



A New Lease on Life for the Rheem Theater

By Sophie Braccini



Tom Peterson



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Running a restaurant is not the same thing as running a theater. “The owners of Amoroma are the best at running a restaurant,” says Jim Sheehan, the new owner of the Rheem Theater lease, and we are professionals at running a theater. Separating the businesses was the best decision.”

Michele Lavecchia and Hafiz Hadari of Amoroma had run the theater for some time, but had been struggling and the lease was for sale. Theater savvy Sheehan and partner Tom Peterson have forty three years of experience in the theater business, and had been eyeing the Rheem for a while, thinking they could revive it.

“Moragans and neighboring residents are a highly educated and sophisticated population,” says Sheehan, “we believe we can offer a mix that will satisfy both the families and the adult residents of the area.”

The tandem will take control of Rheem on Friday April 25th, will close it for a week for repairs and will re-open on Thursday, May 1st for a preview of new the Paramount Pictures production, “Iron Man,” on the main screen. The following weeks will feature “Speed Racer,” “The Chronicles of Narnia” and the new “Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull”.

They will be showing three other movies in the smaller theaters.

“Our policy is to bring family movies to the Theater as well as “indies” and foreign films for the demanding audience,” says Peterson, continuing, “The closure of the Lafayette Theater has left an unsatisfied demand in Lamorinda and Ross-moor; we want to fulfill that need without sacrificing the family audience.” So we can expect to see the Rheem Theater feature all major audience films, Disney releases, plus specialty and international movies when they are available.

In the meantime, they will honor previous commitments such as the Green Movie Night on May 8th, part of Moraga Beautiful Week, starting at 6:00pm with wine and food and followed at 7:00pm by the film “Blue Vinyl.” The group is considering continuing “Italian Night,” that featured an Italian movie on the first Tuesday of the month, accompanied by Italian wines and munchies.

“We want to keep previous promises and be a part of the community,” says Sheehan. The team welcomes suggestions from residents, just send an email to: js@earthlink.net. They’ve already joined the Chamber of Commerce and have reserved a booth at the May 10th Community Faire. There, they will be offering two tickets for the price of one. Come early to get them, before they are all gone!