

MOVIE REVIEW

# 'Hail, Caesar!'

By Derek Zemrak



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The Coen brothers are back with their latest movie, "Hail, Caesar!" Joel and Ethan Coen have brought audiences many great films over the years, including but not limited to, "No Country for Old Men," which won four Oscars, including Best Picture in 2008, "The Big Lebowski" in 1998, which will be the Free Movie next month on Thursday, March 10 at the Orinda Theatre and one of my favorite films of all time, "Fargo" in 1996. This time the brother-directing team makes fun of the industry that made them household names. "Hail, Caesar!" takes place in the 1950s and is centered on a Hollywood "fixer," Eddie Mannix (Josh Brolin). In Hollywood at this time, the "fixer" was the one who would make sure the gossip columnists did not print any scandals that would damage the actors or studio in any way.

When Eddie, a family man, takes the job at Capitol Pictures he soon finds out it is a whole new world, as he must deal with the kidnapping of Capi-

tol Pictures' biggest star, Baird Whitlock (George Clooney). The Coen brothers like kidnapping storylines, as we have seen in their previous films, "The Big Lebowski," "Raising Arizona" and "Fargo." As if kidnapping is not enough to deal with, Eddie is faced with DeeAnna Moran (Scarlett Johansson) as the "Esther Williams" synchronized swimming star who is pregnant. The studio wants her to marry the dad-to-be, Hobie Doyle (Alden Ehrenreich), who plays a spaghetti western star. Add to the mix, the studio's highest paid musical dance star, Burt Gurney (Channing Tatum), who is also hiding a few big secrets. Sounds like a normal day in Hollywood!

Is "Hail Caesar!" the Coen brothers' best movie? No, but their movie meter is far higher than most Hollywood standards. "Hail, Caesar!" is worth the price of admission and the 1 hour and 46 minutes TRT. It is rated PG-13.

## Live Opera at the Rheem



Soprano Litz Plummer

Are you looking for something different to do at 7 p.m. in Lamorinda this Saturday, Feb. 13? How does a live opera concert sound? The Rheem Theatre is presenting Soprano Litz Plummer as she sings the greatest opera arias of all time, live at the Rheem. She will be performing music from Gianni Schicchi, Madama Butterfly, La Boheme, Le Nozze di Figaro by Mozart and Carmen by Bizet, among others. Hari Bayani will be Plummer's accompanist. Come experience Plummer's glorious vocal gift. Tickets are limited and recommended to purchase online at [www.lamorindatheatres.com](http://www.lamorindatheatres.com).

## ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

### OTHER

**Free Tax Preparation for the 2016 tax season is available** starting February 2016 from AARP's Tax-Aide and United Way's Earn It, Keep It, Save It (EKS) programs. All tax preparers are trained and certified by the IRS. While both programs serve taxpayers of any age, Tax-Aide does not have an income limit in whom they can serve but EKS can only serve individuals whose incomes do not exceed \$50,000. For general information and site locations, call: (925) 726-3199. For information on EKS sites call 211 or visit [www.earnit-keepitsaveit.org](http://www.earnit-keepitsaveit.org).

**Get Your Ashes Downtown (Lafayette and Orinda BART stations)** on Ash Wednesday from noon to 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10. Call Pastor Marylee (925) 789-7794 for the station/time most convenient for you.

**The Valentine Kitties R Coming! Take a chance on love** at Community Concern for Cats Special Valentine Adoption Weekend, Feb. 13-14. All kittens and cats are only \$75, down from the usual price of \$125, at Pet Food Express in Lafayette and Pleasant Hill, Petco in Walnut Creek. Hours are 1 to 4 p.m. except Saturday in Lafayette when it's noon to 3 p.m. For more info, visit [www.communityconcernforcats.org](http://www.communityconcernforcats.org).

**On the Bayou/New Orleans Style dinner and silent auction** at 6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 14 on the Saint Mary's College campus in Moraga. Music will be provided by the "and that's jazz" band from Alameda. The price for dinner and entertainment is \$45 per person. For info, call (925) 254-3645.

**Black History Month: freedom quilt craft and stories** from 4 to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 16, at the Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Road. For more info, call (925) 376-6852 or visit [ccclib.org](http://ccclib.org).

**Celebrate Chinese New Year: Lion Dance performed** by Contra Costa Chinese School at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23 at the Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Road. This free program is open to all ages, no registration necessary. For more info, call (925) 376-6852 or visit [ccclib.org](http://ccclib.org).

**Contra Costa Living presents Solar Energy Seminar - Top 10 things to**

know before you install solar from 4 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25 at Lafayette Veteran's Memorial Center, 3780 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette. You will learn about the top 10 things you must know before you invest in a solar energy system for your home. Free. For more info, visit <https://10thingstoknowbeforeyoubuysolar.eventbrite.com> or call (925) 297-5335 or email [Pete@ContraCostaLiving.com](mailto:Pete@ContraCostaLiving.com).

**Lafayette resident, Papa John Kiefer, will offer** workshops on "How to Raise Your Own Chickens." Topics will include raising young chicks, laying hen maintenance, and sustainable coop construction. Workshops are free and will be held in Lafayette from 1 to 3:30 p.m., on Sundays, Feb. 14 and 28. Reservations are required. For info, contact [jhkiefer@comcast.net](mailto:jhkiefer@comcast.net).

**Men "of a certain age" (semi- or fully-retired) are invited** to hear a presentation from Linus Eukel who is the Director of the John Muir Land Trust during the SIRs regular lunch meeting at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, Holy Trinity Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga. SIRs welcomes new members. For details, visit [www.branch174.sirinc2.org](http://www.branch174.sirinc2.org) or call Tyler at (925) 284-5561.

**Sons In Retirement - Las Trampas Branch 116** welcomes guests to socialize at its monthly luncheon beginning at 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 15 at the Walnut Creek Elks Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive. The speaker will be SIR Joel White, physician, who will explore the concept of shared-decision making in medicine in his presentation entitled, "What you need to know and do unless you are certain you will live forever." The presentation will help attendees create better options and make choices that can comfort and enhance our experience even to the end, providing not only a good life but also a good end. Please call (925) 322-1160 to make lunch reservations. Cost for lunch: \$15.

**Ready to give your brain a boost? Join author** of "Strengthen Your Mind," Kristin Einberger, for a workshop on the benefits of stimulating your brain and ways to strengthen your mind on Friday, Feb. 19 in Lafayette. You'll be engaged in brain games and activities that will stimulate your mind,

memories and senses. Workshop is open only to individuals with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), early stage Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia, and their care partners. Cost: \$15 per participant. Pre-screening is required. Exact time and location will be provided upon complete registration. For more information or to register, please contact Lan Trinh at 1-800-272-3900 or [ltrinh@alz.org](mailto:ltrinh@alz.org).

**Mindful Aging at the Moraga Library: Aging in Place** and Universal Design at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 20. Robineve Cole, Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) will share how to remodel and prepare homes so they can be beautiful and practical as we age, as well as for family members of all sizes and abilities. Learn how to make changes big and small, on your own or with the assistance of a designer or builder, using Universal Design concepts.

### GARDEN

**The Moraga Garden Club meeting will be held** at the Holy Trinity Church, 1700 School Street, Moraga, at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 18. The speaker will be Linda Mizes, who will be giving a presentation entitled, "Habitat, It's for the Birds, the Bees and It's for Us." Interested parties are welcome for the 9:30 a.m. social time, marketplace table and meeting at 10 a.m.

**Montelindo Garden Club meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 19** at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 66 St. Stephens Drive, Orinda. Visitors welcome. Presentation: "Incorporating Succulents Into Everyday Garden" by Rebecca Sweet, owner of the garden design company Harmony in the Garden, author, and speaker.

**Registration for the Sunday, May 1 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour** is now open! This year's tour will fill; register now to reserve your place. A variety of bird- and butterfly-friendly, pesticide-free, water conserving, low maintenance gardens that contain 60 percent or more native plants will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 1 at various locations throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties. More than 40 garden talks will be scheduled throughout the day. For info, visit <http://www.bringingbackthenatives.net/registration-p1>.

**Join LOPC for Ash Wednesday Service**  
February 10 • 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary  
The season of Lent begins!

Pastor Jaime Polson will deliver a sermon, "Give Me Eyes to See," taken from Isaiah 58:5-12  
All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

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## Service Clubs Announcements

**Rotary**

Explore Lamorinda Rotary clubs The heart of Rotary is our clubs- dedicated people who share a passion for both community service and friendship. Learn about Lamorinda's Rotary clubs.

**LAMORINDA SUNRISE Rotary**  
Friends, Fun, Service Above Self

We meet Friday mornings at 7:00 am at **The Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa**, 3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. For more info, please email us at [lamorindasunrise@gmail.com](mailto:lamorindasunrise@gmail.com)

<b>February 12:</b> A visiting New Zealand Rotary couple describe life on a "small" stage	<b>February 19:</b> Ron Olwin, St. Mary's professor of Astronomy/Astro Physics, back by popular demand
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**New Zealand Wine Exploration, exquisite hors d'oeuvres, \$50 Sunday March 6, 4 PM, Lafayette Library...to benefit Families Without Borders**

## Lafayette Rotary Club

**Step in on a Thursday and join us for our lunch meeting.** Thursday at noon Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.

<b>February 18:</b> John Coleman from East Bay MUD will be speaking about the drought situation.	<b>February 25:</b> Peter Brooks will talk about the White Pony Express
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We are dark on February 11.  
[www.rotarylafayette.org](http://www.rotarylafayette.org)

## Lamorinda Weekly

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