

Troop 204 Scout's Eagle Project Benefits Shelter, Inc.

Submitted by Stephanie Reilly



Jackson Reilly at work with friends on the shed.

Photo provided

When Jackson Reilly, a member of Lafayette's Boy Scout Troop 204, was looking for a potential project last spring for his Eagle Scout requirement, he asked if Shelter, Inc. might have a need for his services. He was introduced to Shelter, Inc.'s volunteer coordinator Teresita Gonzalez, and he learned about a need at Mountain View Family Shelter to replace two old, metal storage sheds.

Reilly likes to build things and has learned about building from his dad, a general contractor, and in his design and fabrication class at Acalanes High School.

There was a great deal to do before actually starting the building, and Reilly soon realized he would need lots of volunteers and

to raise money to cover all the building costs. He started contacting various businesses, including Dolan's Lumber, Kelly-Moore Paint Company, Cresco Express Tool and Equipment Rental, Skyline Roofing and Diamond K. Supply, and with help from fellow Scouts Mike Roux and Michael Williams, along with his good friends, Ian Ferrer, Ezra Zimmer and Mateo Terrien, Reilly got to work. The project took over 150 hours of actual hands-on work over a two-week period.

The result? A beautiful, useful 10 foot by 10 foot shed that Shelter's Mountain View Family Shelter will put to good use storing seasonal equipment, extra bedding and furniture, and some food and cleaning supplies.



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.

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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.

Climate change discussion focuses on moral issues of our lifetime

By Pippa Fisher



Image provided

Residents will have a chance to consider the moral questions around climate change and discover ways to help at a free event hosted by Temple Isaiah's Environmental Committee in Lafayette.

The forum will focus on the science of climate change, the moral imperative for action and how individuals can get involved alone or with others from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12.

Billed as a "community and interfaith event" the committee emphasizes the community's shared responsibility to protect the environment so that the planet and its diverse species continue to thrive, and says that the work of the committee includes fighting climate change, supporting greenhouse gas reduction, clean air, water, and protecting public health and safety.

The forum will feature three speakers: Andrew Gunther, Ph.D. – the executive coordinator of the Bay Area Ecosystems Climate Change Consortium and board of directors of the Union of Concerned Scientists; Wei-Tai Kwok – a solar technology expert and the president of Sustainable Lafayette, who is a trained speaker with Al Gore's Climate Reality Project; and Rev. Canon Sally Bingham – Canon for the environment in the Episcopal Diocese of California and lead author of "Love God, Heal Earth" (2009), who was awarded the Audubon Society's Rachel Carson Award in 2012 for environmental leadership. She is also the founder and president of the Regeneration Project, which is focused on an Interfaith Power and Light campaign.

Kwok will be focusing on local solutions. "Most Lafayette residents and businesses now have MCE as our electricity provider. What residents aren't aware of is that this change now allows each household to go from MCE's default level of 50 percent renewable energy content and 'opt-up' to 100

percent renewable energy," says Kwok. He points out that the cost to get household electricity "carbon free" is, on average, \$5 more per month for a typical family to run their home on 100 percent California-generated solar and wind power.

So, is the climate crisis one of the greatest moral issues of our lifetime?

Kwok says, "If we accept the scientific fact that the earth is warming (2016 was the hottest year ever measured by weather instruments, eclipsing the previous record of 2015, which eclipsed the previous record of 2014), as well as the scientific consensus that human activity is the principal cause, we must stop to ask ourselves the moral and ethical questions. Is it morally acceptable to continue 'business-as-usual' habits, which pollute our air and oceans to the point where 50 percent of species could be lost by 2100, and to the point where extreme weather events increasingly devastate segments of our society, particularly the most vulnerable in our communities?"

Kwok is encouraged that faith communities, including Temple Isaiah, have taken up the dialog and notes that Pope Francis in 2015 called on people of all faiths to come together and take urgent action. "I thank him for his clarion call to other faiths and I'm proud that Temple Isaiah is taking a lead in our community. I look forward to sharing the stage with the Rev. Canon Sally Bingham, a climate leader in the faith community."

"Awareness levels are low," says Kwok, "so only 2 percent of Lafayette residents have opted up to MCE's 100 percent 'Deep Green' level, but I have a vision of a Lamorinda which is powered by carbon-free electricity. And that's not in the Jetsons' timeframe, it's something we can actually do right now."

The free event will take place at Temple Isaiah, 945 Risa Road in Lafayette.

Teen Talk

The war on females

By Alexandra Gold

Political catastrophe strikes. Again. And I fall into a dream. A dream where the future is unabashedly female.

Donald Trump has had his sexist moments. In my opinion, he is rash, misguided, and frankly fails to consider the greater picture. And that's coming from a 16-year-old. Recently, however, Trump has approved a choice that further divides America's females from the rest of the population – a decision that I believe must be reversed at all costs. Donald Trump has begun the war on contraception.

In a population that is exponentially growing at a pace our resources cannot sustain, one would think that maintaining a birth rate that will not strain our cultural carrying capacity would be principal, correct? In Donald Trump's eyes it is, apparently, not so.

Friday, Oct. 6 marks the date that the President revealed his plan to remove the contraceptive coverage in the Affordable Care Act. More than 55 million women have access to birth control without co-payments because of the mandate, says a study performed by the Obama administration. These are millions of women who deserve to live without added worry of unexpected pregnancy or lack of the pills that are medically key to their functioning role in civil society. However, the problem is not only contraception, it is what politicians will do in subsequent years that is so concerning.

Safe access to Planned Parenthood and abortion are already on the line. Consider the LGBT+ community. Consider the minorities. Consider the women who cannot

yet afford birth control on their own, and are forced to rely on the risky possibility of a partner. Raising the status of women worldwide is the only way to save the future of our planet.

Women are 50 percent of the population after all; I think the involvement of these independent ladies in civil society is priority.

So my hope is the people of this country get educated and get outside. It does not matter how young you are, or what party you identify with. Speak out with confidence, and do not let this time in our government's history pass you by without a second thought.

I dream because I have seen what my generation can engender: harmony, zeal, and a future everyone can believe in.



Alexandra Gold is a junior at Acalanes High School. She volunteers for the Teen Advisory Board, the Lafayette Library, and enjoys literature, the environment, and politics.