

Not to be missed

ART

The Hearst Art Gallery at Saint Mary's College presents Gifted Hands: the Fine Art of Craft, featuring 90 objects by 15 major contemporary Bay Area artists through December 12. These artists transform glass, textiles, fiber, metal, precious and semi-precious stones, clay, wood, fallen logs, and sea shells into extraordinary works of art. On view are both functional and decorative objects: furniture, wearable art, jewelry, pottery, quilts, turned wooden bowls, and fabric and metal sculpture. The Hearst Art Gallery is open to the public Wednesday- Sunday, 11am-4:30pm. Suggested adult donation is \$4; free for K-12th grade students and Hearst Art Gallery members.

Reception Honoring Elementary School Artists at Lafayette's Town Hall Theater, December 11, 6:30-7:30pm. Fastframe of Lafayette has again sponsored "The Luck of the Draw", a collection of budding young artists' original artwork. Local school children entered their artwork in a drawing coordinated by LASF, and the lucky winners received complimentary custom framing from Fastframe. Call Fastframe owner Anthony Ruiz at 283-7620 for more information.

Through December 24 from 11am to 4pm, Winter Wonderland Annual Holiday Exhibit at the Lafayette Gallery, 50 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette. Painting, prints, photography, unique artistic ornaments, ceramics, watercolor and more. Special Trunk show with crafts on 12/11. For more information call (925) 284-2788 or go to www.lafayettegallery.net.

Celebrated artist Pam Glover has works on exhibit at Allison McCrady Fine Arts. The gallery is located in Orinda Theater Square, suite 130, hours are noon to 4pm Tuesday-Saturday, call for an appointment this time of year! For information call (925) 788-5866.

MUSIC

Friday December 10 from 1:30 - 3:00pm, Lafayette Senior Services presents the Devil Mountain Chorus for their annual Gala Holiday Fund Raiser event. This four part a capella group of male vocalists will celebrate the season with the LaDiDa Trio wrapping up the show. Refreshments and

raffle prizes. Funds raised go towards the Spirit Van Program that supports seniors who no longer drive. Tickets are \$3 for members and \$5 for non-members. Event takes place at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. For more information call (925) 284-5050.

Saturday and Sunday, December 11 & 12, 4pm Christmas Concert at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church: Tidings of Comfort & Joy. Featuring Finzi's In Terra Pax and Mechem's Seven Joys of Christmas with Beverley Jane Peatross, soprano, and Nick Hengl, baritone, and the LOPC Festival Choir and Chamber Orchestra. Caroling and other favorites, too! Admission is free but advance tickets are required, all 600 seats will likely get taken. Go to www.lopc.org or call (925) 283-8722 for information.

Voci Women's Vocal Ensemble, conducted by Jude Navari, presents "Voices in Peace X," featuring the Jupiter Chamber Players. Sunday, December 12-4pm Lake Merritt United Methodist Church, Oakland. \$20 general, \$17 students, seniors and groups, free for children under 12. Available at the door or online at www.vocisings.com. For more information call (510) 531-8714.

Sunday December 12, 4pm, Our Savior's Lutheran Church Choirs with special guests the St. Francis Choir of St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco under the direction of Dr. David Schofield. Enjoy a festive afternoon of choral and handbell music followed by a reception. Enjoy the choir at 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette (925) 283-3722.

Yours, Mine and Ours: Welcoming the Baby Together. A free concert of Christmas favorites, including an audience carol sing, featuring the combined singing and ringing choirs of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Lafayette, and St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco. Sunday, December 12, 4:00 pm at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane in Lafayette; More information at www.oslc.net

December 13, the East Bay Contra Costa Wind Symphony celebrates the holiday season in a festive concert of carols and other selections with the Contra Costa Children's Chorus, harpist Shannon Polley, vocalist Vanessa Anderson, guitarist Julio

Not to be missed

Reyes, and sports announcer Dick Callahan. 7:30pm, at the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette. Admission free. For more information go to www.ccwindsymphony.org.

THEATER

California Academy of Performing Arts presents "The Nutcracker" December 10-12 at Campolindo Performing Arts Center. With more than 100 performers and extra characters & surprises, dancers from five to eighteen years put on a brilliantly narrated full-length performance. For more information and tickets, please contact: www.cacadance.net or call (925) 376-2454.

The Orinda Ballet Academy & Company (Artistic Director, Patricia Tomlinson) will present "A Sweet Dream Nutcracker" in the Orinda Library Theater, Dec 10 - Dec 12. Both evening and matinee performances. Tickets for children & adults: \$15. Contact: Jane Black (925) 254-0877 or email: eg-black47@aol.com.

On Dec 11th, 2010, 11am, the California Independent Film Festival will screen "Christmas Story" at the New Rheem Theatre. This is an installment to their very successful and popular Classic Film Series. Scott "Flick" Schwartz will be on hand to do a live Q&A with the audience. Tickets are available at thenewrheemtheatre.com or box office of the New Rheem Theatre. Prices are \$12-Gen Admission; \$8 -Seniors, Students & Children.

S.T.A.G.E. Troupe, teen theater in Pleasant Hill, will present eight showings of the "North Pole Revue," an original holiday musical, from Dec. 3 -12, 2010 at the Winslow Center, 2590 Pleasant Hill Road. The teen actors come from all over Contra Costa County. The classic holiday show takes place at the North Pole, and features elves Jack and Dolly as they prepare for the holiday season. It also includes dancing reindeer and trees, and an appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus. This fun-filled holiday spectacular is appropriate for all ages. For more information or to purchase tickets (\$12 in advance or \$15.00 at the door), please contact the Pleasant Hill Recreation and Park District at (925) 682-0896 or www.pleasanthillrec.com.

The family favorite, Scrooge! The Musical returns to Town Hall Theatre in Lafayette this December. The Musical runs through December 19. For tickets and ticket information contact Town Hall Theatre Box Office at (925) 283-1557, or purchase online at www.TownHallTheatre.com.

Galatean Players Ensemble Theatre is celebrating the 15th Year Anniversary of the popular children's musical Whiskers! (an adaptation of Margery Williams' classic The Velveteen Rabbit) by Caroline Altman playing at the Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, Dec. 11-20. Tickets are \$10-\$15 and are available by calling (925) 943-7469.

The Peter Pan Foundation presents: "Twas the Opening Night Before Christmas," Sat., Dec. 18 (7pm) & Sun., Dec. 19 (1 & 7pm) at San Ramon Valley High School Performing Arts Center (501 Danville Blvd., Danville, CA). Tickets: www.peterpanfoundation.org. Proceeds benefit local charities - such as Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland, and others.

KIDS, PARENTS & TEENS

Kids & Connection: Personal and Emotional Safety in a Changing World. Thursday, December 9, 7-9 pm at the Lafayette Public Library- Arts & Discovery Center,

3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Panel discussion, Q&A, demonstrations and resources to aid parents in helping children develop healthy personal relationships. Topics include fostering resiliency and talking with children and teens about difficult topics, setting boundaries, and regaining emotional safety after stressful events. Presented by the Bay Area Psychotherapy Training Institute (BAPTI). For more information call (925) 284-2298.

Orinda Academy is offering an Open House for prospective families on Saturday December 11th from 1-4pm. There will be campus tours at 1:00 and an informational meeting at 1:30. Orinda Academy is a fully accredited college preparatory school for grades 7-12. Orinda Academy provides small classes and a 9:1 student teacher ratio, and they can accommodate students with learning style differences. Orinda Academy also provides arts, sports, academic coaching and college counseling. For questions, please call (925) 254-7553 x305 or visit www.orindaacademy.org.

Boy Scout Troop 246 Open House Bocce Ball/Wii Event. All Cub Scouts and boys ages 11 and older that are interested in scouting are invited to attend Troop 246's Bocce Ball and Wii afternoon of games. The event is Sunday, December 12th at 2pm. Please RSVP, and get directions, to jeannehuan-gli@gmail.com or Leslie Green at wess-njoe@netscape.net.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

5A's 3rd annual "Santa's Secret Wrapping Room" is free and open to the public through Dec. 24th. This decorated storage unit is set up with table, chairs, large rolls of wrapping paper, tape, ribbon - everything needed to get presents wrapped. This is especially handy if you're trying to wrap presents away from the recipient of a surprise.

The Lafayette United Methodist Church presents an interactive performance that takes you back through time. Tour Guides will lead groups of about ten people through the marketplace of Bethlehem on the night of the Messiah's birth. The program is a social event that emphasizes the spiritual meaning of Christmas. Performances 5:30-8pm, Dec. 10, 11 and 12. One-hour long tours begin every fifteen minutes. The last tour begins at 8pm. Freewill donation: \$5/person or \$20/family. For questions call (925) 284-4765.

Brad & Gloria Noggle, manager's of Moraga's 5A site, will host their 3rd Annual "photos with Santa" on Saturday, December 11th from 11am-3pm. Receive a holiday photo frame, visit with Santa, enjoy hot cocoa and cookies, and get paper & envelopes for children to write "letters to Santa." Everything is free and everyone's invited! They will also accept donations of gently used shoes for the Athletic Department at Saint Mary's, to help those less fortunate this winter. It's been a tough economy and the holiday celebration at 5A is their way of saying "thank you" to the entire community for the business that has been provided this last year. 5A Rent-A-Space is located at the corner of Moraga Road and Rheem Blvd. For more info call (925) 631-7000 or email moraga@5aspace.com.

Dechen Designs' 5th Annual Holiday Boutique & Gift Show. An exclusive trunk-show event with local artists and vendors of high quality gift items, featuring fabulous Himalayan Cashmere Shawls, silk scarves, jewelry, hats, fused glass art, skin care, cosmetics and much much more. Saturday, Dec. 11th 12-4pm and Saturday, Dec. 18th 1-5pm. Lafayette

Library's Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. Enjoy delicious holiday cider and gourmet treats.

Live Nativity at the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church on December 11, 5:30-8pm. See the Christmas story come to life! The courtyard will be transformed into a Bethlehem manger. Light refreshments will be served. MVPC is located at 10 Moraga Valley Lane in Moraga. Questions: (925) 376-4800.

The Bethlehem Experience: Performances 5:30-8pm, Dec. 10th, 11th, and 12th. This interactive performance takes participants back through time. Tour guides lead groups of about 10 people through the marketplace of Bethlehem on the night of the Messiah's birth. Tours begin every 15 minutes and take about one hour. The last tour leaves at 8pm, Lafayette United Methodist Church, 955 Moraga Road, Lafayette. Questions: (925) 284-4765.

Concert: Christmas on the Hill, on Sunday, December 12, 7pm. Experience a heart-warming evening of music celebrating a story that matters. The MVPC Choir and Worship Team, the Kurt Ribak Trio, the Kingdom Kids Choir, and soloists will lead us. MVPC is located at 10 Moraga Valley Lane in Moraga. Questions: (925) 376-4800.

At Unity of Walnut Creek's Remembrance Service, you can remember and honor your loved ones who have transitioned. The Remembrance Service will be held on Tuesday, December 14 at 7pm at Unity, 1871 Geary Rd., Walnut Creek. This annual event is open to all on a free-will donation based. More information about Unity of Walnut Creek can be found at www.unitycenter.net or by calling Unity at (925) 937-2191.

The elves of Saint Mary's College Guild will host their annual Christmas luncheon on December 16. All proceeds will benefit the student scholarship fund at the College. A reception will begin at 11am followed by a festive luncheon at noon. The cost is \$35.00 per person. Entertainment will be provided by the Contra Costa Children's Choir and our own Brother Martin will play Christmas music during the reception. All are welcome. For more information, please contact Pat McEnaney at (925) 376-3306.

OTHER

Every Wednesday through Saturday and New Years Eve - Diamond Dave from 9pm to 1am at Petars Pub. The adjacent restaurant has changed owners and has a new name - the Grape Leaf Restaurant, one of the few restaurants open on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, 32 Lafayette Circle (925) 284-7117.

Lamorinda Adult Respite Center (LARC) sponsors a free Caregiver Support Group the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Facilitated by Dr. Ruth Pease this group offers education, guidance and hope for those caring for loved ones who suffer from memory loss disorders. Everyone is welcome! Lamorinda Adult Respite Center, 433 Moraga Way, Orinda, CA 94563. (925) 254-3465.

Lafayette Garden Club will be meeting at 9:30am second Thursdays monthly, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane Lafayette. Dec. 9 is our Holiday Extravaganza! Our Christmas Party will be held at IL Fornaio in Walnut Creek. This function is for members only. Our January meetings will return to Our Savior's in Lafayette and visitors are welcome. For more information please contact, petersonb4@aol.com.

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"Scrooge!" — A Musical for the Whole Family



Based on the 1970 movie starring Albert Finney, Scrooge is a musical retelling of Charles Dickens' classic tale, A Christmas Carol. A family favorite, the play is returning this holiday season to Lafayette's Town Hall Theater under the direction of Jessica Richards, Associate Artistic Director at the California Shakespeare Festival. The shows will run December 2-19, with caroling in the lobby before matinees. Go to www.thtc.org for tickets and more information.

S.Braccini

John Blytt and Jennifer McFarlane
Photo Stu Selland