

Mindful Littles launches Healing Initiative in Paradise



Peace Kits were delivered to Paradise students last spring. Photo provided

Submitted by Lisa Sadikman

On Sept. 9, Mindful Littles, based in Orinda, officially launched its Healing Initiative in the Paradise Ridge community, which was greatly devastated by the Camp Fire 10 months ago. Integrated lessons will teach students critical mindfulness, yoga and social-emotional learning skills to help them build inner resilience, lower their stress and anxiety after trauma, develop compassion and encourage a positive mindset for the future.

Mindful Littles facilitators will bring the unique approach into every classroom across all three elementary schools in the Paradise Unified School District. In addition to student lessons, the program provides self-care guidance for educators and administrators, as well as service learning programs for the community.

The Mindful Littles story in Paradise is one of miracles. Last spring the small nonprofit, in partnership with Orinda Union School District, facilitated an initiative called Peace Kits for Paradise. Over the course of eight school days, Mindful Littles led mindful service learning experiences for more than 1,600 elementary school students in Orinda. The students learned about the Camp Fire and what it means to be resilient, kind and compassionate. In buddy pairs, they assembled 300 Peace Kits containing 11 mindfulness tools including student-created breathing tools, gratitude journals, eye pillows and notes of loving kindness and encouragement.

A few weeks later, 30 volunteers with the Orinda Union School District and Mindful Littles visited Ponderosa Elementary School to deliver the kits. They spent the day teaching students how to use the tools in their kits, including how to take calming breaths, ways to access gratitude and how to relieve physical and emotional stress. During this unforgettable heartfelt day

together, it became evident that the need for Mindful Littles work was critical in Paradise Ridge.

A growing body of research highlights the tangible benefits of mindfulness for communities and individuals who've experienced trauma. Mindful Littles' goal is to bring these benefits to the children in Paradise during the yearlong program. The program is funded by a grant from the North Valley Community Foundation to the Paradise Unified School District.

"We are deeply grateful and honored to have the opportunity to begin our Healing Initiative in Paradise Unified Elementary Schools," said Tanuka Gordon, founder of Mindful Littles. "Compassion has been at the root of our work from our very first mindful service learning project in my backyard to the programs we oversee in many schools and institutions today. As we begin work with each student in Paradise Ridge, this intention of compassion will remain at the core."

"As someone who grew up in Paradise and studied in PUSD schools kindergarten through 12th grade, I have a deep commitment to seeing the Ridge community recover and thrive in the wake of the Camp Fire," said Lauryn Gregorio, lead Mindful Littles facilitator in Paradise. "I hope to offer my passion for mindfulness, community-building, and resilience in a way that supports students, educators, and families to feel nurtured and supported in the challenging process of rebuilding the Paradise community."

"Our hope is that we can bring deep healing to the beautiful community of Paradise Ridge through our mindfulness, social-emotional learning and service learning programs," said Gordon. "As we plant the seeds of compassion, we hope our work can have a small part in rebuilding Paradise Ridge into a vibrant community once again."

Walk, roll or run for a good cause



Photos provided

Submitted by Suzanne Pestal

Las Trampas will hold its 10th Annual Walk n' Roll 1 mile or 5K event starting at 8 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 28 with registration, breakfast and entertainment at Lafayette Plaza Park. Participants can choose between the 5K run route or the 1-mile walk and roll route, which takes folks along the beautiful streets of Lafayette from 9 a.m. to noon, ending with a celebration back at the park. This year the route will take participants along the trail past the Las Trampas campus, which will be undergoing a major renovation this fall

(see story on page A1).

Since 1958, Las Trampas has helped individuals with developmental disabilities to discover their capabilities and to lead fuller lives in their homes, at work and in the community. Every dollar goes directly to client programs and makes a difference in the lives of those with developmental disabilities.

The fee for the event is \$25 advanced, or \$30 on the day of the event, and includes breakfast, live entertainment, raffle prizes, ice cream social and a T-shirt. To register, go to <https://lastrampas.org/event-item/2019-walk-n-roll/> or call (925) 310-2363.

Volunteers needed to fight fire blight in Moraga pear orchard



Photo provided

nately the winter rains promote the growth of fire blight, especially if it is a warm rain when the blossoms are open. The fire blight infection threatened to kill this historic orchard, which is a source of great local pride and the impetus for the annual Moraga Pear Festival. In addition, each year the Moraga Park Foundation glean the pears for the Contra Costa Food Bank, supplying much-needed fresh produce for the hungry. This year more than 14,000 pounds of pears were harvested from the JM Orchard!

This event is sponsored by the Moraga School District, which owns the land, and the town of

Submitted by Bobbie Preston

Volunteers are needed to remove fire blight-damaged branches from the 106-year-old pear orchard adjacent to Joaquin Moraga School in Moraga, at 1000 Camino Pablo at Canyon, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 5. The trees are doing better after several years of fire blight removal, treatment with an organic fertilizer last year, and winter rains in 2016. But unfortu-

Moraga, with the assistance of Republic Services. There will be instruction, tools, and a lot of fun. Bring gloves, sunscreen, hats and sturdy shoes. If you have them bring (labeled with your name) loppers, hand pruners and (especially needed) pole pruners and orchard ladders.

Heavy rain cancels this event. For more information, contact Bobbie Preston at (925) 376-8474 or barbaram-preston@comcast.net.

In Memory

Edwin "Ted" Gunn

Sept. 6, 1942 - July 16, 2019



Edwin "Ted" Gunn was born in Cleveland, Ohio and spent 30 years in Orinda before he retired in Rossmoor. He was predeceased by his wife Joyce Gunn (2005) and is survived by his son Morgan Gunn and daughter Megan Gunn.

Ted met Joyce in San Francisco and married in 1969. People knew him as "TaxGunn" as he was a CPA for 45 years. Ted loved his jokes and puns and shared his humor with new friends. He was an avid gardener growing tomatoes, veggies and different flowers. He also loved bowling and bowled a perfect 300 game in 1969. Ted gained a love of wine and traveled to wine regions to taste in Argentina, Australia and Niagara.

When Ted moved to Rossmoor, he learned to play bridge and gained a new bridge community. Bridge afforded him to travel on international cruises and earn "master points" while seeing the world.

Ted was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes as a teen and spent much of his life managing this. He was one of very few people to be awarded a 50-year medal being insulin-dependent continuously for at least 50 years.

A celebration of life will be held at 2 p.m. Monday, Oct. 14 at the Fairway Room at Creekside Clubhouse in Rossmoor.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to The American Diabetes Association (www.diabetes.org).

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