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Delivered bi-weekly to all
Lamorinda homes & businesses

Free

Volume 02; Issue 22

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Wednesday, January 7, 2009



Let's Dance at Rheem!

By Sophie Braccini

Just Like Old Times:

Big Band Will Overshadow Silver Screen for an Evening

Some of us remember, some of us don't, and some of us recall fondly that which we never lived. The worst of times can also be the best of times - put on hold the more trying events of the 30's and 40's and you have a generation's good old days, where the finest weekend evening's entertainment was to be found where ever the Big Band was swingin'. And on Friday, January 23, Moraga's Rheem Theatre is the place to be; at this winter's Big Band Ballroom Dance, featuring the Big Band of Rossmoor, all of Lamorinda is invited to come dancing!

Presented by the Generations in Jazz Foundation, the Big Band Dance has traditionally been largely a Lafayette and Rossmoor event. "We have held the dance at the

Veteran's Hall for the last three years," says Jay Lifson of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. "We wanted to try something different and get Lamorinda more involved."

Enter the art deco Rheem Theatre, which was built in 1955. One of the last "classic" theaters built in the Bay Area, the Rheem hosted live Big Bands and dances in years gone by. "We approached the Rheem Theatre and they were very interested," explained Lifson.

"It's a perfect venue for this event," says Theatre co-owner Tom Peterson. "When we rented the facility to the California Academy for Performing Arts for their dance performance I saw how well the staging works. For a Big Band it will be perfect. We already have

a large dancing floor, we will remove more seats and add tables; it will be pretty nice."

Maurice "Mo" Levich, Director of The Big Band of Rossmoor and one of the founders of Generations in Jazz, is looking forward to the performance. "As usual, we will be featuring students from Campolindo, Stanley and Acalanes," he says. "We always enjoy playing at a community event where all generations meet."

The Big Band of Rossmoor is an energetic Stage Big Band (a Stage band incorporates strings, clarinets and flutes to a classic Big Band) and young musicians are invited to share the stage with veteran professionals.

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Women's Basketball Counts

By Robin Schoettler Fox



Photo Jordan Fong

Interest in women's collegiate basketball is up, but attendance remains a challenge nationwide. Here, the Lady Gaels prepare to play the Cal Bears on December 29th in the Haas Pavilion, which that night had fan-seats to spare.

Make your ticket count for Saint Mary's College on January 24. Watch the Lady Gaels battle defending West Coast Conference (WCC) champions, San Diego, and help SMC win this season's National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) Pack the House attendance challenge. Tip off for what SMC calls Pack the Pavilion is 2pm.

Pack the House is the NCAA's second-year national effort to grow attendance for women's basketball.

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