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AUHSD Declines to Change Policy on Herbicide/Pesticide Use

By Sophie Braccini

The Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD) reviewed its pesticide and herbicide policy during its May 5th Board meeting. Parents for a Safer Environment (PfSE), a local grass roots organization that has been working with the District since September 2008, met with some success a year ago when the District agreed to stop using most of the pesticides and herbicides that the group considers harmful. The herbicide Roundup has remained in use, and the Board decided to go with staff's recommendation to continue using the product. The Board also did not

consider tightening the rules used by the District when choosing new pesticides or herbicides.

Speaking to the Board, Dr. Joanne Perron, Obstetrician/Gynecologist and postdoctoral fellow at UC San Francisco's Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment (PRHE), explained that according to the Institute's research, infertility is linked to exposure to chemicals and children and adolescents are a particularly vulnerable population. "Toxicity testing has also shown that together, the active and inert ingredients of the popular product Roundup have greater en-

doctrone effects than Roundup's active ingredient, Glyphosate alone does."

Doctor Rachelle Halpern, an endocrinologist and mother of two Miramonte High School students, explained that all chemicals are potential endocrine disruptors, meaning that substances children are exposed to could interfere with the hormonal systems that regulate anything in the body from growth to reproduction. "The Endocrine Society recommended the adoption of the precautionary principal stating that something is unsafe until proven not so," she said. Moraga's

Vice-Mayor Karen Mendonca, who took the stand next, asked the District to apply the same principal, and explained how the Town of Moraga decided years ago to ban the use of all pesticides and herbicides in all parks where children are present.

Staff responded to the presentation by saying that many other school districts do not enforce a more restrictive policy than they do. They challenged the idea that they did not care about exposing children to dangerous chemicals, "We do care about the students," said Business Services Associate Super-

intendent Chris Learned, "and we have tried alternatives to Roundup, but nothing seems to be killing weeds effectively."

Board Member Tom Mulvaney asked if any alternative could be found to spraying. "If we didn't do anything and let the weeds grow where the fences are and on edges where we can't use a machine it would be ugly," said Maintenance Director Steve Fishbaugh. Board President Vanessa Crews recommended that alternative planting be proposed for hills that would cover ground and not require spraying.

After one parent said he had not been informed of spraying at Campolindo during Spring Break, although he had opted in to the notification system so that he could instruct his children to avoid sprayed areas, Board members asked questions about how parents are notified. Staff responded that they followed the legal requirement to post signs at the entrance to the site. It was not clear which parents were receiving email notices of spraying and what the procedure was to get such notices. The Board asked that staff report once a year on chemical use during a public session.

Troop 31218 Hosts Hollywood Father/Daughter Dance

By Jenna Sposato (submitted by Colleen McCarty)

The Hollywood Father-Daughter Dance on March 5, 2010, at the Lafayette Community Center was a huge success. The 12 ten- and eleven-year old girls from Troop 31218 worked hard to earn their Bronze Award by planning the event from September to March. The girls included Shelby, Laura, Joan, Rebecca, Lauren, Saskia, Meghan, Natasha, Jenna, and Nicole. Saskia designed a patch that showed off the Hollywood theme. All the girls worked from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. the night of the event setting up and decorating the Lafayette Community Center so it looked like a Hollywood nightclub. Troop 31218 welcomed over 200 guests, from kindergarten to 3rd grade, with



Photo Barbie Bocks

their dads or other significant date. At the dance, the guests were able to make frames, take pictures with their dates and dance to popular tunes provided by the ever-popular DJ. They ate yummy treats like

chewy chocolate cookies, scrumptious brownies, salty pretzels and popcorn washed down with tangy lemonade.

Troop 31218 Girl Scouts would like to thank the Lafayette

Community Center, the DJ and all the guests, who brought donations for STAND! Against Domestic Violence and for making the evening such a fun and worthwhile event for everyone.

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Wagner Ranch Presents Annie Get Your Gun

Submitted by Betsy Baus



Photo provided

Ladies and gentleman, boys and girls! On June 4th-5th, Wagner Ranch Elementary School will present its annual spring musical of Irving Berlin's 1946 version of Annie Get Your Gun! Mosey on

over and cross the Old American West with the 4th and 5th grade cast and crew, who have been working hard for months to make this a spectacular show. Directed by Ron Pickett and produced by Jennifer

Vigo and Susie Parr, the show will provide fun for all ages. Buy tickets for one of the four shows by May 28th at www.orindaschools.org/wagner-ranch or at the door as available.

Troop 212's Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Eric Andresen



Troop 212's Newest Eagle Scouts, front row (L to R): Connor Ludwig, Clay Sanders, Ross McKenzie, Alex Ford, Garrett Franklin back row (L to R): Kevin Gustafson, Scott Lyness, Forrest Bagley, Andrew Swanback, Calder Husby, Blake Johnson

On Sunday, April 25, 2010, at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, Boy Scout Troop 212 conducted a National Eagle Court of Honor to celebrate eleven outstanding young men earning the Eagle Award. Eagle is the highest award that a Scout can earn. Nationally, only about two percent of all boys who enter the Scouting program

earn the award.

Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church sponsors Troop 212. The Troop has an active program of campouts, summer camps, and high adventure activities, such as backpacking in the western United States, and Canada and Alaska, bike treks in Oregon, Canada, and Germany, canoe treks and white water

kayaking. The Troop currently has 86 active youth involved in its programs.

Currently there are about 12,000 youth involved in scouting programs in Contra Costa County. Nationally, over five million youth are involved. In reflecting upon this year's large group of Eagle honorees, Scoutmaster Rainer Del Valle said, "I am constantly amazed at the talent, dedication and honor that each of these scouts possess. They are awesome young men, and I am very proud of each and every one of them."

Tom McIntosh, Scoutmaster Emeritus, points out that six of these Eagle scouts have been in Scouts together since they joined the same Tiger Cub den in the first grade. "It's incredible to think that these boys have been together, camping, hiking and supporting each other, for the past ten years!"

This year's Troop 212 Eagle Scout honorees are Forrest Bagley, Alex Ford, Garrett Franklin, Kevin Gustafson, Calder Husby, Blake Johnson, Connor Ludwig, Scott Lyness, Ross McKenzie, Clay Sanders, and Andrew Swanback.

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