

Leo Club offers support to education



Photo provided

From left: Campolindo Principal John Walker, Leo President Eleanor Kim, Leo Advisor Sarah Morgan, and Lion Advisor Bob Murtagh

Submitted by Bob Murtagh

Each year the Campolindo High School Leo Club, which is a service club sponsored by the Lamorinda Lions, donates a portion of its fundraising activities. This year Leo Club President

Eleanor Kim presented a check for \$500 to Campolindo High School Principal John Walker. This was the 16th year the Leos have given back to the community and their total donation to date exceeds \$4,000.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary visits Guatemala to help build house, distribute donated books



Photo provided

A goodwill delegation from Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, led by Skip and Linda McCowan, left, pose with some of the 5,000 books hand-delivered to Guatemalan children.

Submitted by Thomas Black

A 10-member delegation from Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club has returned from a weeklong goodwill mission to Antigua, Guatemala, where, among other things, it helped to build a new house for a local family and to distribute 700 books aimed at children aged 6-17.

The modest house, measuring 12 feet by 24 feet, was for a family that had earned sweat-equity rights by donating countless hours of their own labor at a local family development center operated by Common Hope, a Minnesota-based nonprofit that promotes hope and opportunity for native Guatemalans. It does so by partnering with children and families in advancing education, health care, housing and family development.

Antigua is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Centre founded nearly 500 years ago by Spaniards.

The books, all in Spanish, were purchased for \$5,000. The cost was shared by Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary and individual donors. The books will be used in the library at the family development center and in so-called suitcase libraries taken to neighboring villages for the enrichment of families affiliated with Common Hope.

The Rotarians, led by Jack "Skip" McCowan and his wife Linda, who live in Lafayette, also volunteered at a day-

care center, accompanied social workers on their appointed rounds to affiliated families, and experienced a "day-in-the-life-of" by visiting shops of a woodworker and a metal worker.

While there the McCowans witnessed the high school graduation of a young woman whom they had personally sponsored for years. Her class numbered 160. Five fellow Rotarians have since joined the McCowans in becoming official sponsors of individual children. The McCowans now sponsor two children. Monthly donations help to pay school-related expenses until the child graduates from high school.

Sponsored children graduate at a rate three times the national average. Since Common Hope began its outreach programs in 1986, some 2,000 sponsored children have earned secondary school diplomas.

This marks the second goodwill in the past 10 years by the McCowans. Others were participating for the first time.

Asked about the most meaningful aspects of the trip, Skip McCowan answered, "Presenting the newly constructed house to the family and getting acquainted with the children and their families. Rotary clubs worldwide are involved in literacy programs. It was touching to see how far a few donated dollars can be stretched for the common good."

Info: www.commonhope.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.

'A Sense of Place' at the Moraga Art Gallery



Photos Wenda Pyman

Submitted by George Ehrenhaft

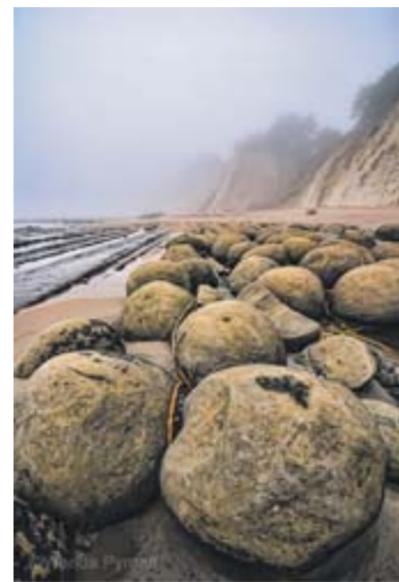
Wenda Pyman's latest exhibit of beguiling landscape photographs entitled "A Sense of Place" kicks off the new year at the Moraga Art Gallery. Calling to mind the camera work of Ansel Adams and Eliot Porter, Pyman captures the luminous and timeless splendor of places like Mt. Diablo, Morro Bay, San Francisco's Baker Beach, and the Florida Keys.

Featured as a guest artist, Suzanne Pershing, who heads the Arts Council of San Leandro and also teaches drawing and painting, has created a colorful collection of unique teacups and saucers, some with stylized ceramic florals sprouting from their rims, many decorated with abstract shapes

and lines reminiscent of Miro and Picasso.

The show, which includes paintings, ceramics, jewelry, fused glass, and much more by the gallery's 14 member-artists and several guest artists, runs from Jan. 9 to March 16. The public is invited to a free opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12. Use the occasion to meet the artists, enjoy a glass of wine accompanied by light snacks and live music.

The gallery is located in the Rheem Shopping Center, at 522 Center Street, Moraga. Its hours are Wednesday through Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. For more information, visit www.moragaartgallery.com or call (925) 376-5407.



In Memory

Frances Jane "Pat" Kessler



On Monday, November 19, 2018, Frances Jane "Pat" Kessler, loving wife and mother of three children, passed away at age 82.

Pat was born on February 4, 1936 in Fresno, California to Clarinda and William Phillips. She received her BSN in nursing jointly from UC San Francisco and Berkeley in 1958 and was a practicing nurse specializing in public health newborn care for the County of Alameda for many years. On September 5, 1956 she married John Berthold Kessler in Yosemite National Park. They raised one daughter Ellie, and two sons, Bill and Steve.

Pat had many passions not the least of which was being a leader in the community and in business. She was a tireless advocate for women's rights. She was an entrepreneur who started the successful gift store, Lighting Bug Gifts. Pat was a Girl Scout Leader for Ellie thru high school. She was president of the Parent Teacher Associations for Sleepy Hollow School, Orinda Intermediate School and Miramonte High School. She ushered in the first on campus Grad Night at Miramonte High School in 1987. She organized and ran the All Orinda Swim Meet in the early 1980's. She was a founder of Lamorinda National Bank and sat on their Board of Directors before it was acquired by US Bank. She was President of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). She was a fierce champion of public education and strong supporter of the University of California system. She rose to be the leader of the General Alumni Association for UC Berkeley and eventually became a Regent for the University of California. In her later years, she devoted much time to the Assistance League of Sacramento helping those less fortunate in the community. Her ability to find common ground and solve problems within the organizations she led or in which she participated is the collaborative trait for which she will be remembered most.

Pat's unique upbringing in the Yosemite Valley carried with her throughout her life. Her love of nature and the mountains was strong. She was an avid and beautiful skier. She hiked and fly fished. She doted on her husband of over 50 years until his passing in 2013. She loved to travel and learn about other cultures. Her favorite place, aside from Yosemite, was Lake Tahoe where she enjoyed having a second home for over 30 years. She was adored by all who knew her especially her family.

Pat was preceded in death by her husband, John. She is survived by her three children and six grandchildren. Donations in Pat's name may be made to The Yosemite Conservancy or AAUW STEM program in Auburn CA <https://auburn-ca.aauw.net/>. A Celebration of Life will be held on April 13th at the home of longtime family friend, Barbara Conley. Please contact Ellie Kessler Vierra for further information at 916-591-8771 or elliavierra@gmail.com.