Page: B2 LAMORINDA WEEKLY

THE BMW 4 SERIES.

Michael Heller 92**5-998-215**0

\$ 925-377-0977



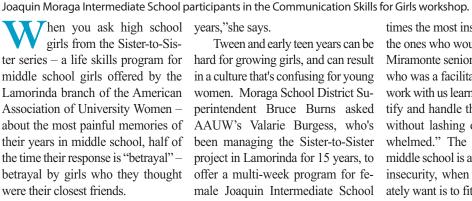
Program Focuses on Coping with Betrayal and Pain in Middle School

By Sophie Braccini



UN4GETTABLE: DESIGNED TO CATCH YOUR EYE. BMW Concord, mlheller78@hotmail.com Call

BMW Concord | 1967 Market ST. | Concord



nior's worst experience in middle school was that suddenly her best friends stopped talking with her on the phone and stopped inviting her to hangout. When confronted about it, they started sending awful texts and putting her down.

Another Miramonte senior, who calls

adds that throughout sixth and sevcares.' one of the worst feelings a young girl can experience in her early teenage

Photo provided times the most insecure, and they are the ones who would need help," says Miramonte senior Elizabeth Chenok, who was a facilitator. "The girls who work with us learn techniques to identify and handle their own emotions, without lashing out or being overwhelmed." The senior thinks that middle school is a time of change and insecurity, when all people desperately want is to fit in.

April Tabler, a sixth grader at JM, participated in the program. "We had a lot of fun learning new skills," she says. "We practiced the 'I' statement - when you say what you feel rather than accusing someone about what they did - or how to identify and defuse 'pushing' statements. We learned how to avoid being bullied and we made new friends."

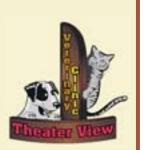
April's mother, Sarah Tabler, appreciated the information session that was held for parents before the series started, and the follow-up emails sent every week to reinforce what the girls were learning. "They learned to avoid using 'always' and 'never," she says. "They learned how to name emotions, recognize feelings. They also discussed the importance of having your own thoughts and being your authentic self."

Burgess hopes to offer a second

Theater View Veterinary Clinic



Theater View Veterinary Clinic is a brand new facility owned by "Dr. Laurie" Langford who has been caring for animals in Orinda for 15 years.



Phone: (925) 317-3187

One Miramonte High School se-

also asked not to be named, was part of a very close knit group of friends and was ostracized one day when one of the girls said that their group was "too exclusive" and it was that girl's fault. The same thing happened to an Acalanes High School senior one day in middle school when she heard that her friends were hiding in the bathroom because they didn't want to hang out with her anymore. "It was a metaphoric punch to my gut," she re-

enth grade she can't remember a day when her "friends" weren't saying things like, "You're pathetic" or "You're a selfish brat," or "No one "Being turned off by friends is

Tween and early teen years can be hard for growing girls, and can result in a culture that's confusing for young women. Moraga School District Superintendent Bruce Burns asked AAUW's Valarie Burgess, who's been managing the Sister-to-Sister project in Lamorinda for 15 years, to offer a multi-week program for female Joaquin Intermediate School students to work on communication issues and healthy relationships. The pilot program, called Communication Skills for Girls, was held in the fall; the Sister-to-Sister summit scheduled March 22 is a one-day opportunity for young girls to experience how to better navigate the emotional roads of middle school.

The programs offered are managed by high school facilitators local high school girls who can testify to the difficulty of middle school years and to the better times that lie ahead. They are trained by AAUW members year-round.

"The purpose of the six-week program at JM is to empower girls and raise their emotional intelligence," says Burgess. "It teaches healthy communication and relationship skills, raises awareness of nega-A Bentley Upper School junior tive cultural and social messages, and helps the girls to be resilient and proficient advocates for themselves and their peers." Burgess designed the program with Laura L. Wittenberg, a marriage and family therapist, based on their participation in the Rachel Simons' Boston Girls Leadership Institute

Fax: (925) 334-7017 Email: tvvc@theaterviewvetclinic.com www.theaterviewvetclinic.com 1 Bates Blvd., Suite 200, Orinda

"People who act mean are some-

Communication Skills for Girls ses sion starting in April. All the girls who participated in the first program have been invited to the March 22 Sister-to-Sister summit, held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the Bentley High School campus in Lafayette. For more information or to register, go to oml-ca.aauw.net/s2s/.



Save some WATER 'n save some **GREEN** this St. Paddy's Day with a re-circulating hotwater pump. There's one to fit your needs (pushbutton, timer-activated, full-time & more). No more water down the drain while you wait for hot water!

\$75 OFF!

re-circ systems*

*Expires 3/31/14 Provided &

installed by LeapFrog Plumbing.

We Hop To It! Family-owned and serving Lamorinda since 1993

green solutions!

VISA

-6600

www.LeapFrogPlumbing.com

Gas \$25 OFF! Water any plumbing job* Sewer

 Water Heater **Specialist**

Head Frog Mo

• 24/7 Service

MOFD Updates GIS Evacuation Maps

By Cathy Dausman



Uriel Garcia and Dennis Rein discuss evacuation routes in Orinda's Sleepy Hollow neighborhood. Their map is a print version of the GIS overlay system they are building. Photo Cathy Dausman

sually residents want to get into their neighborhood, but there are times, and situations, where the goal is getting out. A flood, wildfire or hazardous material spill may make a neighborhood uninhabitable and evacuation imperative. This is why the Moraga-Orinda Fire District is utilizing computer technology to preplan local evacuation routes. The goal is to update the MOFD area GIS, or geographic information system, allowing first responders to identify

safe exit routes and trouble shoot traffic control "choke points" - potential traffic jam locations - ahead of a real disaster, said Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Dennis Rein.

In 2013, Rein and MOFD intern Uriel Garcia worked to electronically note the location of the area's every fire hydrant, fire trail, and street. Garcia also uploaded parcel map information, the location of Central Sanitary (sewer) lines, East Bay Municipal Utility District water lines,

local creeks, streams, and other hazards. Gas main information from PG&E is yet to be added.

The job was a good fit for Garcia, who describes himself as "a big picture kind of guy."

This information, and much more, can be layered into the GIS system, the way celluloid pages built the "visible man" in printed reference books. Each layer can be turned on or off as needed. To illustrate GIS use, Garcia showed how a simulated fire might grow from the Bear Creek trail-along the shore of Briones Reservoir - and progress south toward Orinda's Sleepy Hollow School. The location was picked because Sleepy Hollow neighborhood will soon become one of Contra Costa County's first Firewise (wildfire community preparedness, www.firewise.org) communities.

"GIS is a lifestyle program; it needs to be kept up," Rein said. MOFD started its evacuation route mapping back in 2006-07 under then fire marshal Tonya Hoover, who is now the California state fire marshal. She said the initial effort was tied into the California Fire Safe program (http://www.cafiresafecouncil.org/), with data layers intended for use by fire service responders.

... continued on next page