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Published November 26th, 2008

Lamorinda Holiday Calendar

Music/Concerts

Back Home Again, by Dan Wheatman and Randal Myler, the creators of Fire on the Mountain and Ain't Nothin' But the Blues, plays at the Leshner Center for the Arts from December 4 through December 14. It features modern and traditional holiday songs, as well as some of John Denver's most memorable hits, including "Thank God I'm a Country Boy," "Grandma's Feather Bed," and, of course, "Back Home Again." Special Event: Ticket holders for the Saturday, Dec 6th evening show are invited to a champagne & chocolate reception following the show, hosted by Duxiana. Tickets: Available online at www.LeshnerARTScenter.org, by phone at 925.943.SHOW or in-person at the LCA ticket office.

The resonant tones of the Sonos Handbell Quartet team up with the dynamic voices of the San Francisco Choral Artists for the perfect concert to welcome the holiday season at 8:00pm on Saturday, Dec. 6 at Saint Mary's College in Moraga. Suggested Donation: \$25 general; \$20 seniors (65+); \$12 Saint Mary's College faculty, staff and non-SMC students; \$2 SMC students. Call 925.631.4381 or visit www.stmarys-ca.edu for reservations.

Christmas Carols at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church December 6 & 7 at 7pm in the Sanctuary. Join the MVPC church family as we experience a heart-warming evening of your favorite carols led by the Chancel Choir, Worship Band, members of the Young People's Symphony Orchestra, and the Kingdom Kids Choir, under the direction of Dr. Mark Aaron Humphrey. 10 Moraga Valley Lane in Moraga.

Celebrating its 43rd year, WomenSing presents a holiday program, "O Holy Night," with a galaxy of choral selections. Led by Artistic Director Martín Benvenuto, and accompanied by Paul Caccamo, WomenSing is a 50-member auditioned chorus, based in Orinda. Wednesday, Dec. 10th at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, at 8pm. For ticket information go to www.womensing.org, or call 925-974-9169. Tickets: \$20 General, \$25 Premium, \$18 Senior, \$10 Student.

Lafayette Senior Services Annual Holiday Music Concert and Fund Raiser Fri: Dec 12th 1:30 - 3:00pm. Featuring Jennifer Carne, violinist and her musical partners, the music will encompass a wide spectrum of delights from Bach to Blue Grass to Folk. Join us for a festive afternoon of splendid music, light refreshments, caroling, and an opportunity to win raffle prizes. Bring your friends but call 284-5050 so we can plan accordingly. Live Oak Room, Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette, CA. Admission \$5 - funds raised support our Lamorinda Spirit Van Program.

Christmas Carol singing on Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24, St. Anselm's Church, 682 Michael Lane, Lafayette. Free.

Theater/Ballet/Shows

Jesus Hopped the A Train

This play uses the textual elements of television shows like Law and Order and HBO's Oz, while exploring the complexities of criminals and the crimes they commit. Runs from Dec. 5-14, in the Arena Theater. Tickets can be purchased by calling the DVC Box Office: (925) 687-4445.

Capa Holiday Nutcracker- Friday, Dec 12th – 7pm, Saturday, Dec 13th – 2pm & 7pm and Sunday Dec. 14th – 2pm. Tickets: www.capadance.net or 925-376-2454. Student Matinees: If your child's school class would like to come to a Student Nutcracker performance, please contact Nancy Falk at nancy.falk@gmail.com.

A Holiday Performance of "A Christmas Memory" at the Orinda Library Tuesday, December 9th, 7:00 -8:00 Actors Reading Writers returns to the Orinda Library for a special holiday performance of Truman Capote's short story "A Christmas Memory." Starring Thomas Lynch and directed by John Thomas. Sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library.

North Pole Review – Fratello Puppets Wednesday, December 17th, 4 p.m. Looking for a unique way to celebrate the holiday season? Join the fun with our puppet extravaganza, the North Pole Review, showcasing our frosty juggling penguin and Brazilian ice skating snowman. Featuring the Hawaiian singing sensation, the Hi-Fi Sisters. Moraga Library. Free.

Boutiques, Books & Art

Holiday Book Sale - Thursday Dec. 4 - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friends of Orinda Library Book Sale includes just-like-new books and collector's books ideal for holiday gifts as well as a wide range of good adult books and books for children from toddlers to teenagers.

Sorting room and Bookshop will both be open during the sale; Bookshop will be open until 6 p.m. Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda (925) 254-1358.

Dec. 7 & 8, Sunday & Monday, 9am-2pm, The Great Big Spectacular Chanukah Bookfair returns courtesy of the independent bookstore Clayton Books and the Temple Isaiah Library, 3800 Mt. Diablo Blvd (off Risa Rd) in Lafayette. There's more time to browse the books, plus attend an author presentation on Sunday with Lisa Goldstein, who wrote The Red Magician and other titles. Find the right book for gifting a child, a spouse, or the in-laws on your Chanukah list. A portion of bookfair sales will support the Temple Library's book budget. Public invited. No admission charge.

Santa's Bag Boutique-Lafayette Community Center-FREE. Eighteen years and still going strong, the Santa's Bag Boutique is a very classy event that keeps getting better. Now including 60 talented local artists plus the Lafayette Community Center Foundation's theme gift baskets which are donated by local businesses, organizations and individuals. Friday, 12/5, 11am-7pm and Sat/Sun, 12/6 and 12/7 from 9am -5pm.

7th Annual Overhill Road Holiday Boutique – Dec 5, noon - 8 p.m., Dec 6 & 7, 10 a. m. – 5 p.m. 214 Overhill Road, Orinda. Percentage of proceeds to benefit the Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Hand-crafted gifts and foods by local crafters. Free admission. 925-253-9065 or 925-254-3944

DVC Holiday Art Sale: Pottery, Jewelry, Prints and Photography by DVC faculty and students DEC 8-11th 9 am - 7 pm 321 Golf Club Road Pleasant Hill in the Trophy Room next to the Cafeteria \$2 Parking Fee. For Info Call 925 685-1230 x 2226.

Family Fun

A Holiday Art Walk will take place Dec. 6th in downtown Lafayette, 10am-6pm. Residents and visitors will take a walking tour of the downtown area visiting businesses who are hosting individual artists. This entrée to the holiday season allows shoppers to find unique artwork by local artists as well as to become acquainted with Lafayette's diverse business community. Sponsored by the Lamorinda Art Alliance and the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and the

Lamorinda Weekly.

Season of Light 2008, a holiday celebration at Rheem and Moraga Shopping Centers, sponsored by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, will take place Saturday, Dec 6th 11am-2pm. Start your holiday shopping and enjoy free entertainment, music, children's crafts and some special promotions.

Entertainment includes: The Moraga Adult Chorus, Dancing Christmas Trees, JM Choir, Campolindo Woodwind Quartet, Strings and Flute Quartet, Girl Scout Chorus, Jingle Belles and Beaus. There will also be a table for kids to decorate a pot for the holidays and face painting provided by the Be the Star Your Are Foundation. Take pictures with Santa at the Rheem Center. At 7:00 PM at the Moraga Commons, the Town holiday tree will be lit.

Hospice of the East Bay's 22nd annual Tree of Lights. Each light on every tree is symbolic of a life and will shine in honor or memory of a friend or family member. Please join any of the commemorative ceremonies to enjoy music, poetry, talks by local dignitaries and the special moment when the tree lights up.

Orinda: Sat., Dec. 6, 4:30 p.m. Orinda Village by Bank of America

Lafayette: Sun., Dec. 7, 5:30 p.m. Corner of Mt. Diablo and Lafayette Circle East

Moraga: Sun., Dec. 7, 5:30 p.m. Moraga Commons

Proceeds from Tree of Lights ceremonies benefit the patients and families in the care of Hospice of the East Bay. A suggested donation of \$20 per light can be made by sending a tax-deductible check to Hospice Foundation of the East Bay at 3470 Buskirk Ave., Pleasant Hill. To learn more, or to make a donation of time or money, please contact (925) 887-5678, or visit www.hospiceeastbay.org.

Live Nativity Scene - See the Christmas story come to life! The MVPC courtyard will be transformed into a Bethlehem manger. December 12 & 13 6-8:30pm on the Courtyard - Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane in Moraga.

The Bethlehem Experience - December 12, 13, & 14, 5:30pm to 8:00pm. Tour Guides lead groups of about ten people through the marketplace of Bethlehem on the night of the Messiah's birth, ending at the manger scene complete with live animals. The Bethlehem Experience is a feast for the senses: the smell of exotic spices, the festive sound of Jewish music, the sight of robed and sandaled merchants in their stalls, the taste of freshly baked unleavened bread, and the soft feel of flaxen "swaddling clothes". Lafayette United Methodist Church, 955 Moraga Boulevard, Lafayette. Tours begin every ten minutes and are approximately one-hour long. For questions call 925/284-4765, or go to www.thelumc.org.

Breakfast with Santa- Sat., Dec 13th: Join us for a once-in-a-lifetime breakfast with everyone's favorite North Pole resident...Santa Claus! Featuring eggs, pancakes, sausage, juice, milk, coffee and photos with the "Big Man" and lots of fun. Two seatings: 8:30 am and 10am. Hacienda de las Flores- 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga \$7 adult / \$5 children (12 & under) Presented by the Moraga Parks & Recreation Dept. Pre-registration required. (925) 888-7045 - www.moraga.ca.us.

Holiday Crafts

Holiday Crafty Storytime

Tuesday, December 2nd, 4 p.m. Holiday stories and crafts for ages 3-7. Moraga Library. Free.

Deck the Halls Thursday, December 4th, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Come make an ornament for our library tree and get in the Holiday Spirit! Lafayette Library. Free.

Gingerbread House Decorating Party! This event is a fundraising benefit for Habitat for Humanity East Bay, enabling more deserving families to have a home of their own this holiday season. Decorate two large cookies (\$5); Decorate a cookie for every member of your family and carry them home in a decorated bag (\$10); Decorate a pre-made gingerbread house with an extensive array of candies and fresh frosting from our decorating buffet (\$25); Refreshments in a souvenir mug with refill (\$5). Two events! Bring your family and friends! Kindly RSVP if bringing

a large group.

December 6, 2008, 10am – 6pm St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church 1601 Mary Drive, Pleasant Hill.

Sunday, December 7, 2008, 1pm – 5pm Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Volunteers are invited to bake cookies and assist at the event! Contact Megan Sallabedra at 510-251-6304 x311 or MSallabedra@habitatEB.org

Gingerbread House Decorating Workshop (ages 4 -8) Sat. Dec. 6th. Cost=\$38 residents, \$42 for non-Orinda residents Orinda Parks & Recreation, 26 Orinda Way. www.cityoforinda.org.

Dress Up Your Holidays with Origami

Sundays, December 7th and 14th, 3:15 - 4:15 Origami, the Japanese art of folding paper, can make for wonderful holiday decorations and ornaments. Join us at the Orinda Library for Origami Fun with Yuki Siegrist. No experience required and all ages welcome! Materials provided - FREE!

Holiday Treats for the Birds Thursday, December 11th, 7 p.m. create a party with Audubon Society members for your backyard birds by making nutritious bird snacks and decorations. Music and refreshments. Ages 5 and up. Additional support provided by Wild Birds Unlimited of Pleasant Hill and the Friends of the Moraga Library. At the Moraga Library - Free.

Holiday Family Craft Night Tuesday, December 9th, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Won't you join us at our 4th Annual Open House and get "crafty" for the holidays? Glue, cut and color as we listen to holiday music. Don't forget to take home everything you need to make a serving of "Snowman Soup." Girl Scouts from Troop 1883 will assist "little hands." At the Lafayette Library - Free.

Holiday Fantasy Ornaments (6-11 yrs) Dec 15th from 3:45 to 5PM. Cost = \$24.00 residents, \$27 for non-Orinda residents. Orinda Parks & Recreation, 26 Orinda Way. Call 254-2445 for reservations.

Tiny Tots Holiday Camp (4-8 Yrs) Lafayette Community Center Kids come join the fun and make holiday crafts while parents can finish that to do list! Please bring a lunch and we will cook our own snack. 12/22-12/23 9am-1pm \$72. Call 284-2232 for reservations or sign up at www.lafayetterec.org.

Tiny Tots Winter Camp (4-8 Yrs) Lafayette Community Center Let it snow ... kids will be warm and cozy and kept busy with winter crafts, fun games, and cooking projects! Please bring a lunch and we will cook our own snack. Mon & Tues: 12/29-12/30 9am-1pm \$70 + \$2. Call 284-2232 for reservations or sign up at www.lafayetterec.org.

Holiday Giving

The Toys for Tots Program accepts only new, unwrapped toys and toys in the original packaging. (Stuffed animals are allowed.) Donations are accepted through Dec. 13th
DROP LOCATIONS

Moraga: Fire Station 41, 1280 Moraga Way, Fire Station 42, 555 Moraga Rd, Huntington Learning Center, Rheem Ctr.

Orinda: Fire Station 43, 20 Via Las Cruces, The Framemaker, 19 Orinda Way, Curves Orinda, 2 Theater Square, #140, Orinda City Offices, 22 Orinda Way, Pacific Union, 8 Camino Encinas # 100

Lafayette: Fire Station 15, 3338 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Fire Station 16, 4007 Los Arabis Dr, Fire Station 17, 620 St. Mary's Rd

New or Used Stuffed Animals. S.A.F.E. "Stuffed Animals For Emergencies" Stuffed Animal Collection Drive 2008 The Moraga Police Officers Association along with S.A.F.E. is collecting new or gently used stuffed animals to help children through traumatic experiences. The stuffed animals are given to local police and fire departments to distribute to children they

encounter affected by fires, natural disasters, or the loss of a loved one. Some of the donated animals are even distributed by our troops overseas to children affected by war and poverty. **Drop off at Moraga Police Dept. Lobby** 329 Rheem Blvd. Moraga.

Gifts for Soldiers. Campolindo senior Justin Batchellor will be mailing care packages to soldiers who attended Lamorinda high schools, but are now stationed in Iraq and Afganistan. This started three years ago as part of an Eagle Scout project. Flat rate boxes, about the size of a small shoe box can be picked up at the post office, filled with goodies, and dropped off at the Campolindo school office on or before December 5, 2008. Contact Justin for more details about what to include and how to pay the \$10.00 shipping charge. justinbatch@msn.com or (925) 283-4280.

Bikes for Kids. Each year, Contra Costa firefighters assemble hundreds of new bicycles and deliver them as Christmas presents to children in our service area. This program is co-sponsored by the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa, Local 1230. For information about the Bikes for Tykes program, or to donate a new bicycle, call 925-941-3628. To make a tax-deductible donation, write a check to Bikes for Tykes and mail to 112 Blue Ridge Drive Martinez.

Bobbie and Tom Preston will be doing the "Cycle Recycle, collecting repairable bikes for refurbishing by the inmates at Marsh Canyon Detention Facility. The repaired bikes will be given at Christmas to under-privileged children throughout the county-Most needed are tricycles and junior bikes. New and/or used, repairable bikes may be delivered to the side driveway of the Preston's home through the month of November only: 1307 Larch Avenue, Moraga. (No need to contact the Prestons before leaving a bike, unless you need more information). For more information call 376-8474.

Books for the Library. In the spirit of giving that benefits the larger community, the Moraga and Orinda Libraries are participating in the free2give "Buy A Book" promotion this holiday season. Buying a book for your local library is a great way to help keep the library shelves full of fresh, new titles for you and your neighbors to enjoy throughout the year. Throughout the month of December, visit the Moraga or Orinda Libraries to see which books they have available for purchase as a holiday gift. For more information, call the Moraga Library at 925-376-6852, the Orinda Library at 925-254-2184 or visit ccclib.org.

From the Volunteer Center of the East Bay

www.helpnow.org

Gifts for Teens: A Teen Dream! SHELTER, Inc. works with many families to ensure that they celebrate the holidays. We want to make sure everyone is remembered for gifts and we need your help to do just that! Donate a teen gift to help create a memorable holiday for a teenager that has had a difficult year. Suggested Items: Gift card to retail stores, Lip gloss, make-up kits,MP3 players (inexpensive) Hand-held electronic games, Books, CDs, DVDs, Video Games, etc., Stationary, journals. Contact Theresita Ortiz, (925)957-7561 or theresitao@shelterincofccc.org.

Lap Blankets. The Skilled Nursing Residents are in need of new lap blankets for the winter. They use them when they are up in their wheelchairs to keep their legs warm. We are in need of all kinds: knitted, crocheted, quilted, store bought, etc. The only thing we ask is that it is machine washable so that they will not be destroyed when they go into our washing machines. It is a seemingly small item that can make such a large difference to the lives of our seniors. Merryn Oliveira, Project Director, (510) 434-2846,

Warm new hats, gloves and scarves for children, family board games, Basketballs, footballs, soccer balls and play balls. Anne Struthers, Coordinator, (925) 521-5062, VESTIA provides services and goods to low-income and underprivileged families, foster children, and adults when assistance is not available from other sources. Much of the work VESTIA does is focused on children and families with children. 400 Ellinwood Way, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

New Books For Children. New books in Spanish or English for children (5-6 yrs). These books will be given as gifts to the children during the holiday season. Since the children are all low income, many do not have books at home to read. Since language development and reading is critical to their school success, having quality books at home will help the children in school. Most of the children speak both Spanish and English. Contact: Judy Waggoner, Volunteer Coordinator, (925) 689-5151 ext. 201.

Adopt a family for Christmas: Our program will be adopting 70 families and will provide gifts of clothing and toys for the children and food for a holiday dinner along with a \$25 grocery certificate. Vickie Blomquist, (510) 223-3424

Children's Toys: The Women's Daytime Drop-In Center distributes gift bags to approximately 150 homeless and very poor children ages 2-11. Other than toys depicting violence, the children enjoy everything: art supplies, cars, dolls (dolls of color very appreciated), building sets, etc.) Toys should fit in a paper grocery bag and should not be wrapped.
Mel Simpson, Volunteer Coordinator, (510) 548-2884

Gift Cards: Gift certificates to Concord area grocery stores or large retail stores (Target/Walmart) are needed to assist families with their holiday celebrations. Most of the families using our center have hourly wages of \$8-\$10 per hour. They need assistance with basic living expenses so their holiday celebrations are gravely limited. Gift certificates will allow parents to make their own choices for their children. Judy Waggoner, Volunteer Coordinator, (925) 689-5151 ext. 201.

New or gently used Wii, PlayStation or Xbox Video Games, Digital Cameras and Laptops for foster youth. We have 5 homes with 6 kids to a home. Anything is appreciated and thank you. Youth Homes provides a safe and supportive environment 24-hours a day, seven days a week, in each of our five residential homes located in Concord, Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, CA . Our treatment programs, delivered by a professional and dedicated staff, touch the lives of over 200 children and families each year. Nedda Janatpour, Fund Development Associate, (925) 933-2627

Toys For Troops! Used And New. Please collect used/new toys, children's books, and educational supplies. These will be provided to military combat personnel creating peace in conflict areas. Nancy Harrington, 925-687-7701,

Underwear And Socks: Homeless and very poor women usually make do with donated clothing--except for socks and underwear. For distribution at our holiday party, new socks and underwear are a special treat. All women's and children's sizes needed, including sizes for big, beautiful women. Claudia Madison (510) 549-4390

Volunteering

See the Volunteer Center of the East Bay's web site for more holiday giving and to sign up for these and other volunteer opportunities: www.helpnow.org

The Salvation Army in Concord needs volunteers to help sort and organize toys and food for our main distribution. Pre-screened families will come to us on a set date to select toys for their children and pick up a box of food from us. We need help setting this all up the week before and then helping to distribute these on December 22, 8-3pm. Set up dates vary; 12/16 1-3pm, 12/17 1-3pm, 12/18 6-8pm, 12/19 6-8pm, 12/20 1-3pm. Some bending and lifting will be required. Working in a warehouse setting - lots of standing. On our distribution day itself you will be working with families as they come in. 3950 Clayton Rd., Concord.

Holiday Volunteer Tea Servers. Dec. 6-21 weekends from 10-5pm. We invite you to help at our 38th annual program. 4 hour shifts available. Serve tea in the Dinkelspiel Cottage. Be a mansion greeter & dress in costume.. Fourteen years and older. This opportunity is sponsored by: Dunsmuir Hellman Historic Estate www.dunsmuir.org

Christmas Day Homebound Visitor. Volunteers are needed on Dec. 25th to deliver food and presents (provided by CFE) to homebound and visit for a few minutes so that the homebound won't be alone on this special day. Requirements: Drivers license and insurance. At Full Gospel Church in Concord. Volunteers must sign up in advance to help on Christmas Day. No walk-in volunteers, please.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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