

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

[Home](#) | [Read Online](#) | [Archive](#) | [Links](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Contact](#)

[printer friendly](#)

[download pdf](#)

Published February 4th, 2009

Lamorindans Witness the Obama Inauguration Up Close

By *Andrea A. Firth*



Orinda residents Dick and Gloria Marchick with daughter Patti Kogan on Inauguration day, 2009
Photo provided

With the Capitol building looming large in the background, longtime Orinda residents Gloria and Dick Marchick were situated up close to witness President Obama take the oath of office on a cold January day in Washington D.C. two weeks ago. "It was remarkable. Beyond belief. The event of a lifetime," says Gloria with unrestrained enthusiasm when asked to describe Inauguration Day 2009. "This was my Woodstock. My defining moment," she adds.

The Marchicks, Dick a retired obstetrics and gynecology physician and Gloria an English teacher who taught for the Acalanes Union High District for 22 years, had volunteered for the Obama campaign and purchased their airplane tickets to Washington well in advance of the election results. Up and out by 4:30 a.m. on Inauguration Day, the Marchicks, dressed in long johns and ski clothes, made their way patiently through crowds and long lines to access their ticketed seats. "We walked a long way among swarms of people," states Gloria, "but nobody pushed or yelled. Even while riding the packed Metro, people said excuse me," she adds.

The Marchicks' VIP seats were only a few rows from actor Dustin Hoffman, photographer Annie Liebowitz, and New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Despite the celebrity distractions, the Marchicks and everyone present were focused upon the history-making moment of the mid-day ceremony. "When he was announced as President of the United States, I have never felt such a tremendous surge of emotion. Everyone hugged. Everyone cried," says Gloria.

Eight Campolindo students were also part of the million-person throng on the National Mall in D.C. for the momentous Inauguration along with History teacher Molly Henrikson and parent chaperone Kathy Ranstrom. For the Campo crowd, the Capitol building was visible in the distance as they watched Obama take the oath of office on a large video screen. Like the Marchicks, the students had also committed to the experience before the election results were known, and despite their differing locations on the Mall, their Inauguration Day experiences were quite similar.

Senior Shannon Bruce described the feeling on the Mall as simultaneously peaceful and euphoric. "It could have been a pretty intimidating crowd considering the amount of people there, but it ended up being completely opposite; everyone was incredibly happy and calm," says Shannon. The Campo group spent seven hours outside in temperatures that dipped well below 20°F. But the cold weather did not have a negative effect on the day, according to senior Christy Dye. "It was really interesting," adds Christy, "It was such a calm crowd. You would expect more rambunctious behavior, but everyone was happy and excited. It was a really uplifting environment."



Campolindo students Mark Ranstrom, Darby Kerr, and Shannon Bruce on Inauguration Day, 2009
Photo K. Ranstrom

Reach the reporter at: andrea@lamorindaweekly.com

[Home](#) | [Read Online](#) | [Archive](#) | [Links](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Contact](#)

[back to top](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA