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# Waste-Less Lunch at Springhill a Big Success

By Sophie Braccini



Nanette Heffernan wears a week's worth of lunch trash. Photo S. Braccini

Springhill Elementary School in Lafayette is effecting change. Since the Waste-Less-Lunch campaign was launched in February, the school's Green Team reports that the weight of non-recyclable waste has been cut by 55%. One of the high points of the campaign was the school's science fair on March 2nd, where Nanette Heffernan appeared in a head-to-toe outfit she made out of sanitized plastic trash from the previous week's school lunch waste. She was a real kid-magnate at the fair. The multicolor, twirling costume attached with safety pins was undeniably attrac-

tive, but it highlighted the sad reality of buckets-full of non-recyclable trash dumped by kids each day at school. "I'm all for it," said Springhill's Principal Bruce Wodhams, "It is tough to change our wasteful mentality, but the kids have been getting it and the school has won the \$2,000 County Waste Buster Award. Our students are very good about recycling and some of the parents are very enthusiastic." Heffernan is definitely one of these enthusiastic parents. She is part of the Springhill Green Team that launched the waste-less lunch

campaign last month, with Jodi Consoli, Meg McAdam, Sarah David, and Heidi Rahlmann Plumb.

"We were wondering how to get the word out to parents," remembers Heffernan, "then I proposed to wear five days worth of trash on my hat as I do traffic calming for parent drop-off in the morning." A creative spirit, the young mother invents visual props to make her point. She built a children's book, "The Great Cowpoop Debacle," out of recycled material to teach her kids about wastefulness, and when it came to finding a way to direct traffic and de-stress parents at drop-off time, Heffernan volunteered to do it twice a week, wearing a dress-up hat. "The funny hat broke the ice a little bit and it became iconic at school," says Heffernan, who has done it steadily for two years, "so the idea of wearing the week's lunch trash on a hat seemed natural. I didn't want to offend anybody, just draw attention to how much is wasted at lunch time." Pretty soon, the hat was too small and she had to build a whole outfit.

"At one point (during the science fair) I noticed a woman standing off to the side just staring at me," Heffernan said after the fair, "I approached her to say 'hi' and noticed she had tears in her eyes. I asked her if she was okay and she said, 'You're wearing my son's garbage. I know because I see his name on one of the bags. I can't believe what I've been doing all these years. I never really thought about it before.' Wow! That, right there, was the point of the entire effort. Affecting even one parent made it all worth it," concluded Heffernan.

# Fruit Trees the Future at Los Perales

By Cathy Dausman



Parents, students and siblings from Los Perales plant fruit trees

Photo Cathy Dausman

A group of Los Perales Elementary School students, siblings and family members spent a recent Saturday morning digging, amending soil, planting, pruning, watering and even painting the bark on three new fruit trees they planted on school grounds. The non-profit Urban Farmers donated two antique heirloom apple trees; a third fruit tree, a pear, was purchased by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). "Perales" is

Spanish for pear. Jenny Clare, Los Perales PTA President, recruited the help; and Clare and Urban Farmers' Siamese Sioshansi managed the project. "It was a really good starting point for [building] a relationship [with Urban Farmers]," said Clare, adding she is happy to bring together school families who are interested in growing their own produce. "These children are our future

leaders," says Sioshansi. "It is nice to see them more involved with the food cycle."

Urban Farmers has also donated trees to Acalanes High School, Lafayette Elementary School and St. Mary's College.

Sioshansi says the Los Perales saplings should bear fruit in just a couple of years. But if it takes longer, Clare is okay with that. "We're a school that will be around for a long time," she says.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

**Acalanes Union High School District**  
 Board Room AUHSD Office  
 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette  
 Next: Wednesday, March 23, 7:30pm

**Orinda Union School District**  
 OUSD Office  
 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda  
 Monday, April 4, 4pm

**Lafayette School District**  
 LAFSD Office  
 3477 School Street, Lafayette  
 Wednesday, April 13, 7pm

**Moraga School District**  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium  
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
 Tuesday, April 12, at 7:30pm

# Wait-Listed at the University of California?

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

Colleges build waiting lists to ensure that they have full freshman classes. Since not all accepted students will choose to enroll, these lists allow colleges to reach out to students they would like to accept but do not have the space to enroll. This system is hard on students because the school is not sending a clear message regarding an offer of admission. Some students describe it as being "in a state of limbo." While students and their parents are accustomed to wait-listing at private schools, most are surprised to learn that the University of California also uses waitlists.

### The waitlist as an enrollment strategy

UC currently enrolls more than 11,500 students for whom it receives no state funding. A waitlist is an enrollment management tool that helps campuses reach their enrollment targets and budget objectives. This is especially important during tough economic times when the university is dealing with recent and planned state budget cuts. In the fall 2010 admissions cycle, the UC used waitlists at many campuses for the first time and announced plans to do so again in fall 2011. All campuses, except Los Angeles and Merced, plan to use waitlists for their freshman applicant pools. Davis and San Diego also have a transfer waitlist, and Irvine and Santa Cruz are considering the option for transfers.

### How many students are accepted from the waitlist?

This enrollment strategy was first used in fall 2010, so we only have access to those numbers. Just two campuses—UC Davis and UC Santa Barbara—admitted significant numbers of students from their waitlists. Their final freshman classes included more than 40% of students admitted off the waitlist.

### What our students need to know

- Students may receive waitlist offers from more than one campus. Students may accept as many offers as they wish. Waitlist offers will be made by the end of March for freshman applicants and the end of April for transfers.
- Once students are offered a spot on a waitlist, they must opt in or lose this opportunity. Instructions for opting in will be included with the waitlist notification.
- Even if students accept a waitlist offer (or several), students should submit a Statement of Intent to Register (SIR) by the stated deadline to a UC campus (or other college or university to which they have been accepted). If they later accept an offer of admission from a campus where they have been wait-listed, they will forfeit their deposit at the first campus.
- Preliminary financial aid awards will be sent at the time students are notified of waitlist offers. Students

who submit their SIR by the deadline will be considered on time for housing and orientation scheduling purposes.

• Wait-listed freshman applicants will be notified of their status no later than June 1; wait-listed transfer applicants will be notified by July 1st.

### Key difference in waitlist status between UC and private colleges

There are key differences between being placed on the waitlist at a private college versus the UC. Gael Casner, founder of College Find in Marin County, sums it up well: "The main difference has to do with the amount of control you have over the process. At a private college, you can continue to add important information to your application, write or call to show your continued interest and generally assure the college that it is your first choice school." If you are wait-listed at the UC, you can do little but wait, and that can be unnerving for students and their families.

### Consider Your Options

It is important to focus on the schools that accepted you without reservation. If you have received admission offers from one or more UC campuses, out-of-state public and/or private colleges consider these opportunities carefully—this time from the fresh perspective of an admitted applicant. These colleges want you and indicated their interest with firm offers of admission. Ultimately, being a UC wait-listed applicant may not prove as satisfying to you as accepting an offer of admission from a college that was attractive enough to make it to your college list in the first place. Knowing what college you will be attending in the fall will allow you the freedom to move forward, make definitive college plans and enjoy the remainder of your senior year.



Elizabeth LaScala Ph.D. guides high school and transfer students through the complex world of college admissions. She develops best match college lists, offers personalized essay coaching to produce thoughtful, unique responses and tools and strategies to tackle each step of the admissions timelines with confidence and success. Elizabeth advises students from all backgrounds, including college-bound athletes, and maximizes merit and financial aid awards. She earned certification from UC Berkeley in College Admissions and Career Planning. Contact her @ (925) 891-4491 or elizabeth@doingcollege.com.

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