

Find the perfect preschool for your children at upcoming Fair



Last year's fair

Photos provided



By Diane Claytor

It's a question that has likely plagued most parents at one time or another: how can I find the right child care for my family? There are so many options — and yet, for many parents, finding that perfect spot when you need it most can be daunting. (A quick internet search of “preschools near me” resulted in 21 listings, some as far away as San Jose!) Lamorinda Moms, a social and support organization for moms with children under the age of 6, is doing what it can to help local families traverse their way through the many choices.

For the 22nd consecutive year, Lamorinda Moms is hosting its free annual Preschool Fair from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Nov. 7 in the gymnasium at Oakwood Athletic Club in Lafayette.

With more than 30 local preschools represented, this event is the perfect opportunity for parents to learn what's available. Each preschool will have its own table where parents can pick up a brochure, view pictures and learn about specific programs and philosophies. Teachers and administrators will be on hand to answer individual questions and offer an overview of their facility. There are preschools attending

that accept children as young as six months while others may only accept toddlers; there are some offering full day programs, ideal for the working parent, and others that have shorter days. While most preschools registered are from the Lamorinda area, there will also be several from neighboring communities.

Attendees will leave with a detailed directory, providing far more information in one handout than you can find after spending hours searching online.

Kristin Oliveira Kraetsch, a co-director of Lamorinda Moms, notes that in less than two hours, families can learn enough about the local preschools to “hopefully find the perfect match for their children.”

The organization has partnered with the Oakland-based nonprofit, Help A Mother Out, whose mission is “to improve baby and family well being by increasing access to diapers for families in need,” so attendees are asked to bring diapers and/or diaper wipes. These will then be provided to family service organizations for distribution to families in need throughout the Bay Area, Oliveira Kraetsch said.

To register for the Preschool Fair, or to learn about Lamorinda Moms go to www.lamorindamoms.org.

Lamorinda teens saved the day at Orinda Olive Festival



Photos provided

Submitted by Katharine Barrett

If not for the stepping up of dozens of willing teens, and many of their parents, this fall's Olive Festival would not have been the great success it was. More than 1,500 visitors from 39 Bay Area Cities – Sacramento, Los Gatos, Modesto, San Ramon, even New York City – attended the 10th Annual Orinda Olive Festival at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area on Oct. 6.

Great big shout out to Boys Team Charity (middle and high school boys and their parents), National Charity League (middle and high school girls and their moms), Boy Scout Troop 237, OIS Others First middle school students, as well as Carondelet and Miramonte high school students. Very capable teenagers from these groups welcomed visitors, worked with visiting youngsters exploring the pond and its wildlife, prepared and conducted a garden scavenger hunt for toddlers, raked pathways, sold raffle tickets, set up booths and picnic areas, and overall served as outstanding ambassadors of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area to the greater public. Capri Filippenko and Kate Bertenthal displayed their inspiring project to encourage people to plant olive trees, which help remove carbon from the atmosphere.

Shout out also to Orinda's own ALMA music, directed by James Fatarone, who presented an entertaining recital by dozens of student musicians and singers. The Orinda Ukulele Band enticed visitors through the Olive Gate with Hawaiian tunes in the historic Olive Grove, much to the delight of picnickers. Orinda's own Carole Amstutz gave Welcome Gate greetings and unparalleled concierge service to first-time Olive Festival visitors. Mary Welte, recently retired Orinda school teacher, patiently and generously guided more than 50 young artists with their tile painting endeavors.

Professors' emeriti, John Helms and Reg Barrett, guided families along the trails to the homestead, ruins of the blacksmith shop, and olive grove to hear the Orinda Ukulele Band. The proceeds of John's gorgeous olive wood creations of bowls and sculp-

tures were donated to the Nature Area. Children received Olive Passports to take to the activity stations for a nature stamp. Embracing the theme of olives and peace, Jan McGurk helped children and adults craft leafy olive crowns, which they crafted from fresh boughs.

There were 25 activity stations to choose from, such as Frontier Chemistry with Dan Phillips, and Claire McCullough's Face Painting station.

Well-loved nature columnist Joan Morris invited visitors to observe a variety of bird nests and shared her insights about animals and wildlife. Nearby, Friends of Orinda Creeks displayed maps and proposals for improving citizen access to San Pablo Creek, which runs through downtown Orinda. Alison Burns and Athena Davis of the Orinda Historical Society, attracted dozens of curious children and families to their array of 100-year-old household artifacts from the ruins of the historic Wagner Ranch; and nearby, Teresa and Kent Long shared visuals from the historic Moraga Adobe.

Special thanks to Teen Advisory Committee members Mallika Dandamudi, and Madi Lehman and Sara Lehman, all of Miramonte High School, who provide great ideas, guidance, and assistance to the Friends of Wagner Ranch Nature Area board of directors; and to our photographer, Wade Barrett.

Toris Jaeger handed out awards to the Eagle Scouts who completed projects in the Nature Area, including Brendan Ball, Alex Meckes, Logan Lee, Kendall Law, Daniel Lucas and Kobe Martin.

Opportunities abound for middle and high school students and adults! For more information on how to volunteer at the Nature Area, go to: www.fwrna.org.



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.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include “Celebrations and Remembrances” in the subject line.

In Memory

Sallie Fillebrown Hofmann

January 31, 1928 – October 7, 2019

Resident of Lafayette



Sallie Hofmann was born in New York City to Thomas and Beatrice Fillebrown. She was the younger of two children. Sallie attended Stuart Hall and Colby Junior College in New England before meeting her future husband Burt S. Hofmann while working at Harvard Law School. They married June 9, 1951 and they settled in the San Francisco Bay Area. Sallie was predeceased by her husband Burt Hofmann, brother Scott Fillebrown, father Thomas Fillebrown and mother Beatrice Fillebrown. She is survived by her children Deborah Anne Vivrette (spouse Michael), Darcy Elizabeth Smith, Thomas Scott Hofmann, Peter Starkweather Hofmann (Nancy), five grandchildren Lisa Davidovich (Yevgeniy)

Amanda Vivrette, Benjamin Smith, Jennifer Hofmann, Jason Hofmann, one great grandchild Grayson Davidovich, brother-in-law John R. Hofmann (Molly), sister-in-law Lavinia Fillebrown, and many nieces and nephews.

While growing up, Sallie competed in many sports and continued in later life playing tennis, skiing and swimming. Sallie loved quilting and gardening. There was always a quilt in process and several recently finished quilts on display. Nothing would please Sallie more than spending a few hours each day working in her colorful garden, especially when she was joined by her west highland terriers “protecting her from squirrels and rabbits.”

Sallie attended St. Stephen's Episcopal church in Orinda and was active in several ministries (alter guild, choirs, Sunday collections, garden committee, and vestry). One of her favorite ministries was the choir in which she served in for over 20 years. Her family experienced many Christmas Eve services in which Sallie participated with the choir and provided some of the most beautiful singing performances.

Sallie and her husband enjoyed traveling and meeting people from other cultures. They were active in supporting various foreign exchange student programs including AFS and foreign students at UC Berkeley. They would plan trips abroad and connect with acquaintances from their involvement with foreign exchange programs they participated in.

A family celebration of her life took place Oct. 25.

Donations in memory of Sallie Hofmann may be made to St Jude's Children's Hospital.