

AAUW-OML Branch awards scholarships to local students



Photos provided

High School and Saint Mary's Student Scholarship Recipients: Tess Gundacker, Nilab Ahmed, Liesel Hilkemeyer, LaReina Torres, Briana Alexander, Sophia Gonzales



Tech Trek Scholarship Recipients: Ally Rogin, Sophie Westin, Thea Wilberts, Evelyn Hollenberg, Adelaide Chan, Vasy Pridatko, Morgan Butler, with Molly Mudgett, keynote speaker and 2013 Tech Trek graduate

Submitted by Heidi Mayer

The American Association of University Women Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch recently held a Celebration of Excellence honoring 13 local middle school, high school, and Saint Mary's College students.

Seven seventh-grade middle school girls received scholarships to Tech Trek, a weeklong STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) immersion program held this coming July at Sonoma State University. Tech Trek is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The camp is designed to encourage rising eighth-grade girls to persist with their excitement about STEM through high school, college, and into their careers. The program features numerous hands-on activities as well as a chance for the girls to make friends with other girls interested in STEM and to meet professional women in STEM fields.

The following students will attend camp: Ally Rogin and Sophie Westin (Orinda Intermediate School), Evelyn Hollenberg and Thea Wilberts (Stanley Middle School) and Morgan Butler, Adelaide Chan and Vasilisa Pridatko (Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School).

Three graduating high school students were awarded scholarships: Tess Gundacker (Acalanes), Nilab Ahmed (Miramonte), and Liesel Hilkemeyer (Campolindo). Sophomore and junior members of the High Potential program at Saint Mary's College also received scholarships: Briana Alexander, Sophia Gonzales and LaReina Torres.

The selection criteria for these high school and college scholarships are academic excellence, community service and leadership. In addition to outstanding grades, these students demonstrated a desire to help others by volunteering in their schools, local volunteer agencies and global programs.

Students, family, and friends along with branch members attended the event which featured keynote speaker Molly Mudgett, a prototyping engineer at Apple. Molly attended Tech Trek in 2013 and continues to volunteer in the program. She graduated from Acalanes High School and received her bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering at Northwestern. While sharing the experiences that led to her job at Apple, she highlighted the importance of young women working equitably and comfortably in the STEM field.

Troop 212 Celebrates New Eagle Scouts



Photo Karen Drinkwater

Submitted by Steve Bartis

Moraga Boy Scout Troop 212 presented its 60th Eagle Court of Honor on Sunday, March 26 at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, the Troop chartering organization. At this National Court of Honor, there were 10 Scouts who earned the highest and most prestigious rank in Scouting.

Tai Lee, son of Hanns and Katy Lee is a senior at Campolindo High School. Kye Wesselman, son of Brian Wesselman and Kristen Tjaden is a junior at Campolindo High School. Thatcher Cattell, son of Aubrey and Cindy Cattell is a junior at Campolindo High School. Daniel Berkes, son of Andrew and Elizabeth Berkes is a senior at De La Salle High School and will be attending Boston college. Christopher Seo, son of Suk and Deborah Seo is a junior at Campolindo High School. Griffin Bartis, son of Steve and Lori Bartis is a senior at Campolindo High school and will be attending Montana State University. Brandon Mayo, son of Mike

and Kristen Mayo is a junior at Campolindo High School. Maxwell Sheehan, son of Matt and Deanna Sheehan is a senior at Campolindo High School and will be attending Chapman University. Isaac Jai, son of Henry and Irene Jai is a junior at Campolindo High School. Alexander (Will) Barash, son of Jason and Kirsten Barash is a senior at Campolindo High School and will be attending Montana State University. These 10 young men have served under the guidance of Scoutmaster Hanns "Tabasco" Lee, and they will join 438 Eagle Scouts who have "Eagled" from Troop 212 before them.

All of these young men were conferred the Rank of Eagle by the National BSA Council after successfully completing the requirements including holding a Leadership rank of Patrol Leader or higher, earning a total of 21 merit badges, and demonstration of the principles of the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. In addition, each Scout planned, developed, and completed an Eagle Scout project for the community.

Kiwanis Club Moraga Valley sends books to the Philippines



Photo provided

Brother Kenneth Martinez, FSC, of the Philippines, and Kiwanis Club members Cherie Grant, President Gloria Eive, and Peggy Brown-Salazar with boxes of books ready for shipment to the Philippines.

Submitted by Steve Woehleke

The Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley helps the Friends of the Moraga Library with its twice-yearly sale of donated books to the public.

The club helps with set-up, and take-down of the books at the completion of the sale, and manages distribution of many unsold books to local nonprofit organizations. The club also selects books for the Bahay Pagasa Center in Bacolod, Philippines. About 800 books per year are shipped to the

Bahay Pagasa Center, a center for juveniles in conflict with the law, sponsored by the University of Saint La Salle, located outside of Bacolod. While some of the books are added to the small library at the center, most are redistributed to needy schools in very remote rural areas outside of the city of Bacolod.

Recently a few Kiwanis members lunched with Brother Kenneth Martinez, president of the University of Saint La Salle to discuss his vision for expanding access to the library at Bahay Pagasa to the local public school teachers.

Scouts place flags in honor of Memorial Day



Photos provided

Submitted by Lauren Herpich

The grounds of Lafayette Cemetery are currently sprinkled with red, white and blue thanks to members of Cub Scout Pack 220. Scouts, along with their parents and pack leaders, spent a couple hours on the morning of May 21 placing flags on the graves of nearly

300 U.S. military service members buried there. The Lafayette Cemetery holds the remains of veterans who have served in military conflicts dating back to the Civil War.

Prior to placing the flags, the scouts performed the traditional Presentation of Colors, which included the Pledge of Allegiance, and the saying of the Scout Oath and Law. They also sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "America The Beautiful." Accompanying the Scouts were veterans Scott Swantner and Bill Lew.

According to Alamo-Lafayette Cemetery District Manager Patricia Howard, this was the first time in more than 30 years that a local group has offered to place flags for the cemetery staff. "It's just so wonderful to see these children take time out of their weekend to do this," Howard said. "Seeing our kids in their uniforms carrying American flags was like a piece of Americana," den leader Jim West said.

Pack 220 is comprised of students from Lafayette Elementary, Springhill Elementary and St. Perpetua's School. The Lafayette Cemetery has invited them to come back in November to place flags for Veterans Day.



Local veterans organization embarks on community service project to enhance Lafayette's beauty

Submitted by Patrick Lieneweg

Members of VFW Post 8063 on May 13 proudly joined forces for a community cleanup project, dedicated to enhancing the aesthetics and cleanliness of Lafayette. The volunteers, as part of the nationwide VFW Day of Service campaign, diligently cleared weeds and removed litter along the sidewalks and pathways along Mt. Diablo Boulevard, between the Veterans Memorial Center and the Lafayette Reservoir. This initiative not only provided the Post an opportunity to volunteer their services, but also served to showcase the ongoing positive impact veterans make in our local communities.

The VFW Day of Service, a national campaign recognized for its dedication to community improvement, is a testa-

ment to the veterans' unwavering commitment to serving beyond their military duty. By engaging in local projects, these dedicated individuals exemplify the values instilled during their service and promote a sense of unity among citizens.

"The members of VFW Post 8063 are incredibly proud to have participated in the community cleanup project," said Patrick Lieneweg, the Post's Community Service Project Coordinator. "As veterans, we understand the importance of serving the greater good. By coming together and taking action, we hope to inspire others to do the same and foster a greater sense of pride and unity within our communities."

For more information about VFW's Day of Service project, visit <https://today.vfw.org/vfw-day-of-service-faq/>