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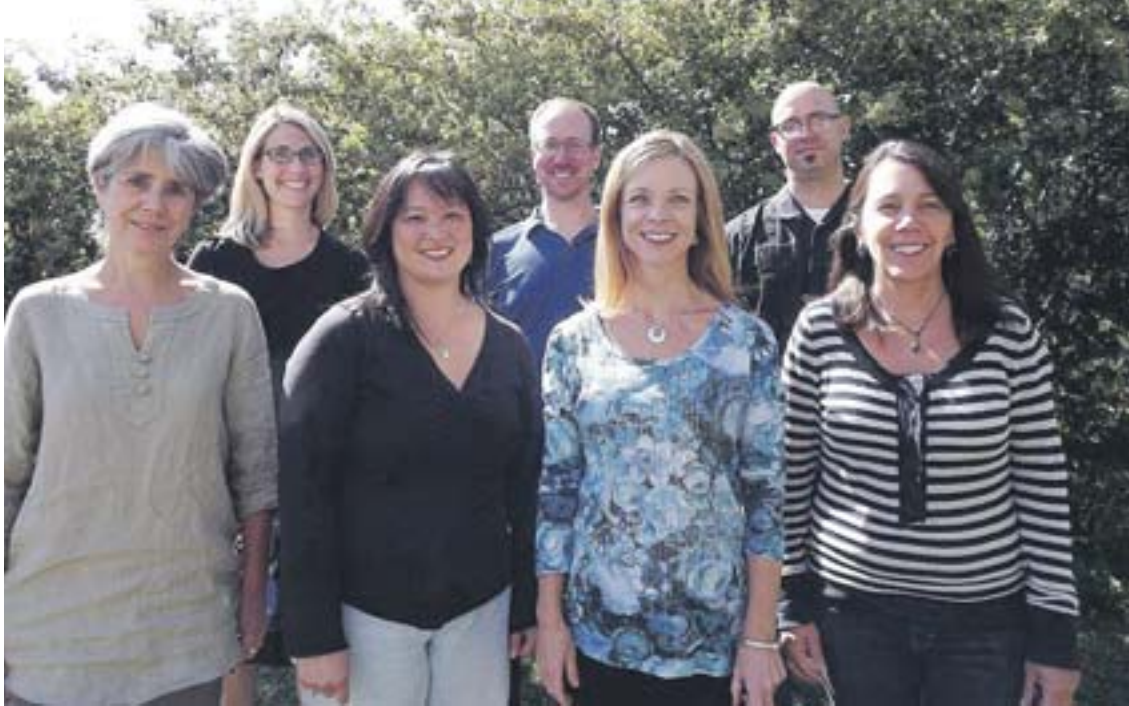
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New in Class: Staff Changes in Lamorinda Public Schools

By Cathy Dausman



New staff at Stanley Middle School include, from left, front row: Vicki Bertrand, Suzanne Tom, Launa Parnas and Michele Murphy; back row: Sayna Peeff, Brian Cooper and Robert Anke. Missing from photo: Ami Nichols, Lauri Panther and Marjolein Byl

Photo Cathy Dausman

Pay attention, class: it's time to learn the new faces appearing at your nearby Lamorinda public schools. At the high school level, Acalanes reports just one personnel change this year—the addition of

teacher Karen Kelly, who transferred in-district.

Campolindo has a new Associate Principal, Sharon Bartlett, as well as new teachers Shannon Collins and Lindsay Webb-Peplow—Social Sci-

ence; Angela Prado, Jessica Hoff-schnieder and Lisa Bruzzone— Learning Center; Sarah Marheine—Physics, Shih-Min Holland—Mandarin; Mark Roberts—Choral Music; Tren

Kauzer—Biology.

Miramonte hired Michael McAlister as its new Associate Principal.

Stanley Middle School Principal David Schrag explains that his long list of new teachers is a result of in-district personnel moving up from K-5 schools. Three special ed teachers are new to Stanley this year; they are Vicki Bertrand, Ami Nichols and Laurie Panther. Robert Anke, Shayna Peeff and Suzanne Tom teach core classes; Michele Murphy teaches wood technology, Launa Parnas teaches foreign languages and Brian Cooper is a math instructor. Stanley also shares school psychologist Marjolein Byl (new to them), with Lafayette Elementary. "It's great new energy [for Stanley]," he says.

The new Assistant Principal at Orinda Intermediate School is Stacy Wayne. The school roster also includes new teachers Brenda Thompson (band), Katherine Palmer-Collins (English/History) and Greta Heintz (Science).

Joaquin Moraga Middle School welcomes science teacher Jason Blalock, and intensive learning teachers Mary Uscilka and Rosy Audette.

Orinda Union School District reports "a lot of personnel changes." Dr. Ken Gallegos is Sleepy Hollow Elementary's new Principal. The district has also hired three new administrators – Director of Curriculum and Instruction: Kathy Marshall; Director of Special Services/Personnel: Brian Inglesby, and Director of Business Services/CBO Loreen Farrell.

Retirements forced several changes within the Lafayette School District. John Egnor is the new Director of Student Services; he arrives from Big Bear School District in Southern California. Heather Duncan, the former Buena Vista Elementary principal (Walnut Creek) succeeds Bruce Wodhams as principal at Springhill Elementary. Jim Manheimer is new Assistant Principal at Burton Valley Elementary. Manheimer taught at Lafayette Elementary last year.

Meanwhile, Moraga School District's Marie Parti gets an A+ for her clear, concise report. When asked about staff changes, the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent said simply: "Everybody's back."

Picasso at the Lapin Agile

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Joel Roster (Picasso), Alexandra Creighton (Suzanne), and Mick Mize (Einstein)

Photo Stu Selland

Paris at the turn of the 20th century is on the mind of many creators and curators this season, from Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris*, to the Picasso exhibit at the De Young Museum (until October 10), or the just-closed Steins Collection at the SFMOMA. Steve Martin's play, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*,

which is set in 1904 Paris, runs from September 24 to October 15 at Lafayette's Town Hall Theater (THT).

"It was quite a coincidence," said THT Artistic Director Clive Worsley, "when we planned for our 2011 season the Woody Allen movie was not yet heard of. All these cross

references are interesting, but the play is not really about that particular era or place."

Picasso at the Lapin Agile tells the story of a fictitious encounter between Picasso and Einstein one Paris night (along with a few other surprising characters.) "The play asks a lot of questions," says Lisa Anne Porter who directs the production, "about what happens in geniuses' brains when creation take place, what kind of people are the geniuses, what happens when the market place takes over their creation, what becomes of the dreams of people at the beginning of a new century. Steve Martin throws a lot of things in the air, not always giving answers, and of course it is spiced up with his typical sense of humor."

The action is classically constructed with the rule of unity of place, action and time (with a caveat), but that's about all the classical there is about it. It takes place in the little Parisian Café called Le Lapin Agile (which is, in fact, the oldest cabaret in Paris and is still in operation at 22 rue des Saules). Working from documents of the time, the set was constructed representing the inside of the popular Montmartre place. The bartender, the barmaid and a regular customer (named Gaston, of course) are on stage all along, as interesting patrons come in and out.

Think of the first act as the appetizer, or

even the *mise-en-bouche*, of the play. The real fireworks begin after the short intermission, when Picasso makes his entrance. Porter cast Joel Roster as Picasso. It's a dream role for anyone with a bit of spunk, and Roster takes it away brilliantly. Mick Mize, who plays Einstein, gets even better in his interactions with Roster. The duo— sometimes duelists – is quite believable.

There is more to the play than Picasso and Einstein. "It is interesting in the play to listen to the voice of the women," said Porter, "the heroes are the men, but the women are the ones that tell the truth about human nature." The character of the Barmaid, Germaine, played by Beth Deitchman, is particularly endearing and clairvoyant. One can't help thinking of Gustave Flaubert, who after writing *Madame Bovary* allegedly said, "Madame Bovary... it's me!" Did Martin put a lot of himself in Germaine? Or was he thinking of himself as a genius? Possibly a bit of both.

The evening ended with a feeling of lightness and amusement. As the play picks up speed and Martin's humorous take on things shines through, a third act would be good but he leaves the audience wanting more.

For more information or to buy tickets, go to www.THTC.org.

Cal-ESAR: They've Got your Back(country)

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From left: Lamorinda Cal-ESAR volunteers, Pictured, left to right: Myles Holland, Erin Grey, Wes Riggins, Matt Riggins, Travis Wiley and Richard Weerts

Photo Cathy Dausman

In spite of once driving three hours one way only to have the search called off, Wiley says "I wouldn't trade the experiences, the friendships or the hardships for anything in the

world." Miles Holland spent much of the interview time simply listening to and watching his Cal-ESAR counterparts. Grey fills in the blanks

when describing Holland as "a master in the outdoors and thoughtful of other people. She says "the things that come out of his mouth [are] very insightful and observant...beyond his years in many cases." Holland, currently a senior at Bentley High School, joined the program in September, 2009, because he said "it looked like fun." He's working toward his Eagle Scout rank and plans to stay with the program until he starts college.

Matt Riggins is a Miramonte High School senior who learned about Cal-ESAR from family friend Richard Weerts. He is almost an Eagle Scout, and says he loves to "go on searches and get to go where no one else does." The younger Riggins, who plans to stay active until at least June 2012, once became hypothermic at high elevation in Yosemite. He said "if two of my team members weren't there I most likely would not be here today." Later that day Riggins helped evacuate a hiker hit by a boulder. Riggins says Cal-ESAR has "heavily motivated me to become some sort of helicopter rescue crewman."

The group agrees that becoming a Cal-

ESAR volunteer is a blast, but cautions it is not a glamour job. They are self-professed "ground pounders," a mutual aid organization that serves only at the request of professional first responders. Cal-ESAR training requires committing one weekend a month, October through May. An optional nine day summer session, held at Yosemite in June, is also available. All meetings and outings are drug, tobacco and alcohol free.

An informational meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m., October 4 in the Gallery Room of the Orinda Library. Details are available online at <http://www.cal-esar.org/>



Matt Riggins, Wes Riggins on board a helicopter
 Photo provided