

Burton Valley Book Sale Proceeds Benefit Library

By Cathy Tyson



Students surround teacher Carroll Martin as she holds their donation check at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Photo courtesy of Suzanne Everly

After working hard to organize, collect, and re-sell donated books at the Bargain Book Bonanza, Carroll Martin's combined fourth- and fifth-grade class at Burton Valley Elementary School visited the Lafayette Library and Learning Center to donate their proceeds to Senior Community Library Manager Susan Weaver. The class sold gently used books to their fellow students, raising \$1,000 that will be used to buy an early literacy station for kids two to 10 years old with 56 top-rated educational software programs and touch screen capability. Last year the students made enough from the event to purchase a telescope for the Library.

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart; we've wanted this for many, many years. We've just never been able to afford it," said Weaver, explaining that their gift will be especially useful for younger kids with special needs or learning disabilities.

Everyone pitched in to make it a very special field trip for the students: Mona Amanat of the Bookmark Cafe generously donated snacks for all, and Friends of the Library gave each student a gift certificate for their Friends Corner Book Shop.

Mike Gilson, President of the Foundation Trustees had some words of wisdom for the students: "This is more than just a big library with won-

derful books; it's a place where lots and lots of people come to learn. We hope all of you come here often."

Thanking the kids for their hard work, Kathy Merchant, Executive Director of the Foundation, nudged them to come for a very special event on June 5 where they can put their telescope to good use. "It's incredible—the Transit of Venus." Experts from the Mt. Diablo Astronomical Society will be in attendance with extra telescopes. The students and anyone who's interested should consider attending since the next time this astronomical event happens will be in 800 years.

TEEN SCENE

Social Stereotypes—Don't Judge the Book by Its Cover

By Arianna Tong

Cheerleaders, jocks, nerds, you name the label. . . high school has a reputation for stereotypes. Social stereotypes impact the collective atmosphere creating an unjust social system. An individual's reputation is created before we ever meet them.

By "judging the book by its cover," we miss opportunities to encounter very interesting and influential individuals who could be different from ourselves. Stereotyping ignites a chain reaction, similar to fireworks. The net effect is an assumption based on the label plus a judgment with limited knowledge without personal interaction.

Why do we teenagers have the need to misjudge and misinterpret one another simply based on reputation or looks?

"I would define social stereotypes as a mental organization of people that I use to determine who I might or might not be comfortable with," said Miramonte senior Arjang Asadi. "Social stereotypes define the hierarchy at our school, at any school in fact. It's like how economic indicators define an economic hierarchy." Campolindo sophomore Hannah Grubs added her thoughts. "I think social stereotypes are the way people frame other people by who they hang out with or how they act. It's not just teenagers who do it. I did when I was five and I will probably do it when I'm older. It's a bad habit I have and need to work on," commented Grubs.

Christina Cisneros, a soccer player and sophomore at Acalanes feels there are cliques at her high school. "People with similar interests spend time together. For example, students on teams tend to eat together. If you are on the baseball team, you sit with you're your players. Drama club members seek out their fellow actors. People have opinions about who is cool and who is not. Those choices don't affect me. I don't have lunch with my soccer team. I eat with my friends who are on the lacrosse team."

In the end, no matter where we go, or whom we encounter, social stereotypes play a large role in our lives as high school students. Whether it is "the jock" that sits next to you in physics, or that "band geek" in your PE class, instead of judging by first glance, open the book to get to know the person. Stereotyping stigmatizes. Cliques exclude. Anyone can be cool when given a chance.

Arianna Tong is a sophomore at Miramonte high school. She is an avid water polo player, future journalist for the Mirador, and is part of the Miramonte public speaking program

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The opinions expressed in Teen Scene are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

Four Odyssey Teams Head to World Finals

Submitted by Gerard van Steyn



Photo provided

Four teams from the Lamorinda area took first or second

place at the recent State Odyssey of the Mind tournament, and have

qualified for the World finals, which will be held in Ames, Iowa the end of May. This is a wonderful showing for Lamorinda teams and is reflective of the great educational programs at our schools. Winning local teams were: Happy Valley Elementary (1st Place); Moraga Rotary, High School Team (1st Place); Orinda Intermediate School (2nd Place); and Stanley Middle School (1st Place).

The Happy Valley Elementary team from left, bottom row: Bradley Sides, Hayden van Steyn, Madeline Smith, Elena Mountin. Top row: Tyler Smith, Coach Gerard van Steyn, Jacob van Steyn.

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