

## Floral Arts Florist

Fresh flowers for any occasion  
Weddings • Proms  
Sympathy arrangements • Plants

**Taking orders now  
for Valentines Day**

3584 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette  
(925) 284-5765 www.floralartsflorist.com

We are NOW a part of "THE KNOT"



## Brian D. McLaren

Hailed by *TIME* magazine as one of the 25 most influential speakers, social justice advocates, pastors and writers of our day.

**February 1 & 2, 2014**

**Brian McLaren to speak:**

**Sat., Feb. 1, 5-6:30 p.m.**  
Book: *"Naked Spirituality"* – Free

**Sun., Feb. 2, 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.**  
– Worship Services / Special Music –

**Sun., Feb. 2, 12:15 p.m.**  
Book: *"Why Did Jesus Cross the Road ..."*  
– Light Lunch, \$5 at the door –

R.S.V.P. at [LOPC.org](http://LOPC.org) Childcare available

LAFAYETTE-ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Questions? [Lisette@LOPC.org](mailto:Lisette@LOPC.org)

# Parenting for "Authentic Success"

Challenge Success co-founder to discuss how Lamorinda parents can encourage teens in today's society

By Clare Varellas



Madeline Levine Photo provided

In a world of unbelievably low college acceptance rates, increased competition in high school sports, and the pivotal importance of the resume, the golden college acceptance letter, championship trophy, or prestigious award can seem like the ultimate measure of success to the contemporary teenager.

But world-renowned psychologist and co-founder of Stanford University's Challenge Success program Madeline Levine says these "metric" measures of success are not as important as many high school students, parents, teachers, and administrators seem to think they are, and she is working to spread the news.

"None of us are the best at everything, and what I see is kids have developed an incredibly unrealistic point of view aided and abetted by the parents, by the school, but mostly by the general culture, that if you're not the best, you're a failure," said Levine.

Levine, a well-known clinician, consultant, educator, and author, will

be giving a presentation for Lamorinda parents Jan. 23 at the Acalanes High School Performing Arts Center about how to encourage children to not only do well metrically, but, more importantly, to develop good character traits and live happy lives.

"I'm going to be talking about what it means to give a kid a leg up, because every parent wants to give their kid a leg up," said Levine. "Some of the ways we do that are in the best interests of our children, and some of the ways in which communities like Palo Alto or Lafayette or Marin are doing that are really working against healthy development."

Levine, who centers a lot of her work around teenagers in affluent communities, says that the pressure high school students living in wealthy, successful communities feel from adults leads to much higher rates of depression, anxiety issues, and substance abuse.

"The parents in these communities are well-educated and tend to be affluent and have hard-driving careers themselves, and place a particularly high value on the metrics of success," said Levine. "By that I mean how much money do you earn, which college did you go to, who are you working for. While those are one set of measures of success, they have very little to do with either adjustment or happiness, and at the end of the day we want our kids to be successful, but we also want them to be well-adjusted and happy."

In the past, Levine has written several books: *The New York Times* bestselling work "The Price of Privilege" and her latest book "Teach Your

Children Well." She is also widely sought after as a speaker and a source for television and radio interviews. As one of the heads of Challenge Success, Levine helps oversee the program, which works to provide resources for managing student stress levels and mental outlooks at approximately 120 schools across the country.

"We believe that being entirely focused on grades and test scores leaves little time and energy for other [qualities] to develop," said Levine. "We provide the research-based tools to help raise kids with greater well-being. We don't measure success at the end of the semester, but over decades."

Originally a junior high and high school teacher, Levine says she enjoys working with teenagers, and hates to see their mental conditions deteriorate because of stress levels when there are so many other bad things happening in the world. Therefore, at presentations like the upcoming one at Acalanes, she strives to allow parents to see that there are multiple levels of success, and grades and titles are just one of them.

"Do we all want to see our kids work hard and be successful? Of course," said Levine. "Do we want that at the cost of their mental health? Of course not."

Madeline Levine's presentation is scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 23 at the Acalanes High School Performing Arts Center. Tickets (\$10 for one; \$15 for two) are available at <http://madelinelevine.eventbrite.com>.

# "August: Osage County"

By Derek Zemrak



Photos provided

John Wells is a six-time Emmy Award winner who produced and wrote great television shows including "ER," "The West Wing" and "Southland," and is the director of "August: Osage County," that garnered a 2008 Pulitzer Prize for author Tracy Letts. Letts also wrote the screenplay, which is produced by Hollywood heavyweights George Clooney and Harvey Weinstein.

This "dramedy" – drama/comedy – revolves around Vi Weston, the pill-popping and f-word using matriarch of a dysfunctional Oklahoma plains family. She is played by the incredible 17-time Oscar nominee and three-time Oscar winner Meryl Streep. Streep is a true chameleon – from her role in "The Deer Hunter" to her role as Margaret Thatcher in "The Iron Lady," which won her an Oscar last year – once again Streep pulls off magic and will receive her record breaking 18th Oscar nomination. A family crisis reunites the Weston family and they all must deal with their deeply divided lives. Oscar winner Julia Roberts ("Erin Brockovich") delivers what I believe is the best performance of her career, portraying Vi Weston's bit-

ter and hostile daughter, Barbara. The amazing ensemble also includes Oscar winner Chris Cooper ("Adaptation"); Ewan McGregor ("Moulin Rouge!"); Margo Martindale ("Dead Man Walking"), and Oscar nominees Sam Shepard ("The Right Stuff"), Juliette Lewis ("Cape Fear"), Abigail Breslin ("Little Miss Sunshine") and Golden Globe nominee Benedict Cumberbatch ("Sherlock"). The performances of the entire cast are outstanding.

"August: Osage County" is bitterly funny in a few scenes but overall it is a dramatic piece. It does feel stacy at times – especially inside the house – and it is Julia Roberts who pulls the scenes back into being a motion picture.

"August: Osage County" is rated R for language, alcohol and drug use, sexual content and violence.

Derek Zemrak is a film critic, film producer and founder of the California Independent Film Festival. You can follow Derek on Twitter @zemrak for the latest Hollywood news. Derek can be heard every Friday on KAHN 950AM on the Poppoff Show.



## The GRUBB Co.

We are pleased to welcome

## CYNTHIA SPEERS

Joining our Berkeley Office

O: 652.2133 /417  
C: 510.517.6939  
[cynthia@grubbco.com](mailto:cynthia@grubbco.com)  
[eastbayhomesbycynthia.com](http://eastbayhomesbycynthia.com)  
GRUBBCO.COM



## TREE SCULPTURE

COMPLETE TREE CARE  
**Proudly serving the East Bay since 1965!**  
Fully Insured ❖ Certified Arborists ❖ License #655977  
**(925) 254-7233 ❖ www.treesculpture.com**