, who started striking from school for the climate about a year ago. As she has said in past speeches, "the Climate Crisis is an emergency and deserves to be treated as such. I don't want your hope. I want you to act. I want you to act as if the house is on fire, because it is."

Our family joined the Global Youth Climate Strike this past March with 1.6 million students in the streets, demanding world leaders to act and lead on climate.

For more info, <https://globalclimatestrike.net/>, <http://strikewithus.org>, www.sustainablelafayette.org/post/in-the-news-global-youth-climate-strike

There is also a Youth Climate Rally from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 21 at Civic Park in Walnut Creek for those wanting to support the movement, without skipping out on school.

It's super important that kids know what they are up against and that this one thing of showing up in support will mean so much, especially since the timing of the event is right before the UN Climate Summit on Sept. 23, where we hope that leaders can agree to take drastic moves to reign in on carbon emissions after seeing the outcry from our world's youth.

Nancy Hu
Vice Chair, Lafayette Environmental Task Force

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