

Moraga Junior Women's Club makes sizable donation to New Day for Children



Photo Vera Kochan

New Day for Children representatives receive donation from Moraga Junior Women's Club members May 16

By Vera Kochan

At their end-of-year meeting at the Hacienda de las Flores on May 16 the Moraga Junior Women's Club presented a donation check in the amount of \$25,000 to New Day for Children, an organization dedicated to restoring the lives of American girls who have been rescued from sex trafficking.

The funds were raised through MJWC's fourth annual Hometown Hoedown held last February. While making the presentation to New Day, club president Jennifer McCollum stated, "It's been a pleasure to get to know your organization and bring to the attention of our community the thousands of kids sold for trafficking."

New Day's representatives, Executive Director Sharon and Primary Spokesperson Kathy (their last names are omitted for security purposes), were overcome by the size of the donation. They stated, "Two-thirds of the kids are from California and the other one-third are from other parts of the United States."

This year marks the 10th anniversary since New Day first opened its doors to help girls aged 10-18 recover their stolen childhoods. With an 80 percent success rate, this approach comes in the form of safe housing, education, character development and therapy. Kathy said, "People assume that sex trafficking is a crime only against girls, but 50 percent are crimes against boys as well."

According to New Day, "Child sex trafficking has no socio-economic, racial or cultural boundaries; every

two minutes a child is sold in the U.S. for sex; there's a four to seven year life expectancy; trafficking of minor girls is the fastest growing crime in the U.S.; one out of five children will be sexually abused by the time they reach adulthood; we have served girls as young as 11 years old, some having been trafficked since age 6 or 7."

MJWC has 47 active members who devote their time and energy to philanthropic work such as Meals on Wheels deliveries, making goodie bags for patients at Children's Hospital and delivering comfort pillows to women recovering from breast cancer. McCollum explained, "To select our featured beneficiary, we compile a list of potential beneficiaries through member submissions or direct requests from organizations themselves. The club members vote, and then the top three are invited in to speak to members directly, make a brief presentation and answer questions." Their annual Spring Egg Hunt proceeds benefit local organizations, schools, parks and recreation programming or the library.

January will mark the club's 50th anniversary and while things slow down for the summer they will have recruitment booths at various summer concerts with information for anyone interested in learning more about MJWC. For more information send an email to info@moragajuniors.org or visit www.moragajuniors.org.

New Day for Children is celebrating its 10th anniversary at Hacienda de las Flores on Sunday, Sept. 22. For details, visit www.newdayforchildren.com.

Three local Girl Scouts help seniors navigate technology



Photo provided

Scouts Hanna Hageboeck, Isabella Aris-Dumas, and Sierra Lashinsky at Carlton Senior Living Facility in Pleasant Hill during the 2018 holiday break.

Submitted by Dolorez Dumas-Aris

Lafayette Girl Scouts Isabella Aris-Dumas, Hanna Hageboeck and Sierra Lashinsky – members of Girl Scout Troop No. 32986—will be recognized by Girl Scouts of Northern California and receive their Silver Award pins and certificates this June. This award gives girls the chance to practice their leadership skills and make their community better in the process.

For their Silver Award project, the girls both recognized and empathized with the first-hand challenges that seniors encounter as they struggle to navigate the challenges of today's high tech driven society. They met with business leaders and experts in both the nonprofit and for-profit senior care industry, and with the help of their advisors, developed a class curriculum to help teach seniors the iPhone basics. In order to ensure that their students would have a concrete "take away" and that their teaching would be sustainable, the girls also created a teaching booklet to share with their students and arranged for a local printing business to donate the printing cost.

The three Scouts hosted their first

iPhone class for seniors at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church in Lafayette and have met with sixth- and seventh-grade local troops to share the curriculum and contacts for another troop to carry on as Girl Scout Troop No. 32986's Learning Legacy. These Girl Scouts will package up their soft and hard files and train a troop (or small sub-group) to administer the curriculum and conduct their own classes when they're in the eighth grade.

"There's a stereotype out there that young people are not interested in anything other than themselves. These Girl Scouts prove that stereotype wrong," said elder law attorney Kathryn Schofield.

As a part of their Learning Legacy Promise, the Girl Scouts are targeting six local senior centers in the community, and thanks to the donation by Minuteman Press, they'll have a supply of their "iPhone Basics & Beyond" booklets printed to share at these centers. In the back of the booklet will be the Troop email address so if there's anyone out there that needs iPhone assistance, the Girl Scouts can address that need.

The Scouts will bridge at Disneyland at the bridge of Cinderella's castle in June.

~ Celebrations ~

Orinda resident graduates from the prestigious U.S. Coast Guard Academy with honors



First Class A. Stanton Raymond, from Orinda, graduated from the Coast Guard Academy, May 22 with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering and a commission as a U.S. Coast Guard Ensign.

Raymond, who is scheduled to serve aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Resolute out of St. Petersburg, Fla., is the president of the Compañeros Club and played Rugby while at the Academy.

"To achieve ones dreams it takes hard work and perseverance. It also takes the help from god, family, and a few good friends," Raymond said. "The journey through the academy was long, challenging, and at times unforgiving. However, as I come close to the end of one chapter,

another is soon to begin. Go bears and 'Semper Paratus.'"

Raymond is a 2013 graduate of Miramonte High School and is the son of Alberto and Patricia Raymond of Orinda. His sister Myriah is also a Miramonte graduate and a soon to be law school student.

The U.S. Coast Guard Academy, one of the nation's five federal service academies, is located on the west bank of the Thames River. Each year, the Academy graduates about 200 newly commissioned officers to lead the smallest branch of all the U.S. Armed Forces.

~ Celebrations ~

Campolindo alumnae named BYU valedictorian



Submitted by Stacy S. Ashby

Katherine Elisabeth Christensen walked across the stage at Brigham Young University, in Provo, Utah April 26 to receive a B.S. in psychology. At this time, she was named Valedictorian for the Psychology Department of BYU's College of Family, Home and Social Sciences. Katherine is the oldest daughter of Steve and Chris Christensen and grew up in Moraga, graduating from Campolindo High School in 2015.

While a student, Katherine worked at as a teaching assistant for various psychology professors and as a research lab manager. Her work resulted in articles, presentations and posters, for which she won the prestigious Staples Mentorship Award and placed first at the Mary Lou

Fulton Mentored Research Conference. Membership to both Phi Kappa Phi and Psi Chi honor fraternities and the International Honor Society in Psychology are among her academic honors. She also served as support group facilitator and co-president of BYU's chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

Being of service fuels Katherine's passions and she feels that the support of her loving family, amazing friends and inspirational teachers have contributed greatly to her success. Studies continue this fall, as Katherine begins a PsyD program in clinical Psychology at both Palo Alto and Stanford Universities.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.