The Amazing Race, Lafayette-Style

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By Cathy Tyson





Contestants ready for adventure on the first LPIE Amazing Race.

Photo Warren Lane

phones and a list of supplies that a time penalty. included water, a first aid kit, a football and a variety of crazy items just Was I Thinking?" and "Let's Get it to throw off participants, 32 brave Done" paid to play with all the prosouls, eight teams of four people each, got started on the Amazing Race, a fundraiser for the Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE). As contestants were poised and ready to run, the race LPIE. officially began with a welcome and review of specific instructions by Mark Gundacker at the Acalanes High School flag pole. What followed was a chaotic search for the first clue, leading participants on a mad dash to find four T-shirts of the same color to designate their team. However, there were a total of 32 shirts spread out randomly and hidden all over the Acalanes High School football stadium – a not so subtle heads-up about through senior year at Acalanes. The

the remainder of the event. The premise of both the TV show and the fundraiser is for teams to race of kids in Lafayette with funds going around the world, or in this case to science, math, music, art, technol-Lafayette, and complete unusual tasks; when each task is completed, teams get their next clue and so on to the finish line. Thanks to the deep pockets of network television – winners crossing the line first on TV receive \$1 million. In Lafayette, winners – spoiler alert, mentioned at the end of this story – get to "enjoy the glory of it all," says one of the organizers, Suzy Pak, and of course the T-shirts tied around ankles – defibragging rights.

Gundacker spelled out the inforteam had to participate in and road T-shirt was off to an early lead. blocks which are only done by one show, despite specific instructions, Golden Gate Way. some folks neglected to fully grasp

ith a can-do attitude, com- what was being requested and had to fortable sneakers, smart- repeat portions of a challenge or take

> Teams with names like "What ceeds benefitting LPIE. Teams that were completely stuck could phone an organizer who would sell them a clue for an additional \$50 donation to

> The Amazing Race fundraiser event started out four years ago at Springhill Elementary School, growing in popularity, and this year spreading to include all Lafayette schools. Organizers spent months planning, carefully wording instructions and rustling up support from generous merchants. LPIE is run by parent volunteers to expand educational opportunities for students from kindergarten educational foundation consistently supports and enriches the education ogy, foreign language and more. Some residents may be more familiar with the group's prior name, LASF or Lafayette Art and Science Foundation which changed in 2010 to LPIE.

Once T-shirts were found, competitors had to complete a threelegged style walk (actually five-legged walk) that linked all four team members around the track, with nitely a learning curve there – then on to kick field goals, apparently a job mation teams received in each enve- many middle-aged parents weren't lope, route information, detours the familiar with. At this point, team teal

In what turned out to be a very team member. Conveniently there full afternoon, teams had tasks all were four road blocks, one per team over town; one task cleverly had them member. Similar to the television look for a message somewhere on

... continued on page B10

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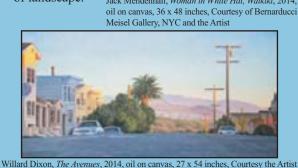


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