

Lafayette Resident and Katrina Rescue, Joey, Share Good Times

Submitted by Rochelle Holbrook



Photo Rochelle Holbrook

Katrina survivor, Joey, a dog that lost his leg due to injuries suffered during the devastating hurricane 10 years ago, is the loyal companion of owner Robin Hanson at Atria Park of Lafayette. Hanson contacted the nonprofit Best Friends Animal Society in Kanab, Utah, after receiving an alert from them following the hur-

ricane regarding animals in need of homes. Michael Hand of Best Friends brought Joey from New Orleans to Kanab with three other dogs and a cat. Hanson and his wife, Mary, traveled to Kanab to pick up Joey and return to sunny California.

Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions may be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

New Troop 224 Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Claire Phillips



From left: Keifer Wagener, Connor Virostek and Will Hirsh

Photo provided

Three members of Boy Scouts Troop 224 in Lafayette were honored at a National Eagle Court of Honor July 19 upon attaining the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in the Scouting program. Keifer Wagener, Connor Virostek and Will Hirsh are all seniors at Acalanes High School in Lafayette.

For his Eagle project, Wagener made duckling boxes for International Bird Rescue (IBR) located in Fairfield, Calif. Many orphaned ducklings in the surrounding Bay Area, including Lafayette, are brought to the Lindsay Wildlife Museum every year for initial treatment, then are transferred to IBR for continued care until adulthood and released back into the wild. This project allows more orphaned ducklings to survive and increases the local duck population.

Virostek's project benefited Lafayette Nursery School, a nonprofit parent participation preschool. He led the design, construction, and installation of an outdoor weather-resistant play

kitchen set comprised of freestanding stove and sink, and wood cabinets covered by a framed waterproof awning. This project was special to Virostek because he attended LNS as a young child and wanted to give back to his preschool.

For his Eagle project, Hirsh worked with the Lafayette Creek Committee and the City of Lafayette to install two informational signs along the Mt. Diablo Boulevard creek pathway that educate passers-by about the special permeable sidewalk pathway located there, as well as the native wildlife in the area. In addition, he organized a cleanup of the overgrowth affecting the creek area, which improved the health of the neighboring trees and made usable three sets of stairs down to the creek area.

Troop 224 has been a part of Boy Scouting in Lafayette for over 60 years, and offers a year-round program of activities, trips and camps. For more information, visit www.troop224lafayette.com.

Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com, and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.

Day Trippin' A Weekend in Yountville

By Fran Miller



Domaine Chandon property

Photos Fran Miller

Yountville has changed greatly over the 17 years in which my girlfriends and I have gathered annually in the tony 1.53-square-mile hamlet. With a front row seat, we've witnessed the town's elegant gentrification. Having dined at most of the restaurants, wined at many of the tasting rooms and local wineries, and meandered the sidewalks and back roads, we continue to be charmed by Yountville and all it offers. At less than an hour's drive from Lamorinda, one can easily make the trip in a day. But with so much to see, eat and drink, and with fall specials at the ready, why not make it a weekend?

Book a room at the North Block Hotel (6757 Washington Street) where guests are invited to eat, sleep, work and play like a Napa Valley winemaker. Modern, but oozing with old world charm, North Block is partnering with Rutherford's Round Pond Estate through October to provide a winemaker-led, hands-on experience. Help with the harvest, tour the facility, and taste Round Pond's estate wines with seasonal food pairings. Head back to the hotel for a swim in the lovely outdoor pool before enjoying dinner at the award-winning Redd Wood, famed chef Richard Reddington's second, more casual Italian-inspired Yountville restaurant, sibling to Redd.

Bardessono is easily Yountville's most luxurious retreat, and also its most "green." One of only three LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) platinum certified hotels in the country, Bardessono is proof that a hotel can be both indulgent and environmentally conscious. Bardessono guests are well respected in the valley and are afforded "access." Whether it is restaurant or wine tasting reservations, in-room spa treatments, chauffeur services, or a desire for a delicious, locally sourced, gourmet midnight snack from restaurant Lucy, staff will make it happen.

Yountville's main road, Washington Street has become home to numerous wine tasting rooms. A few standouts include Girard at 6795 Washington Street where tasting fees are waived for those staying in Yountville hotels. Enjoy a flight of their chardonnay and cabernet-based wines, which, you will learn in wine lingo, have both "power and finesse."

Silver Trident Winery's 6495 Washington Street location is like walking into a Ralph Lauren catalogue, and in fact, everything you see, from the furniture to the crystal wine goblets is for sale by Ralph Lauren Home. The Tuscan-style stone building with its intimate and beautifully appointed living room is a great spot to settle in for a relaxed tasting. New to Washing-

ton Street (6505) is Cornerstone Cellars where each Sunday through September from 3 to 6 p.m., local musicians serenade a crowd that receives two-for-one tastings.

Step off the main drag and enjoy some champagne (or officially, sparkling wine) at Domaine Chandon (1 California Drive), an easy and picturesque walk from town. The gardens and property are beautiful, but the tasting room does get crowded with fans of the country's number one premium sparkling wine. Domaine Chandon, opened in 1973, was the first French-owned sparkling wine venture in the U.S. Pair your bubbly with delicious handmade chocolates from Kollar Chocolates at the V Marketplace (6525 Washington Street), home to assorted galleries and boutiques. Chef Chris Kollar, recently named one of the top 10 chocolatiers in North America by Dessert Professional magazine, makes his chocolates in small batches in a glass show kitchen. A fall visit to his shop might reveal his Halloween and holiday creations.

Any article about Yountville would be remiss without mention of Thomas Keller and his restaurant empire. Yountville is home to four of his current 13 eateries nationwide: the famed French Laundry, Ad Hoc + Addendum, Bouchon Bistro and Bouchon Bakery, where a single macaroon imparts the Keller magic. There is delicious reason for the lines that spill down the street from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

Work off your weekend indulgences with a quiet back road stroll amongst vineyards and majestic oaks on Yount Mill Road. Start at Yount Cross Road, end at Highway 29, and head back again. This is Yountville as it used to be, and it's lovely. But the current version is pretty great too.



Domaine Chandon property

Submit stories and story ideas to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com