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# Mindful Littles' event and Orinda's last Concert in the Park end the summer season

By Sora O'Doherty



**Mindful Littles Carnival**

Photo Sora O'Doherty

Mindful Littles and Orinda Parks & Recreation teamed up on Sept. 21 to celebrate the International Day of Peace at a one-of-a-kind event. The nonprofit organization founded by Tanuka Gordon seven years ago held its fifth Annual Peace & Kindness Carnival at the final

Orinda Concert in the Park. Gordon noted that it was much easier to host the carnival with the assistance of Orinda Parks & Rec.

At the event, kids could engage in fun, kindness-themed activities, like face painting, games, and service oriented

tasks such as assembling dental health packs to be distributed to unhoused people, assisted by Gordon's sister, a dentist. During its existence, the nonprofit organization has seen thousands of students and is expanding to events at workplaces to help adults guide children to compassion and empathy. Gordon has given up her employment to donate her volunteer work to the nonprofit, which also employs two assistants.

The event and the concert coincided with the Orinda Thursday night food trucks, and Contra Costa County Animal Services was also on hand with a kitten adoption event. The concert was performed by Patron Latin Rhythms, and many people enjoyed the perfect weather on the evening sitting on the grassy lawn of the Orinda Community Park. The band's music was also broadcast to the Library Plaza, where tables and benches were available for people to enjoy their dinners from the food trucks.

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## Lafayette teachers

... continued from Page A2

“Since then, the District received more money than we could have predicted, and now that the contract is open again, both sides want to make meaningful strides on teachers' salaries. Our 12% offer is reflective of that commitment.”

Stephens called the district's current 12% offer “very strong” and says it will amount to “meaningful pay increases for teachers.”

Teachers say that although the district's offer may seem strong, even the 14% that they are asking for is a concession

they're willing to make – when the cumulative discrepancy in pay between Lafayette teachers who prematurely settled for a 2% cost of living wage a few years ago and their peers, who were able to factor in the state-rate of over 6%. “We'll still be behind, but this will be a step in the right direction,” Gingrich says.

When asked about the possibility of a strike, Gingrich and her colleagues remain hopeful that a win-win solution can be found. “None of us want it to come to that,” Gingrich says when asked about the strike. “We love the district,

we love the kids, we just want a fair, competitive contract.”

Parents like Jeanine Smith, the mother of a Lafayette elementary school student and a Stanley middle school student, who joined the teacher's informational picket line before school, say they're on the side of the teachers.

“I support the teachers and advocate for them having higher salaries because they do such a great job teaching our students,” Smith says. “I would like to see all teachers make a great living no matter where they live or where they teach.”

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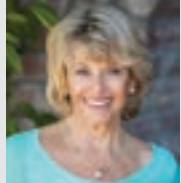
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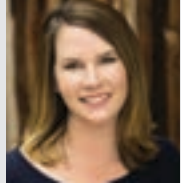
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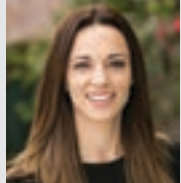
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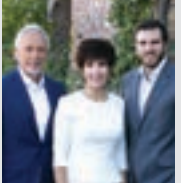
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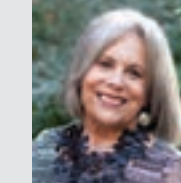
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