

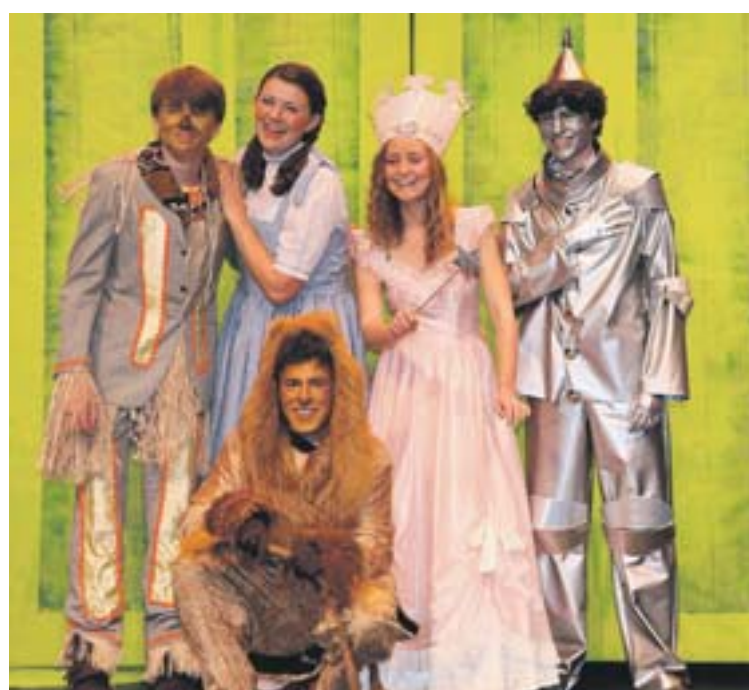
Acalanes High School | Bentley School | Burton Valley | Camino Pablo | Campolindo | Contra Costa Jewish Day School | Del Rey Donald L. Rheem | Glorietta | Happy Valley | Joaquin Moraga

Lamorinda Schools

Lafayette Elementary | Los Perales | Miramonte | Orinda Academy Orinda Intermediate | Saklan Valley School | Sleepy Hollow Springhill | Stanley Middle | St. Perpetua School | Wagner Ranch

High Schools Take on Classic Musicals

By Lou Fancher



The Wizard of Oz features: Max Fleer (Scarecrow), Neris Newton (Dorothy; Jacqueline Garell not pictured), Sophie Woodlee (Glinda), Connor McCormick (Tinman), Carter Soso (Cowardly Lion) Photo submitted

Campolindo and Miramonte High Schools are taking on musical theater icons with their upcoming productions of *Fiddler on the Roof* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Both musicals are also film industry giants, which lends familiarity, but leads to certain expectations.

"We're doing a fairly faithful retelling of the film, although scenes are compressed and locations are 'accordioned' into one place," says David Pinkham, the director of Campolindo's show.

Last year, Pinkham asked students and parents to make suggestions when developing a list of productions to consider. *Fiddler on the Roof* was

mentioned enough times that it caught his attention.

"And, it's wonderful story telling, it has a lot of strong female roles and we wanted to do a traditional show," he added.

The most challenging part of directing the musical has been getting students to relate to the deep-rooted family traditions at the production's core.

"As a community, we do things the way they do things on TV: we don't have the same connections to place or family," he said, his tone a mix of regret and practical acceptance.

Shannon Sullivan, 17, plays Tzei-

tel, the eldest daughter, and has found a way to relate to her character.

"She is more sheltered than I am, but she wants to try new things, like I do," Sullivan said.

A question about art in the schools brings an immediate, fervent response from Sullivan: "That's why I came to Campolindo: for the great music program. If they ever cut it, I would be so offended and so hurt. The arts push and challenge in a way science will never do for me."

At Miramonte, Producer Petra Michel is master of everything Oz. With her flair for fashion, it's no surprise that tremendous energy has gone into procuring costumes.

"The Munchkin costumes created the biggest challenge because we needed to transform fully grown teens into tiny, sweet munchkins. We started with colorful felt hats that I found at a trade show, and student costume designer Hannah Reed added ingenious hoop skirts. Parent co-chair Stacy McCormick finished the costumes with a tiny, little vest," Michel explained.

Over fifty students are involved in crafting, performing and producing the musical. Sporadic rehearsals began in December, but picked up a steady pace in the new year. With several rehearsals a week, students scramble to fit in homework, extracurricular sports and family responsibilities.

"I realized it was crazy when I was in fifth grade, so I dropped all sports to do theater," 15-year-old Daniel Cook said.

Director Heather Cousins ex-

plained that the 1978 adaptation is not a replica of the film or book.

"Many references are new, giving it a more modern twist. But we honor the most iconic and familiar mo-

ments, [paying] tribute to the film wherever possible," Cousins reassured.

Both productions open on March 17th.



Tevye (Ben Thomas) and Golde (CaroLynn Stuart) of Campolindo's *Fiddler on the Roof* Photo Kathie Wicker

Campolindo High School's *Fiddler on the Roof*

Performances are Thursday, March 17 at 7:30 pm, Friday, March 18 at 7:30pm., Sat., March 19 at 2 pm and 7:30 pm, Thursday, March 24 at 7:30 pm, Friday, March 25 at 7:30 pm, and Sat., March 26 at 2 and 7:30 pm. For ticket information go to www.campochoir.com.

Miramonte High School's *The Wizard of Oz*

Performances are March 17, 18, 24, 25, 26 at 7:30pm and March 20 at 3pm. Reserved Seating \$12-\$17, General Admission \$10-\$15. Purchase at www.showtix4u.com.

High Standards at High School Newspapers

By Lou Fancher

Technology savvy students and intense editorial standards make Lamorinda High School newspapers high quality, hyper-current, and hip, to use an old-fashioned phrase.

Although articles about life on campus form the bulk of their coverage, all three papers—Acalanes' *Blueprint*, Campolindo's *La Puma*, and Miramonte's *Mirador*—aren't afraid to tackle community stories. In the past year, downtown planning in Orinda, University of California at Berkeley's Title IX issues and a rash of burglaries in Moraga, all received the papers' attention.

The three publications have many things in common, especially their use of new technologies like video, Facebook, and Twitter. Here is a profile of each paper.

The *Blueprint*

The Acalanes editors are technically determined by an advisor, but class votes and student editors influence the final assignments. There are eight issues per year and fact checking is primarily the responsibility of the writers.

Editors Nicole Lee, Emily Ellsworth and Sam Cheng said that the use of secondhand sources is discouraged and "any claims made in the story must be backed up by an interview or another reliable source."

Subject matter is wide open at the *Blueprint*. Editors in Chief have the final say and, in an email reply, they clarify the point, noting, "No subjects are off limits. We have published stories on sexting, marijuana, fake IDs, and meth."

The biggest changes at the *Blueprint* are due to the passage of Measure A.

"Our district has been dealing with budget cut issues," wrote the editors, "and there was a chance that our newspaper wouldn't survive. We attended district board meetings to argue for journalism at Acalanes. Fortunately, the measure passed and *Blueprint* lives on."

The Arts section and controversial stories are most popular. The Opinion page draws the most

commentary from readers.

This year's *Blueprint* editors picked their coverage of Title IX at Cal and the cost of sports at Acalanes in recent articles as their greatest source of pride. "These have all been large stories with high-end sources and topics relevant to the student body," they said.

Invited to share a closing comment after responding to formatted questions, *Blueprint* editors said:

"As cliché as it is, staff members can really do as much as they want; the only limit to how much they can do is themselves. For example, we've had people interview 'N SYNC and United States senators, walk inside the Giants' dugout at AT&T Park, and attend a roundtable discussion with director Gore Verbinski and actress Abigail Breslin. *Blueprint* is committed to reporting accurate news and practicing quality journalism, and the workload can be quite demanding, but it's an incredibly rewarding experience."

La Puma

Applications for editorial positions are accepted at the end of each year at Campolindo. The current editor in chief and faculty advisor review and interview the applicants.

An issue is produced each month and Tori Shepard and Victoria Garrity, 2010-11's *La Puma* editors, ask for 2 drafts before the final copy is submitted, to "try to be as accurate as possible."

La Puma allows a staff advisor and the school administration to control the content: crude jokes, criticism of school administration and topics not focused on school or community are off limits.

Their new advisor introduced layout and design changes this year, which Shepard called "influential." Like their larger counterparts in the professional field of journalism, the paper also had to cut back the number of pages to save money.

At *La Puma*, student surveys on the Opinion page and a satirical back page draw the most reader response. The feedback can come in the form of letters to the editor, but

most often, it's through Facebook, Twitter, and Gmail.

In closing, the editors said:

"This class is unique compared to other classes because it offers students a lot of freedom and an opportunity to learn in a hands-on way. The atmosphere is very relaxed and casual, and we have a lot of fun."

The *Mirador*

Hannah Tennant and Brian Friel were selected through an application and interview process similar to the one at *La Puma*. The final issue of last year was a transitional one, where Tennant and Friel were trained into their positions.

The *Miramonte* paper is published approximately once a month, with seven total issues. The editors rely on section editors to question facts and request clarifications from their writers.

California Scholastic Journalism Standards learned in their journalism classes set the boundaries.

"We conduct ourselves as a legitimate paper, and we print anything as long as it is not libelous," the editors said.

Last year, *Mirador* staff attended the NSPA Journalism Convention in Washington, D.C., which triggered the addition of an online website and editorial overseers assigned to the site.

An editorial on Boy's Water Polo received the collective nod from editorial staff as the most important story this year.

"[The article] focused on the pressure that we are placed under here at Miramonte. It exposed the unrealistic expectations we are held to by coaches and teachers. The writer argued that we can learn from our failures," explained the editors.

Mirador editors emphasized a final, important aspect of working on a high school newspaper with their last words:

"Twice a month we meet from 6-9 pm to work on the paper. We call these nights *Mirador* Nights, and we have a pair bring food. It's always fun!"

Acalanes Design Students Win State Contest

Submitted by Susan Lane



John Kintner

Graphic provided



Helen Kim

Graphic provided

Acalanes students Helen Kim and John Kintner recently won the California State Senate Logo design contest for "Greening the 21st century." State Senator Carol Liu will personally present the students with their awards.

St. Perpetua School Celebrates Literacy

Submitted by Monica Chappell



Mayor Carl Anduri

Photo Karen Goodshaw

During the first week of March, St. Perpetua School was transformed in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday. Classroom doors were decorated to reflect favorite books, students dressed as their favorite book character and enjoyed delicious homemade Cat in the Hat cookies, guest readers, including Lafayette's Mayor Carl Anduri, visited the school to read to the classes, and time was set aside for a school-wide reading period.