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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

Thirty-one years after the release of Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory the magic continues to live on through people like Zeina and Nabil Hissen, owners of Powell's Candy Shoppe in Lafayette. On March 14th, they made dreams come to life for the children of the Lafayette's Special Parents for Special Kids group. Recently Kathi, the mother of a sweet 6 year-old boy receiving special education services through the Lafayette School District, and a self-proclaimed big fan of the movie, contacted Powell's to see about a visit. This mom was joyfully surprised at the Hissen's response. Shortly after her call, her son received a coveted golden ticket in the mail, inviting him and several special friends for a before-hours private tour of the candy wonderland. The friends arrived full of wonder and excitement as a local Oompa Loompa guided them throughout the shop and even into the back, where the magic happens. The children received a gift certificate to share among themselves and they happily shopped for Powell treats. And, to top off the day, the friends got to meet Mike TeeVee from the original Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory movie! These special kids enjoyed a day they won't soon forget, thanks to Zeina and Nabil Hissen. It was magical for all. To learn more about the Lafayette Special Parents for Special Kids group, please visit www.ufp.com/lafspeced.



Photo submitted

J. Smith for Lafayette Special Parents for Special Kids

Dear Editor,

For Willow Spring Church, Easter Sunday will be a celebration of Jesus' miraculous resurrection, as well as the provision of their new building that will house Lamorinda's only church service expressly for youth.

In January of 2008, Willow Spring Church decided that their current facilities were no longer sufficient to provide for their current ministries, or for the future growth that God had for them. As the church prayed for an answer from God, a "dedication service brochure" from January 25, 1970 began to shape their prayers: they discovered that the original purpose and call upon the founders of Valley Church of Moraga was to "worship and serve God in this community." Knowing that

God would have to provide a miracle in order for the church to remain in Moraga, they decided to "walk by faith and not by sight." Through many subsequent miracles and trials (including a rejection letter from a bank that now hangs in the foyer of the new building), God rewarded the church's trust and gave them their new facility at 1675 School Street.

This acquisition will allow the church to continue their excellence in serving the community that God loves. Over the past year alone, they have served food to the homeless of Berkeley and San Francisco, entertained the elderly at Aegis of Moraga, cleaned up the Hacienda De Las Flores, donated gifts to the orphans of Haiti, served in Mexico with Rancho De Sus Ninos, and had over 200 people help wrap presents for the Bay Area Rescue Mission. It is because of these and many other efforts, that Willow Spring was honored to be voted the "Best Place to Worship in Moraga" in 2008 by the U.S. Small Business Association.

Zachary Diestler

Willow Springs Church, Moraga

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