



LAGUNITAS SCHOOL DISTRICT

WEEKLY NOTICE

Lagunitas and San Geronimo Schools ~ November 6, 2017
Serving Forest Knolls, Lagunitas, San Geronimo, and Woodacre, California

Quote of the Week: *“The true object of all human life is play. Earth is a task garden; heaven is a playground.”*
(Gilbert Chesterton, 1874 – 1936)

November 7	-	Election Day
November 9	-	Lagunitas School Board meeting 6:30 pm
November 10	-	Veterans Day (<u>no school</u>)
November 11	-	New San Geronimo playground ribbon cutting ceremony 3 - 5 pm
November 14	-	LEAP give-back night at Farm Burger in San Anselmo 5 – 9:30 pm
November 15	-	Open Classroom parent meeting 7 pm
November 20 – 24	-	Thanksgiving holiday (<u>no school all week</u>)
November 28	-	Middle School parent meeting 6:30 pm
November 29	-	Final College of Marin/Lagunitas drama class
November 30	-	Facilities Committee meeting 2:30 pm
	-	LEAP board meeting 7 pm
December 1	-	Peer Summit for Middle School

News and Information

If you’ve walked over the Larsen Creek footbridge connecting the two campuses recently, you probably noticed that something’s happening here. This area of the school district, from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to the midsection of Lagunitas School Road, is designated as the Marietta Larsen Memorial Nature Preserve. Marietta Larsen (1906 – 1966) was a beloved Lagunitas school board trustee. She helped fund the Preserve in 1965 as an outdoor classroom for our school and as a protected natural area.

In 1969, a team of biologists who served as natural science consultants set up a program for teacher training, activity guide development, and land use design. This project was funded by the Lagunitas School District and the National Audubon Society and culminated in a 264-page teaching guide and handbook for the Preserve. Page one is a history of the nature preserve and includes:

The creek always flowed the length of the school grounds, but it had usually been considered more hazard than anything else. At this time, however, some people saw the outdoor education opportunity offered by the stream, grassy fields and woods. The school

board determined that the area between the Lagunitas and San Geronimo Valley Schools be designated a nature observation area and that its use be properly planned.

The late Marietta Larsen, in whose honor the Preserve was named, served the San Geronimo Valley community as an active, outspoken, fair-minded member of the Lagunitas School Board, County Committee on School District Organization and the Tamalpais Union High School Board. Two qualities which she valued highly – open space and education – are integral parts of the purpose and function of the Preserve. Many improvements in the Nature Preserve were made possible through donation from Mrs. Larsen's many friends.

This brings us to our current project, begun this past summer. Thanks to the vision and efforts of Open Classroom teacher Larry Nigro and the leadership of Dave Cort of the San Geronimo Valley Community Center, a group was formed to improve access to and educational opportunities in the Larsen Creek Preserve. The school district joined with the Community Center and the Marin Resource Conservation District to develop a proposal to restore the Preserve.

History comes full circle here. Marietta Larsen's son, Jeff Harriman, and his family joined our group and provided generous funding for the entire project. We are so appreciative of their involvement and support! With tremendous guidance from a remarkable urban streams coordinator, Sarah Phillips of the Marin Resource Conservation District, our project is underway.

Last week the California Conservation Corps cleared and redefined the trail along Larsen Creek. They pulled the poison oak and invasive species, and attached coconut matting to prevent erosion. We will also add mulch to the trails, further mark trail edge boundaries, re-vegetate with native riparian species and install a willow wall just upstream from the footbridge to prevent further bank erosion. Next week our students will begin their involvement in the planting phase, with other activities and lessons planned. An interpretive sign will be installed to teach about riparian ecology and restoration. A boulder and plaque in honor of Marietta Larsen and the Harriman family will be installed on the site.

(Are you wondering what *riparian* means? A riparian area refers to the area on the bank of a river or other body of water.)

We have kept our focus on creating safe access while keeping the Preserve in its natural state. We want our students and community to have a place to experience the beauty of the Preserve, while learning about native wildlife and plants. Larry is excited to bring his students to an area that certain bird species flock to each year and has plans for student-made nature field guides. We may be asking for volunteers soon, so keep the project in mind if you'd like to be part of the latest incarnation of this important aspect of the Lagunitas School District and Valley history.

*Laura Shain
Principal*

Copperfield's Bookstore is holding an in-store school fundraising weekend on November 10 and 11. On those two days, 20% of all purchases will go to the school designated by each customer! There are local Copperfield's in San Rafael, Novato, and Petaluma.

We have come to the end of the super build of the century! Our **San Geronimo playground** is close to being finished (just a smidge left to complete) and to celebrate, you are invited to a gathering Saturday, November 11!

We will begin the day with a final push, putting the finishing touches on the structures from 8 - 2:30 pm. From 3 - 5 pm, we will party on the playground with a potluck and music to enjoy the day. The festivities will include a ribbon cutting and a group photo of all our wonderful volunteers at 3 pm by photographer Art Rogers to commemorate the event.

We'd love to see all of you at the upper campus this Saturday, enjoying the fruits of our labors, frolicking in the playground village, and receiving a deeply heartfelt thank you from all of us at the school.

We could not have completed such an awesome task without all of your efforts. The children currently in school at the Lagunitas School District and the children who will be joining us in the future now have the grandest playground of all, thanks to you.

With love and respect,
The Playground Committee

Marin School of the Arts (MSA) at Novato High School is holding a special event – **MSA Preview Night** – on **Thursday, November 30** from **6 – 8 pm**. The event will begin in the Old Gym at Novato High School where parents and their children and can explore each program by visiting the various program tables.

CA Conservation Corps spreading coconut matting by Larsen Creek...



County-wide Schools Rule fundraising group donated over \$5,000 to Lagunitas!



Montessori students learned spooky math... and love science with Sue...



Open Classroom students created their annual Haunted House...



Middle School students enjoyed their Halloween dance fundraiser (over \$800 for wildfire relief)...



Our Halloween Parade was a monstrous success!



Even Janis made an appearance...



Stephanie's wonderful class joined in the Halloween fun...



November brings calm to the playground... for just a moment!

