

Eighth Annual Lafayette Jazz Festival

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John Santos Quintet at a past Generations In Jazz Festival

Photo provided

Friday, March 7th, "Jazz Singer and Swingin' Jazz"

Jazz and Blues stylist Jamie Davis will perform with his trio. Davis, the headlining vocalist with the Count Basie Orchestra from 2000 to 2003, will debut in Lafayette for the first time at the Bentley School Theater after an afternoon workshop for local student musicians at Stanley Middle School. Opening for Jamie Davis and his Trio will be Bob Athayde and his award-winning Stanley Jazz Messengers, a group of students from the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades of Lafayette's Stanley Middle School.

Saturday, March 8th, "It's all about the Rhythm"

The Wayne Wallace Latin Jazz Quintet, will be featured for a spirited performance highlighting his arrangements with Brazilian and Afro-Cuban rhythms. Born and raised in San Francisco, Wayne's name is synony-

mous with Bay area Latin/Funk jazz music. Opening the evening will be the 2008 Folsom Jazz Festival winners, Acalanes High School Jazz Ensemble directed by Rick Meyer.

Sunday, March 9th, "Honor that Jazz"

Sponsored by LASF and the Bill Graham Foundation, the fifth annual Contra Costa County Middle School Honor Jazz Band with Guest Director Ted Moore, followed by the sixth annual Contra Costa County High School Honor Jazz Band with Guest Director Frank Sumares will perform at the Acalanes Performing Arts Center for a matinee performance at 3 p.m. The brainchild of Mary Fettig, this group is comprised of the bay area's best student jazz musicians from local high schools and middle schools.

Tickets for the Eighth Annual Lafayette Jazz Festi-

val are on sale now at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. Tickets range in price depending on package. Bentley Theater performances will be \$7 and \$16. Shows at the Acalanes Performing Arts Center will be \$7. For ticket information, contact the Lafayette Chamber at (925) 284-7404 or visit their web site at www.lafayettechamber.org



Jamie Davis

Photo provided



Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writers and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and town (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only), and should be 350 words or less. Letters may be edited for length or legal considerations.

email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com;

Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Dear Editor,

As a parent of a child with special needs I was gratified to read the article by Jennifer Wake about Coach Verducci. He sounds like a wonderful coach and an even more wonderful person. It means the world to our kids to be included in sports activities and to wear a uni-

form and be treated as part of a team. I hope you will print more articles on people in our community who are trying to make a difference in the lives of special kids. Thanks for making my day.

Alice Piper, Lafayette

Saint Mary's College Mourns Loss of Beloved Professor

By Jennifer Wake

Hundreds of students, friends and colleagues gathered at a prayer service in the Saint Mary's College Chapel on Feb. 11 following the shocking death of long-time professor John Dennis, Ph.D. Dr. Dennis was killed at his home in Oakland on Feb. 9. He was 59.

At the prayer service, Brother Michael Sanderl described Dennis as someone who educated many minds and touched hundreds of hearts.

Dennis was a member of the Saint Mary's History Department, teaching a variety of courses including Modern African History, Roman and Early Christian Thought, as well as courses in the Graduate Liberal Studies Program. He was also director of the High Potential Program from

1993 to 2005. The program prepares first-generation college students (primarily Latino and African-American students from the Bay Area) for college through summer coursework, mentoring and enrichment activities.

Ironically, just last month, Dennis taught a January Term course entitled, "Beyond Death and Dying," which invited students to "view life and death through multicultural lenses."

In the course description, Dennis wrote, "America abounds in 'truth seekers' who have sought to know 'God' and the spirit-world first hand.

Whether triggered by a near-death experience, a life-altering spiritual encounter, an active dream life, a deep-seated quest for meaning, or the gift of ESP, they come to

see life in a new light. Like their Hollywood counterparts, this special group of teachers invites us to discover the power of the mind and the gift of the inner life. Most important, they want to teach us to value life, to discover our unique gifts and to love ourselves and others."

Dennis sought to "empower, enrich and inspire students to take time to revisit the losses in their personal lives and to explore the questions of the immortality of the soul and its need for 'salvation.'"

In addition to his 29-year tenure at Saint Mary's, Dennis also taught at City College of San Francisco. He earned a bachelor's degree from UC Santa Barbara and a doctorate in African History from Stanford University.

Shop Moraga First Launches Website

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"The Shopmoragafirst.com website is just what the Town of Moraga needs to improve communication between residents and the business community," says Edy Schwartz, President of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. "Before you can shop in town, you need to know what's available. Grant has created websites for Moraga businesses that make them more than a storefront that one just walks past. It gives details that surprise residents with what is available in their Town."

The site has over 100 visitors per day. Most of them are searching specific businesses and are coming from either Yahoo or Google. All the businesses are indexed in both Yahoo and Google. Simple listing is free for all Moraga Businesses; Chamber members get a free link to their profes-

sional sites. For \$15 a year, Chamber members get pictures, logo and a map to their location; non-members pay \$55 for a premium listing. Over 250 businesses are already present, in both shopping centers and office buildings; home businesses can be included in the directory by calling Stubblefield at 408-5428.

Stubblefield is a St Mary's alumnus who's always wanted to see a better synergy between campus and town, so a special section has been added to Shopmoragafirst.com where Saint Mary's students can find discounts and promotions. "The Town of Moraga has tried for



Grant Stubblefield wearing the Shop Moraga First button
Photo Sophie Braccini

many years to connect more with the Saint Mary's College community," adds Schwartz. "This is definitely a step in that direction." "Bridging this gap between those who live, work, and support Moraga, will create a union," hopes Stubblefield, "and together we can strive towards a stronger, more sustainable community."





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