A Writer's Place: Lafayette Library and Learning Center Hosts Group of **Budding Writers**

By Moya Stone

Sunday visitor to the Lafayette Library and Learning Center might spot in the Teen Center a group of animated men and women sitting in a circle, laughing and clearly having a good time. Who are these jovial folks? They are local writers, part of a new group called A Writer's Place.

A Writer's Place is just that a space and opportunity for budding scribes to regularly meet and discuss the craft of writing. Started late last year by Lafayette resident and author Gloria Lenhart, the group supports one another by discussing their own crafting challenges. Moderated by Lenhart, the writers also share writing strategies, publishing tips and research resources. Additionally, participants have the option to exchange manuscripts and critique each other's work.

Called Writers Open House, the meetings happen once a month on Sunday afternoon. Among the writers gathered recently is Lafayette resident Dudley Braun, who is working on a non-fiction piece and looking for tips on how to write a book proposal. Shelley Koon from Martinez writes young adult fiction and shares information on e-publishing and the importance of social networking for writers. Lenhart begins with a particular topic, such as how to get started writing, but the discussions take on a life of their own as any good conversation does.

Moraga resident Danielle Vanaman is working on a collection of personal essays and excited to be attending for the first time the upcoming San Francisco Writers Conference. Those in the group who have attended the popular event guide her on what to expect and how to prepare. Lenhart mentions that what's great about this conference is the opportunity to pitch story ideas to editors and agents. Business cards are now number one on Vanaman's must-have list.

Lenhart was one of the women behind the Lafayette Library Sweet Thursdays Author Reading Series. Having seen the success of that program, she was inspired to offer something useful to local writers. "I know there are a lot of writers out there waiting to start that book or short story," she says. "I'd like to be a resource for these people."

Lenhart is familiar with the distractions writers face. Life got busy in 2006 after the publication of her memoir, Planet Widow: A Mother's Story of Navigating a Suddenly Unrecognizable World. "I fell off my own writing," she admits. Wanting to start writing a historical novel, she recognized the need for a supportive community and approached Friends of the Lafayette Library with her idea of A Writer's Place. The response was immediate and enthusiastic. The Friends provide administrative support and promotion and the Lafayette Library and Learning Center provides the space.

In addition to the monthly meetings, A Writer's Place offers reasonably priced workshops led by published authors. Scheduled for March 6th is a workshop designed to jumpstart would-be writers, Write that Book Already, led by authors Kathi Kamen Goldmark and Sam Barry. Lenhart also organizes visits from local authors to talk about their writing and publishing process. Visitors last fall included San Francisco Chronicle columnists Jon Carroll and Adair Lara.

Writers Open House is free and open to all writers. Each meeting attracts eight to fifteen writers coming from Oakland, Lafayette, Moraga, Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, Martinez, and even Brentwood. Lenhart says she's pleased with the interest and support. "We are feeling our way and seeing

how it goes."

A Writer's Place Website: For more information visit http://www.awritersplace.com/



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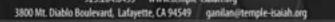
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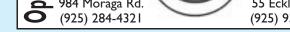




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helped to fund our efforts to create this service to the community

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Apple Seed Little School	NA		year around	8am - 5:30pm	2 years	(925) 962-9335	www.appleseedlittleschool.com
Building Bridges	1035 Carol Ln.	Dev K	year around	8am - 6pm	2 years	(925) 283-6792	www.buildingbridgespreschool.com
Child Day School	1049 Stuart St.	yes	year around	6:45am -6:15pm	2 years	(925) 284-7092	www.tcdschools.com
Diablo Valley Montessori School	3390 Deer Hill Rd.	yes	yr around option	7:30am - 6:00pm	3 months	(925) 283-6036	www.dvms.org
Gan Ilan Preschool/ Temple Isaiah	3800 Mount Diablo Blvd.	no	summer option	8am - 3pm	2 years	(925) 284-8453	www.temple-isaiah.org
Happy Days Learning Center	3205 Stanley Blvd.	Pre K	year around	7am - 6pm	2 years	(925) 932-8088	www.eastbaypreschools.com
Joyful Beginnings	955 Moraga Rd.	Pre K		8:45 -11:45am +	2 yrs., 7 months	(925) 284-1143	www.eastbaypreschools.com
Lafayette Kids' Cottage	Monroe Ave	yes	year around	8am-6pm	2 yrs, 9 months	(925) 286-6848	www.lafayettekids.com
Lafayette Nursery School	979 First St.			NA	NA	(925) 284-2448	www.lafayettenurseryschool.com
Merriewood Children's Center	Burton Valley Schoool	Pre K	yr around option		1 year, 6 months	(925) 284-2121	www.merriewood.org
Michael Lane Preschool	682 Michael Ln.		yr around option	•	2 yrs., 9 months	(925) 284-7244	www.stanselms.ws/preschool
Old Firehouse School	984 Moraga Rd	Dev K	year around	8am - 5:30pm	1 year	(925) 284-4321	www.oldfirehouse.com
Seedlings/LOPC	49 Knox Dr.	Dev K	summer option	9:15am - 4:15pm	6 months*	(925) 284-3870	www.lopc.org
Moraga Bright Beginnings Child Day School Creative Playhouse Growing Light Montessori School Growing Tree Preschool Mulberry Tree Preschool MVPC Nurtury Preschool Saklan School	1689 School St. 372 Park St. 1350 Moraga Way 1450 Moraga Rd. 1695 Canyon Rd. 1455 St. Marys Rd. 10 Moraga Valley Ln. 1678 School St.	Dev K Dev K Pre K Pre K Junior K Pre K yes, full day	school year year around year around no no school year	8am - 4pm 6:45am- 6:15pm 7am - 6pm 7:30 - 6pm 8am - 4:30pm 8:45am - 4:00pm 9am - noon + 8:30am - 2:00+	2 yrs., 6 months 1 year 24 months 18 months 18 months 2 years 2 years 2 yrs., 9 months	(925) 376-2600 (925) 376-5110 (925) 377-8314 (925) 377-0407 (925) 376-8280 (925) 376-1751 (925) 376-4800 x248 (925) 376-7900 x16	www.eastbaypreschools.com www.tcdschools.com www.eastbaypreschools.com www.growinglight.net www.growingtreepreschool.net www.eastbaypreschools.com www.mvpctoday.org/nurtury www.saklan.org
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