

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Acalanes Union
High School District
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
Wednesday, May 19, 2010 at 7:30pm
Wednesday, June 2, 2010 at 7:30pm

Lafayette School District
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
Wednesday, May 12, 2010 at 7 pm
Wednesday, May 23, 2010 at 7 pm

Orinda Union School District
OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
Monday, June 7, 2010 at 4 pm

Moraga School District
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at 7:30 pm

Scholastic Honor

Submitted by Di Harlow



Stephen W. Harlow has received the William J. Branstrom Freshman Prize from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. The prize is awarded in recognition of outstanding academic achievement to those students who place in the top 5% of the freshman class. Also selected for the Dean's Honor list for fall term 2009, Stephen is a Mechanical Engineering major and is a 2009 graduate of Campolindo High School. He is the son of Peter and Dianne Harlow of Moraga. Stephen W. Harlow at a reception after one of the Campolindo band concerts last spring

Measure A Wins by a Nose

By Jean Follmer

Many Lamorinda parents and high school staff breathed a sigh of relief last Tuesday evening. With a 52.16% voter turnout and 37,867 ballots cast, Measure A squeaked by with 68.49% of the votes - just passing the required 2/3 majority to win.

What does this mean for the students? To begin with, they will not lose their 7th period. "It really allows the instructional programs at the schools to remain at or even possibly a little broader than before," said Acalanes Superintendent John Stockton. The school counselors and librarians will also be retained at each of the school sites. "I'm thrilled we're keeping our counselors; they're very preventative and proactive and they do an amazing job for our kids.

I'm very excited about our librarians because they do so much more than check out books; they teach our kids how to do research in the 21st century," said Measure A campaign co-chair and Acalanes parent Joni Avery. Avery worked tirelessly with co-chair Susie Epstein and the AUHSD teachers. "We had twenty-six phone bank nights and the teachers were at every single one of them. Our teachers really are part of the solution," said Avery.

Stockton was pleased with the outpour of support for Measure A from the Lamorinda communities. Although the duration of the campaign was relatively short - only 87 days - the communities rallied to support it. "Adults of all ages, students, civic leaders, edu-

cators, and dynamic parent leadership united to support educational excellence for our students," said Stockton in a written statement. Avery added, "It was a huge team effort with hundreds of volunteers. I'm very proud to have been part of a really positive campaign."

The elementary districts also joined in the massive effort to pass Measure A. "It was really important to educate the elementary school parents about what was going on in the high school district, as it would directly impact their children within a few short years. As a parent of 7th, 5th and 2nd grade children, I know we'll be facing these educational uncertainties for years to come at the high school, middle school & elementary school levels, all at once," said

Springhill and Stanley parent Kathy Hemmenway. Hemmenway acted as the Springhill Elementary Measure A representative. "I think the initiative also helped create dialogue between parents of different aged kids and opened up lines of communication about how great our high schools really are," continued Hemmenway.

Stockton said there are occasions when administrators seem to forget the reason they're doing the work they are doing - the students. "It's not about what's right for adults; it's about what's right for our kids. We just are fortunate to have a very supportive community that is willing to respond to the needs of our kids. We're really a model district for the rest of the state," said Stockton.

Orinda Celebrates Annual EFO Arts and Music Showcase

By Katharine Kates (submitted by Sandra McGonigle)



Photo Christina Shook

Once they stopped laughing, many in the audience may have begun soul-searching after watching "Beware of Over-Parenting," a spoof of type A-style parenting, written and performed by Will Rhodes, a member of Miramonte's Public Speaking team in the category Original Prose and Poetry. Certainly no one in the audience at this, or any of the other

incredible performances at EFO's Celebration of the Arts, left without being awed by the depth and breadth of talent displayed by students in the Orinda schools. This annual event was held on March 28, 2010, at the Orinda Intermediate School. Hosted by the Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO) and sponsored by Mechanics Bank, it is designed to show-

case the visual and performing arts programs at all six Orinda schools. EFO has funded visual and performing arts as well as academic programs through generous donations from the community for the past 30 years.

Kicking off the evening, singers and instrumentalists gave a concert in the gym. Among the memorable tunes were a rousing

"Lean on Me," performed by a combined chorus of Fourth and Fifth graders from all four elementary schools, folk songs from Cuba and Ireland performed by the OIS Symphonic Orchestra, and "Viva la Vida" by Coldplay, performed by the Miramonte Choral Artists.

The visual arts occupied the multi-purpose room. A wide range of images were on view, from window-like drawings demonstrating a mastery of one-point perspective, to woodworking, sculpture, digital photography and even video production. As they perused the art, viewers listened to the up-tempo Miramonte Jazz Combo, featuring standards such as "Summertime" and "25 or 6 to 4." Not to be missed, Miramonte's Drama and Public Speaking departments also gave performances, including a preview of the upcoming production of the Odd Couple, which left the audience in stitches. To learn more about the various programs funded by EFO please visit www.orindaefo.org



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JM Creative Arts and Writing Contest

On Thursday, April 27th, Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JMIS) presented the winners of its 33rd Annual Creative Arts and Writing Contest. Principal Bruce Burns and Assistant Principal Brad Carn announced the first, second and third place winners, and honorable mentions, in 14 different categories that included poetry, historical fiction, drawing, photography, video, ceramic art and music performance. Sponsored by the JMIS Parent Teacher Association, the Creative Arts and Writing Con-

test offers the school and the community a way to promote art, music, and creative writing education and appreciation, while recognizing and rewarding students for their efforts and high-quality creative work.

"The atmosphere during the event was intense," said one young writer, who added, "It was a little nerve-racking, because I was afraid nobody would like my work, but when they called my name I was proud and had no regrets about entering the contest."

The students' work was on display in the JMIS Library for all to see and enjoy. Writing pieces ranged from a whimsical tale of flying chairs to poetic reflections on life and informative non-fiction. Artwork was striking in its diversity of media and concept, from nature photography to highly stylized com-

puter art to graceful sketches and dramatic paintings. The 1st place creations in many categories can be viewed on the PTA's website, <http://www.jmispta.org/index.htm>.
L. Borrowman



Images of some of the winning artwork were provided by Karen Baymiller



STAR Test Scores on High School Transcripts - Are They Necessary?

By Sophie Braccini

According to John Nickerson, Educational Services Assistant Superintendent of the Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD), including scores from California's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests on students' high school transcripts, which are sent to university admission officers, is not a state requirement; nor is it requested by the University of California, Cal State Colleges, or Community Colleges. Nickerson says he has received no indication that private universities pay attention to these scores. So why did the District re-establish this practice in 2005?

"It is done primarily because

we believe student performance on CSTs (STAR tests) is an accurate reflection of student achievement in our core curriculum," said Nickerson. He is echoed by private college admissions advisor Dr. Elizabeth LaScala. "My guess would be that some colleges might use the results to help evaluate prospective applicants," she said, "It may be viewed as a more objective measure of a student's academic performance because, in theory, it draws upon content from the student's academic curricula. Since there is so much test preparation available for the SAT and ACT (and test prep is more commonly seen in more affluent families who

can afford this expense), colleges may use STAR testing as another objective measure of student's academic standing over time."

Both the Nickerson and LaScala believe that there is a strong correlation between grades, STAR testing and SAT/ACT. "Some parents, whose children do better in those tests than with their grades, are happy to have us include it in the transcript," said Nickerson, who adds that parents can opt-out of the test.

Ricardo Vazquez, a spokesman at the UC Office of the President, confirmed that the UC system does not consider the results of the STAR test in its admission process.

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