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LARKSPUR ETIQUETTE CLASS

MISSED
MANNERS

Samual Lushtak learns to make eye contact and smile when shaking hands during Syndi Seid's Advanced Etiquette class at the Let Bank in Larkspur. At top is a table setting at the restaurant.

Father hopes
class restores
peace at dinner

By Joe Wolfcale

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CHRIS NEWHARD, a father of four youngsters, described the atmosphere around the family dinner table in Kentfield as pure chaos.

"It's just bedlam," Newhard said.

So he and his wife, Josie, took matters into their own hands this week and signed

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A student follows along with a posture exercise during Syndi Seid's Advanced Etiquette class.

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up 10-year-old Ryan for a two-hour seminar in etiquette for children and adults at the Left Bank restaurant in Larkspur. It was the second of two sessions offered by etiquette guru Syndi Seid as part of a program sponsored by the Ross Recreation Department.

Seid, founder and creator of San Francisco-based Advanced Etiquette, put 12 children and two adults through their etiquette paces with military precision Wednesday. It cost \$85 per person.

Newhard whisked up Ryan, a fifth-grader at Kent Middle School, from basketball practice and escorted the oldest of four boys to the rear of the restaurant where the seminar was being held in a banquet room.

"It's just constant," Newhard, who works in orthopedic sales, said of the household dinner scene. "Up and down, someone didn't get milk, others are standing up. We very rarely get a chance to sit around and have a good conversation."

Newhard hopes some of the communication skills and table manners Ryan picked up will "trickle down" to the other boys, especially during the dinner hour.

Seid's etiquette classes teach children and adults about the basics, including introduction, proper handshaking, eye contact and table manners during a three-course tutorial meal.

"The program is not much different than the things I teach corporate America," said Seid, who developed Advanced Etiquette, a business aimed at training and consulting in the business community and protocols on social etiquette.

Seid is a graduate of the Protocol School of Washington, D.C. She has nearly 15 years of experience and has trained thousands of corporate clients, including employees at Hewlett-Packard, Marriott Hotels and the Miss



At left, Seid Syndi introduces herself at the start of the class. Her program includes training and consulting in the business community and protocols on social etiquette.

LESSONS

Some etiquette tips from Syndi Seid:

► **Communication:** Use a firm handshake. Make good eye contact and smile. Introduce yourself using first and last name. Place your name

tag high on your right lapel.

► **Table Manners:** Allow the host to place napkin on lap and serve each course. Take small bites of bread, don't slather the butter. Do not slurp soup. Use fingers delicately.

Universe pageant, to name a few.

On Tuesday, another group of children and adults went through the same seminar at the Left Bank. The Ross Recreation Department sponsors regular etiquette classes and has worked with Seid for several years on etiquette training.

Students sat attentively in proper position, "shoulders back, chest out," while Seid went over how to sit and rise from a chair. Students were also presented with an Advanced Etiquette guidebook to take home.

"The one thing I know is you never put your elbows on the table," Left Bank hostess Elizabeth Davidman said. "I never knew a lot of this stuff when I started here. I've had to learn it."

While Ryan was learning proper etiquette at the table and the proper way to introduce himself and sit in a chair, Chris Newhard enjoyed an early dinner at an outdoor table. His napkin was folded neatly on his lap.

Server Maria Felgueiras said some customers get confused about which glass or silverware to use or where the bread plate goes.

"But I try and not make them feel uncomfortable," Felgueiras said.

For more information on Seid's etiquette classes, visit www.advancedetiquette.com. To contact the Ross Recreation Department, call 4553-6020.

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Girls listen intently as Lushtak answers a question on table manners posed by Ms Seid.