



Wagner Ranch 4th graders win 2nd at Odyssey of the Mind World Finals

Submitted by Jill Gibson

Wagner Ranch Elementary fourth-graders (now rising to fifth grade) placed second in the World Finals of Odyssey of the Mind held at Iowa State University May 28, competing against 35 teams. Refining their ideas in Part I - Long Term Problem Solving and Part II - Spontaneous Problem Solving, from their earlier wins this year in San Francisco Bay Regionals and

Northern California State competitions, led to this top result. Winning team members are Drew Alameda, Gianna Campbell, Ryan Gibson, Elise Nguyen, Anya Parikh, Stella Schmitt, and Connor Volk, and coaches Leslie Volk and Maggie Wang, who guided the innovation and spontaneous team problem solving.

This team, nearly the youngest competitors, were also the highest placing out of all the competing

Northern California teams in the World Finals, which included elementary to college level students. Creativity, scene assembly, and problem solving is all done by the team, who spent over 100 group work hours since October 2021.

Other Lamorinda team winners at Worlds: Moraga Rotary Team A – 6th Stanley Middle School – 8th Sustainable Lafayette – 11th Moraga Rotary Team B – 24th

Wagner Ranch fourth-graders win second place in Odyssey of the Mind World Finals. From left, bottom row: Drew Alameda, Connor Volk, Stella Schmitt, Gianna Campbell; top row: Ryan Gibson, Anya Parikh, Elise Nguyen.

Photo Praveen Singh

Local Girl Scouts enrich Burton Valley School Garden with Silver Award Project

Submitted by Queenie Hill



Abigail Hui and Rena Liu

Photo Queenie Hill

Girl Scout Troop 33551 was honored to present Abigail Hui, Lucy Kao, Aila Lind and Rena Liu with the Girl Scout Silver Award.

As alumni of Burton Valley Elementary, the girls had fond memories of the school's thriving garden and sought ways to enhance it for current and future students at the school. They identified a goal to increase bee and bird activity in the garden.

After consulting with the school's garden teacher, Mrs. Tasha McNamara, the scouts developed a plan to build a bee habitat and two birdhouses. They tried to use as much reclaimed material as possible, sought out donations, and borrowed tools from neighbors to construct the habitats. Finally, to share all that they learned with Burton Valley's students, they created educational posters on the importance of birds and bees in the garden and a video on how to clean and maintain the habi-



Lucy Kao and Aila Lind

Photo Leah Kao

tats. Each scout spent over 50 hours planning and executing the project.

The Silver Award is the highest award a Girl Scout Cadette in grades 6-8 can earn. To earn the Silver Award, the girls must explore a community issue, conduct research, and develop a

project that addresses the root cause of the issue. The scouts were supported in their Silver Award efforts by troop leaders Liz Shipman and Queenie Hui, teacher Mrs. McNamara, as well as numerous neighbors, family and friends.

Friends Corner Book Shop receives grant from Mechanics Bank



Photo provided

Submitted by Caz Cazanov

Friends of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center would like to thank the Lafayette branch of Mechanics Bank for their grant in support of Friends Corner Book Shop. Pictured

are: Book Shop manager Sharon Lingane and Carlos Meraz, manager of the Lafayette Mechanics Bank. Friends Corner Book Shop proceeds support programs, collections, and services of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. www.lllcf.org/friends-book-shop

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 story-desk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

In Memory

Paul Conescu

1944 - 2022

Paul Conescu, of Moraga, died June 11, 2022, age 78.

Paul moved to California with his wife, Liz, five years ago to be near their children and grandchildren. He suffered complications of Alzheimer's Disease and had been a resident of Aegis Living in Moraga.

Before his illness, Paul had been a talented and much-loved orthopedic surgeon for 33 years.

Born in New York, Paul was a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He and Liz had been married three weeks shy of 55 years.

His mind was never static – he was continually inventing, imagining, adventuring, learning. Like his three brothers, he had a hilarious sense of humor.

Surviving this loss are Paul's adoring wife; his two beloved children, Ron (Lisa), of San Diego and Jeremy (Haidy) of Orinda; his three grandchildren, Alex, Sam and Josh; his three brothers, Bob (Lisa), Jon (Sandra) and Matt (Malgosia); his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Cory and Michael Stebel; and his nieces and nephews.

Before moving to Aegis, Paul attended the group social program called LARC, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Orinda, which provided him with well researched stimulating activities presented by experienced, thoughtful and devoted staff. When he could no longer participate in that program, he was helped and guided by expert and loving caregivers at home.

Paul spent his last two years as a resident at Aegis Living. The well thought-out programs and the stellar caregiving staff at Aegis gave him pleasure and a peaceful, loving environment that saw him through his many changing needs. The attention and careful adjustments and the love these people gave to Paul softened his experience.

Suncrest Hospice tended Paul with expert nursing and experienced advice, and the gentle approach that gives Hospice its deserved reputation for kindness and excellence.

In memory of Paul, contributions may be made to Suncrest Hospice, Walnut Creek or to LARC, 433 Moraga Way, Orinda 94563.

In Memory

Carol Gamble



Carol Gamble, a longtime resident of Moraga, died peacefully on May 15, 2022, due to Alzheimer's. Carol and her husband, Ted, were married 56 years and raised their two daughters in Moraga.

Carol graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in finance, one of only two women in her class. Subsequently, she worked with Northern Trust in Chicago. She decided to move out to San Francisco "just for a year" to try something new, worked for Bank of America as a trust officer, where she met Ted. When Ted was transferred to Fresno, Carol stopped working in banking and devoted another 15 years to their children and volunteering. After the family was transferred to the Bay Area, and the kids were in school, Carol became a Certified Public Accountant and worked for an accounting firm in Walnut Creek doing individual tax returns.

Carol's passion was time with her daughters and their three children, her dogs, traveling, and spending time in their other home in Borrego Springs, California. She drove their station wagon to all the kid activities, with Heidi, the poodle, riding on the back of the bench seat. She was president of the swim team at Moraga Valley. She watched countless hours of dance classes and gymnastics meets. The family camped all over the West in their Airstream trailer. Later, Carol traveled extensively through Elder Hostel and "Space Available" on military flights to Asia, Europe and even the Galapagos Islands. She hiked down the Grand Canyon multiple times. She wore waders and rubber boots and volunteered with the Marine Mammal Center for 16 years, rehabilitating seals and seal lions, making certain they had the proper medications placed into their fish meals.

Carol is survived by her husband, Ted; her daughters, Anna and Sara; her three grandchildren, Isabelle, Luca and Charlie; and her brother, Raymond Caldwell, plus the family Labrador, Gracie.

The family expresses their appreciation to Aegis of Moraga and Suncrest Hospice for their compassionate care.

Carol will be interred in the Sacramento Valley Veteran's Cemetery and the family plans a celebration of her life in the early Fall.