

Life in LAMORINDA

Need a Last Minute Gift for your Favorite Grad?

By Lou Fancher



Maria Konstantin at Dallas & Company in Lafayette Photo Judi Amos

It's graduation time and you don't have a gift. Lucky for you, this is Lamorinda, a gift-givers paradise. If cold cash seems cliché and supporting local businesses is on your roster, follow these off-the-beaten-path suggestions for recognizing the academic achievement of kids from elementary school through college.

Eleven and twelve year olds, headed for the big leagues of middle school, might like a flash to the past. Remember when they used to romp around the yard, running through the sprinkler? Recreate the moment and offer them the world, with an inflatable globe-shaped sprinkler from the local hardware

store. Grab some spray-on sun screen and a bottle of bubbles from the nearby drug store and you're set.

If water isn't their thing, try camp. There are tech camps, sports camps, farm camps, gymnastic camps, theater camps, math camps, film camps, church camps, horse-back riding camps, and that old-fashioned idea: day camp. The great thing about giving a week (or more!) of camp is you get a little gift too. Five whole days (or more!) without "I'm bored, what should I do now?"

A special day of treats can be a perfect way to celebrate graduation. Take your pre-teen to a movie

at your local independent movie theater, pick up decadent perfection in the form of gourmet cupcakes at a specialty bakery, then stop by the local toy shop for the necessary equipment to finish out the journey with disc golf in the Moraga Commons.

Middle school grads deserve careful consideration. Take them to the bank. No, not for cash, but to set up their first savings account. Start them off with whatever amount you like, then hand them a list of summer jobs they can do to build the balance. You'll keep them busy, teach them how to handle money, and maybe, score a free bank pen when they sign on the dotted line.

After the bank, send them to class. (They already think you're from another planet, so what do you have to lose?) But not just any class, sign them up at Sewnow! for Advanced Fashion Design for Teens, or look to a local music store for guitar lessons.

Are there any teens without cell phones? Give in and give an app, extra text messaging, or a sleek, awesomely-colored silicone case for their favorite possession. Include band-aids for their TM-weary thumbs and learn to like the top of their heads as that's all you'll see while they live and breathe on the phone.

Food is popular with any age group, so consider a treat day for pre-high schoolers too. Start at Powell's Sweet Shop and fill a bag with bacon flavored candies, Big League Chew, wax lips, pop rocks, chocolate covered gummy bears and other gastrointestinal challenges. Hike around the Lafayette Reservoir until the bag is empty and your guts are full. Swing by Loard's Ice Cream for a scoop of palate-cleansing Lemon Chiffon

and close out the action with a video game rental and unlimited virtual battles for the rest of the evening.

High School athletic grads headed for college need protection. A helmet from the bike shop, a self-defense class at the martial arts school, or CPR training through the Red Cross or recreation centers all fit the bill.

They also want to look good and Lamorinda offers salons from \$ to \$\$\$\$\$. Set your budget and see your scruffy scholar transformed into a rock star or tomorrow's top model. Throw in a manicure and massage if their grade point average earned them a free ride at next year's Ivy league school.

The ultimate prize for college-bound foodies could be a 24 hour pizza binge. Spread the wealth around and start with dinner in Orinda. Order enough to bring home breakfast. Your kid will finish the cold pie leftovers at noon, when he or she rolls out of bed. Head to Moraga for a late pizza lunch, hustle home to put on a tie, then zip down to Lafayette and pick a swanky spot for the final *piece de resistance*. Pepto Bismol is available at any Safeway in the area.

College grads want a job, but beyond that, they need wheels. Make sure theirs are in working order with a gift tune-up or full detail wash (they'll even shampoo your kid's seat) or, go all out and mount a GPS on the dash. That way, they'll always be able to find their way back home.

If you are lucky enough to have your college grad remain local, consider a gift that keeps on giving. A subscription to the Town Hall Theater, California Shakespeare Festival, or season tickets to Saint Mary's Men's and Women's Basketball games will keep them

entertained—and nearby.

The best grad gift on the market will set you back only 15 bucks. It's Ann Patchett's *What Now?* Her delightful essay, based on a commencement address she gave at Sarah Lawrence College and packaged in a slim, portable edition is a 97-page packet of dynamite advice. Keep Lamorinda's independent bookstores in business by ordering a cartload for friends and family alike.

Of course, what most kids want upon graduation is you: smiling, clicking the pics, and letting them know you'll always be there. But a little something extra never hurts.

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Free Father's Day Car Show in Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson



1956 Buick Spider, one of many cars at Motorama

Photo provided

It rolls around every year, but deciding how to make dads, honorary dads and husbands feel special is always a challenge. Instead of a tie or cologne – how about checking out a 1937 Phaeton on Father's Day? Look for this mobster car along with 50 other fabulous automobiles, including a 1965 Sunbeam Tiger, the newest police car from Lafayette's finest,

a 1933 Ford Street Rod and the 1956 Buick Spider pictured above at the first ever Motorama – World of Wheels extravaganza.

Local dads and stumped would-be shoppers can thank the Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Club for putting together this unique all-day event on June 20. Spectators are welcome starting at 9:00 a.m. in the Clocktower and Postino

parking lots on Mount Diablo Boulevard.

The free event will feature an exhibitor corral with dozens of spectacular cars – classics, muscle cars, motorcycles and bicycles from delivery boy models to racing bikes, even a jet engine, along with music by Hugh and the Heffners from 11:00 – 3:00.

Organizers went all out to

put together a VIP package that will be the envy of Lamorinda. A Recliner Room, lunch buffet, shave and a hair cut, scotch tasting, family photos and more await in the VIP tent. Man spa VIP tickets are \$50.

"There are hundreds of car clubs in the bay area, and we invited the best to participate," said Motorama Chairperson Krysten Laine, a member of Sunrise Rotary, who works at the San Francisco P.U.C. She and husband Rene Aguirre, President and Owner of Urban Suburban, are car aficionados themselves. Aguirre started out with Hubbard Racing of Oakland as a teenager and managed Nick's Mercedes of Lafayette before opening Urban Suburban over fifteen years ago.

Although the event is free, donations are welcome and are tax deductible. Vendors will have "all things auto" available for that special souvenir to commemorate the day. Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, like other Rotary clubs, values "Service above self" – money raised from this event supports a variety of projects locally and around the world. For more information, go to www.motorama.us or www.lamorindasunrise.org.

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