

# Weekly Spanish Storytime Comes to Lafayette Library

By Cathy Tyson



Yolima Salamanca, the very educated bi-lingual story teller at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. Photo Cathy Tyson

**B**ueno dias amiguitos, como *Bestan?* - Good morning little friends, how are you - is the welcome song at La Hora del Cuento or Spanish Storytime at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. On a recent Tuesday morning, a room full of toddlers were singing, clapping and counting in Espanol. Not a word of English was uttered by library employee Yolima Salamanca, as she led the kids through several songs and Spanish picture books. Little ones chimed in on repeated key words, especially enjoying "zoom" to illustrate the blue car accelerating in the book *Carrera en la Carretera* or Road Race; it was easy to understand what "muy rapido" meant. Even this reporter could figure it out.

The Spanish storytime started when former Librarian Miss Donna hosted a Spanish language event for special holidays like Cinco de Mayo and Day of the Dead. After Miss Donna's retirement, Youth Services Librarian Ann Miller instituted a monthly Spanish story time over the summer after taking a "Spanish for librarians" class while working on her master's degree in library science. The program was successful enough to expand to a weekly event starting last month with Salamanca as story teller.

"She's truly a natural," said Miller of Salamanca, who graciously runs

the program using sweeping hand gestures, a gentle and engaging delivery style while repeating key vocabulary. Salamanca came to America four years ago from her native Columbia with her husband. Armed with two master's degrees - one in human resources and one in engineering - she worked on special projects for the Columbian government. She continues to focus on perfecting her English language skills and currently is part of the Facilities Team that manages the library building and sets up for events.

The little ones, mostly up to age five, get a little squirrely toward the end of the fast-paced half-hour session; many wander over to the children's section afterwards to pick up a few books to take home. Miller says the Lafayette Library has a small but growing collection of Spanish language books for kids as well as for parents and nannies.

With more than 30 attendees recently, it's been a big success, bolstered by a solid group of regular attendees. Simple rhythmic songs that the kids can follow, a selection of story books with big pictures, lessons on vowels and counting: toddlers are entertained and learn something in the process, which is priceless. Of course this program, like many others at LLLC, is free of charge - every Tuesday from 10:15 to 10:45 a.m.

# Get to Know Community Artists at Lamorinda Arts Alliance Open Studios

Submitted by Kris Vagner

**T**his is no ordinary Sunday drive. On October 20-21, Lamorinda Arts Alliance (LAA) hosts a free self-guided driving tour to 26 artists' studios in Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda. The event kicks off with a reception Friday, October 19, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Lafayette Studio, where visitors can preview LAA artists' photographs, paintings, sculptures, and other artworks. From landscape photographs of majestic Mt. Diablo to exquisite porcelain dinnerware to dynamic, kinetic sculptures that can jazz up your whole yard, the artwork in Lamorinda is as diverse as the 26 artists on this year's tour. Light refreshments will be available at some studios, and artists will have their work for sale. Peek into artists' studios to learn more about their creative processes, add to your fine-art collection, or just enjoy a scenic drive through Lamorinda's hills to meet the artists who work here. Lamorinda Arts Alliance is a group of artists who live or work in or near Lamorinda. Its mission is to educate artists and the public on a range of art-related topics and to promote appreciation of the region's arts. Open Studios is the Alliance's largest annual event. You can pick up a map of the studios at the reception or print your own from the LAA web site at laa4art.org.



Wall piece by ceramicist Brian Wilson Photo provided

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