

Published October 16th, 2019

Imperfect produce put to good use

Submitted by Cathy Harrison



Students prepare salads for Community Cabins Program by Lake Merritt Photo provided

At the beginning of this summer harvest season, a local volunteer-run farm in Moraga was looking for channels for imperfect and ripe produce so the produce would not go to waste. Camino Pablo Elementary School second-grade teacher Margaret Coughlan, who was looking for service projects for her class and the school PTA's community services committee, decided to turn these amazing produce into healthy vegetable sides for the 40 residents at Housing Consortium of East Bay's Community Cabins program by Lake Merritt (9 10th E Street, Oakland).

Coughlan's class prepared fresh salad in the school kitchen with the teacher and parent volunteers' help. The class also made a giant, colorful poster for the Community Cabins program. The residents don't get fresh vegetables regularly and, therefore, every bite counts. With support from the school principal, Chris Reddam, and the successful pilot with Mrs. Coughlan's class, five more classes have participated in preparing healthy vegetable dishes on Fridays for the Community Cabins' residents. The classes have made salsa, salad, sandwiches, chilis, vegetable stew and rice sandwiches.

Colorful posters added more energy to the Community Cabins' site. The food and posters were delivered fresh by parent volunteers on the same day. This initiative has brought parent volunteers, students, teachers, and Moraga volunteer-run farm together. It also connects the two communities.

Although the seasonal Friday food initiative at Camino Pablo Elementary School has ended in early October this year when the volunteer-run farm's summer harvest season came to an end, the Community Cabins program by Lake Merritt will continue to receive Friday meals through the "Feasting with Friends" program (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/feasting-with-friends-tickets-60915267204>). Camino Pablo PTA Community Services Committee creates and promotes volunteering opportunities for elementary school students throughout the school year.

For information about the Community Cabins program by Lake Merritt, visit <https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2019/04/04/oakland-to-invest-millions-in-tuff-shed-program-to-help-house-homeless/>

For information on Moraga School District's Volunteer Service Award Programs, visit www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1314/

[Moraga-students-honored-for-volunteer-service.html](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1314/Moraga-students-honored-for-volunteer-service.html)

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA