

Birthday Bash

By Sophie Braccini



From right to left: Mayor Federighi with Pierre-Francois Mourier, General Consul of France in San Francisco and his wife Rachel Lautherier-Mourier
Photo Sophie Braccini

The Lafayette Park Hotel had never witnessed such an historic event: General George Washington and the Marquis de La Fayette, both celebrating the Marquis' 250th birthday in the courtyard. The attending audience, about 300 French and American residents of the San Francisco Bay Area, didn't seem the least bit alarmed by the arrival of the General and Marquis and all cheered in honor of the French-American reunion.

The two young performers portraying General Washington and Marquis de La Fayette were part of the event jointly planned by the City of Lafayette and the San Francisco French Consulate and hosted by the Lafayette Park Hotel to honor the birthday of the French hero in the city that bears his name.

Mayor Carol Federighi read a letter from Governor Schwarzenegger honoring the memory of the French hero who came to the side of the new nation to fight for freedom and human values. The mayor spoke of the brave life of the young French aristocrat who at age 19 armed a ship at his own expense to join the American Revolution. A

life-long friend of George Washington, La Fayette advocated the American cause to Louis the XVI of France and eventually convinced the French King to send warships, ammunition and supplies to support the Americans.

Monsieur Pierre-Francois Mourier, the new French General Consul of San Francisco, reminded guests that France was the first ally of the United States and that the two countries share many of same values and democratic principles. "We are allies but not aligned," stressed the Consul, who assured the audience that the new French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, is not hesitant to be labeled "pro-American." Mourier also presented two documents to the City of Lafayette further commemorating the bond between the two nations. The first was a letter from the French Historical archive that was sent by the early US Congress to Louis the XVI, praising Generals Rochambault and La Fayette. The other was a recent resolution of the US House of Representative honoring the memory of the Marquis de La Fayette.



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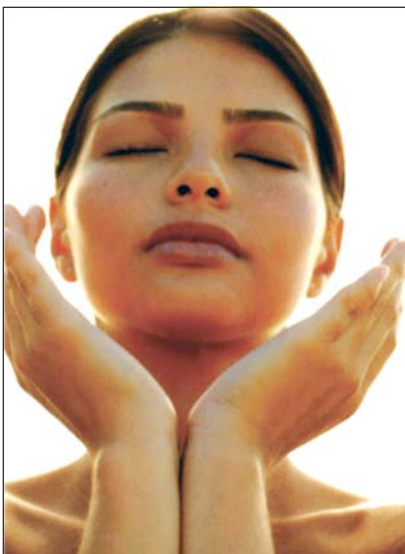
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