

# New children's music station debuts at Freitas Park in Terra Linda

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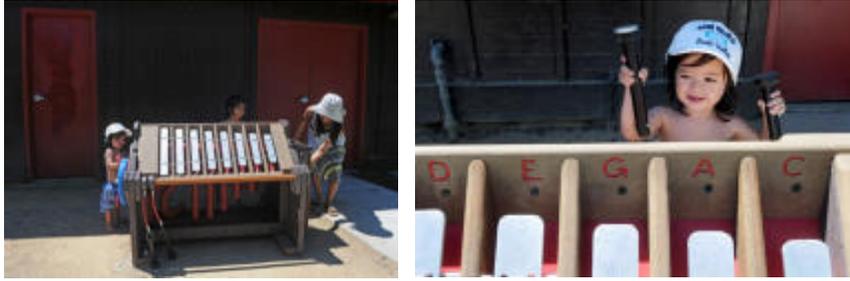
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Gianna Griggs, 2, and her sister Fallyn, 4, of McKinleyville play with a new music station at Freitas Park in San Rafael, Calif. on Thursday, June 28, 2012.



Rubber mallets are attached to a new music station at Freitas Park in San... (IJ photo/Alan Dep)



Terra Linda children can now spend the summer drumming, strumming and banging after city officials installed a new preschool music station at Freitas Park.

The station, installed earlier this month, features a marimba, metallophone, rain wheel and a set of two tongue drums, the Terra Linda Homeowners' Association said. The association raised about \$5,000 to finance the station, which also serves as a memorial to 15-year-old Emily Grace Panicacci, who died by suicide in October 2010.

"She loved kids and animals and music," said Reuel Brady, president of the homeowners association. "We wanted to do this for the family."

Brady said the structure, which bears a dedication plate with the word "Grace," has already proven popular with neighborhood children.

Last summer San Rafael officials installed a children's play structure at Freitas Park a decade after beginning a major renovation there.

In 1999 the city put in a series of water rings, as well as picnic and game tables, renovated the bathrooms and made disability access improvements, said Carlene McCart, the city's community services director. A wooden pirate ship play structure that former city parks supervisor Scott Tilden built in the 1970s delighted children across the street for many years but had to come out because it didn't meet the state's latest safety codes, McCart said.

"It doesn't generate a lot of noise, which was a relief for us," McCart said of the new music station. "It is a fun, interactive play piece."

Scott Panicacci said he believes his daughter, known as Gracie, would have loved the music station.

"From what I've seen of the music box, I think that whole thing is very, very reflective of her personality," Panicacci said. "She was very creative, very artistic."

The memorial "is something that makes us realize what a great community and what great neighbors we have," he added. "It's really touching."

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