

Life in LAMORINDA

Saint Mary's "Focuses the Nation"

By Sophie Braccini

Steve Woolpert, Dean of Liberal Arts at Saint Mary's College, is one of hundreds of faculty members around the country engaging their institutions this month in "Focus the Nation," a project that coordinates teams of teachers and students at more than 1,000 locations to engage in a collaborative discussion about possible solutions to global warming.

"My hope is that Saint Mary's College can help our community confront the biggest challenge of our generation. We stand at a unique moment in human history. We are in a race against time to elevate global warming solutions to the top of the US political agenda," says Woolpert. "Decisions that are ours to make today

– to stabilize global warming pollution and invest in clean energy solutions – will have a profound impact not only for us and our children, but indeed for every human being who will walk the face of the earth from now until the end of time." Woolpert quotes Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger: "We know the science, we see the threat and we know the time for action is now."

Focus the Nation is an educational project. Each Focus team will invite local leaders and decision-makers to come to campus and participate in a non-partisan, round-table discussion of global warming solutions. During the last week in January, thousands of students on every participating campus, millions of students nationwide, will participate in workshops and panels, brainstorming global warming solutions. "In the next few years,

we as a nation will make, or fail to make, critical decisions regarding global warming, pollution and clean technology investments. These decisions will

co-director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources at Stanford University; Robin Bedell-Waite of Contra Costa Hazardous Materials and the Contra Costa Green Business Program; Dan Lashof, who received his PhD from UC Berkeley's Energy and Resources Group and is a senior scientist with the National Resources Defense Council's Air and Energy Program; and Rob Lucacher, Senior Manager for Facility Services and Sustainability with Mervyn's LLC, who has extensive experience managing environmental affairs, operations and sustainability for major corporations in energy, technology, defense and manufacturing.



have far-reaching and irreversible impacts on the lives of today's students and the lives of their children," explains the Focus the Nation team. "At this moment in time, we owe our young people at least a day of focused discussion about global warming solutions for America." On Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2008, Saint Mary's will host Focus the Nation: Global Warming Solutions for America. The event includes a daylong Eco-Fair and evening symposium. The Eco-Fair will be held in the Soda Center from 11:00 am- 5:00 pm, with green vendors, advocacy groups and nonprofit organizations working for a sustainable future.

A 7:00 pm Symposium will feature experts discussing the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change. The speakers will be Stephen Schneider, an internationally renowned expert in global warming who is

Scheduled to participate in the Eco-Fair:

Building Solutions Contracting, Calculate Your Impact, California Institute for Biodiversity, Chevron Energy Solutions, ClifBar & Co., East Bay Regional Park District, Everything Grows Interior Landscaping, Greenbelt Alliance, International Rivers, Life Garden, Low Carbon Diet (Acterra), Sustainable Moraga, Melaleuca: The Wellness Company, Natural Resources Defense Council, Parents for a Safer Environment, PG & E (electric car), Provocare Presentations, San Francisco Electric Vehicle Assn., Save Mount Diablo, Sierra Club, Bay Area Chapter, Slow Food East Bay, SMC Project Green, Sustainable Lafayette, TALC (Transportation & Land Use Coalition), Trendsetter, Village Green, World Centric

Raul Deju: A Man of Many Interests

... continued from page 6



Deju in front of one the quilts his wife Shari create Photo Sophie Braccini

Working with partners, he built the first environmental science and engineering company in America, International Technology. Later, he participated in the building of Chemical Waste Management, Inc., a subsidiary of Waste Management Inc. In 1997, he started ISG Resources with two partners, a company that took ash from coal-fired power plants and sold it as a cement and lumber substitute. ISG eventually handled 60% of the fly ash sold in the United States. He merged the enterprise with Headwaters, Inc., became President of the merged entity and grew it over two years to a \$1.8 billion enterprise.

When he decided to retire in 2004, nobody thought it would be for long. Indeed, he went back to his passion of growing and merging companies with his previous ISG partners, and some additional muscle from a Wall Street equity

partner. He is now the President and C.A.O. of Energy Solutions, Inc., a provider of specialized, technology-based nuclear services to government and commercial customers. The company's range of nuclear services includes engineering, in-plant operations, outsourced specialty services, spent nuclear fuel management, decontamination and decommissioning. The company, based in Utah, operates twenty-two reactors and ten sites in the UK. It is the largest single-purpose nuclear and waste disposal service company in the US.

Deju is an enthusiastic supporter of nuclear energy and he is not oblivious of the dangers. "Every form of energy has risks," he says, "mines, dams can all claim a terrible death toll." "We cannot ignore the challenge of the growing need for energy," affirms Deju. "One can either participate in the game and make sure to minimize

the risks or be passive and complain."

Deju travels all over the world and sees first hand the growing needs of economies in Eastern Europe, Asia, and South America. "The first thing to do is to maximize energy efficiency, use solar and wind," advises Deju, "but we won't be able to cover everyone's growing energy needs with just renewables and efficiency, or oil and gas for that matter. Those last two have all the negatives: cost, pollution, non-renewability. So you have coal and nuclear left. The footprint for a nuclear plant is much smaller than a coal operation and I believe it is safe." Deju is well aware of the risk of proliferation. "We can build nuclear fuel that can't be used for weapons," he explains, "especially if the country has a deal to send the material back for reprocessing. We can build nuclear energy without proliferation."

Moraga is where Deju calls home. "Moraga is a great place to live; everything is close by in the Bay Area and, more importantly, our friends are here. We've lived in the same house for twenty-one years. My wife Shari says that we're 'nesters.'"

Deju plans to spend more time at home in the future. "I believe in the importance of education and giving back," says Deju. Energy Solutions has a very active Foundation that provides about two hundred scholarships yearly to sophomores in towns where the company does business. His advice to budding entrepreneurs: "I'm a believer in global business. The key to success when you integrate different businesses and work on different continents is respect of the cultural ways. You don't create business in a vacuum, you have to listen a lot and work very hard."

The Party Was at Amoroma!

Submitted by Lesley Eckstein



littledog2 in front of the Rheem Theater

Photo provided

For the first time in decades, Moraga enjoyed its own New Year's Eve celebration, hosted by Ristorante Amoroma and the Rheem Theater. Long time Moraga resident and sports announcer Dick Callahan presided as emcee of the event, which featured littledog2, a rock band comprised entirely of Moraga parents – Eric Eckstein (drums), Dean Myatt (bass), Ric Hattabaugh (guitar), Dorothy Watson (keyboards) and Jane Daniel (vocals). In addition,

there were performances by stand-up comedian Jim Perry and folk duo Kelly Callahan and Eric Black. Local Moraga residents (including neighbors from Orinda, Lafayette and Walnut Creek) shared in spirited dancing, great food and beverages and a big screen countdown to midnight.

This first time event underscored a growing trend of Moraga-centric events featuring local talent in collaboration with local businesses and organizations. Mem-

bers of the Town Council, including former Mayor Mike Metcalf, mingled with Moraga Park Foundation members, including former Board Presidents Judy Dinkle and Howard Harpham, as well as residents of all ages, backgrounds and interests. Amoroma co-owner Hafiz Hadari stated his hope to continue to promote community events like this as well as private functions in the restaurant and theater, "It was a great success and I hope to make it an annual event."



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