

Lafayette Inventor Shares Secrets on Raising Kids to be Problem-Solvers in New Book

By Kara Navolio

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Jim Marggraff speaks at Nov. 29 Rotary Club meeting in Lafayette.

Photos provided

When Jim Marggraff was 4 years old he was placed in a special education class because he stuttered and had a droopy eye. He almost didn't finish college at MIT because, as a child of a single mom, he couldn't afford the tuition. Marggraff, a Lafayette resident since 1998, went on to become an inventor, entrepreneur and author. The guiding principal in all his work is finding ways to make the world a better place.

Marggraff spoke at the Lafayette Rotary Club Nov. 29 about his involvement with Rotary Club's Virtual Reality projects (he is a member of Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary) and his new book "How to Raise a Founder With Heart: A Guide for Parents to Develop Your Child's Problem-Solving Abilities," which was released in November and achieved a No.1 New Release ranking within the category of "Family Activities" on Amazon in its first week of publication. It's a subject he knows much about. Marggraff has invented many products including LeapPad and the Livescribe smart pen and owns 36 patents. He has started many companies and sold them to the likes of Google and others. He advises companies and was inducted into the Entrepreneur of the Year "Hall of Fame." Every new invention starts with what Marggraff calls a "Problem To Solve". "The correct PTS has to be identified," stated Marggraff. "Many times we aren't focusing on the right problem."

But beyond being a founder of companies himself, he and his wife MJ have raised two children who also have taken the problem-solving mindset to their own careers.

Their son Blake, an Acalanes High School graduate, is running his second start-up at the age of 26, Epharmix. Epharmix provides digital intervention messaging to reduce re-hospitalization of patients by increasing their compliance in behavioral and medical therapies. In 2011 the Marggraffs' son and friend Matt Fedderson, also an Acalanes graduate, won the Gor-

don E. Moore global prize for the Intel Science Faire for developing a treatment for cancer.

The Marggraffs' daughter Annie, age 24, started a nonprofit called StepAhead to help autistic youth. University student athletes are paired one-on-one with autistic children in a running program. The benefits to the children are being studied by a leading autism researcher at Washington University St. Louis and will be published soon in the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Their daughter is a finalist for the 2018-19 Westly Prize, which honors young social innovators in California with novel solutions to community challenges.

Marggraff stated of his book, "If you would like to guide your children, or grandchildren, to develop

skills for positively impacting the world, with a well-developed sense of ethics, empathy, confidence, resourcefulness and creativity, please enjoy the stories, suggestions, and simple science of 'How to Raise a Founder with Heart.' You'll likely find yourself laughing, crying, and taking away some ideas that you'll use immediately and will help you further bond your family and help your kids."

All profits from the sale of the book will be donated to the Rotary Club's charity works, Rotary International, The Gratitude Network, and The Team Gleason Foundation.

What's next for the serial entrepreneur? He is working on a new PTS – social isolation. "Many people do not get daily personal or deep connection with other people. This is a huge problem as social isolation leads to depression," explained Marggraff. The specifics of his newest invention, using artificial intelligence, are still top secret, but both he and his wife are working on parallel solutions. MJ Marggraff is pursuing her Doctorate at University of Southern California on developing a counter measure for the psychosocial issues encountered by astronauts during long duration space flights. "MJ's work and my exploration for a parallel solution on earth to address the increasing conditions of loneliness and isolation are based on the concept of creating the world's first AI Social Agent. While it might seem that technology might be part of the problem, rather than a solution to social isolation, the proper application of any technology, designed around a well-specified 'PTS' (Problem To Solve) can positively impact human performance, cognition, and emotion," adds Marggraff.

To learn more, visit www.jimmarggraff.com.

"It's a tremendous pleasure to read a book written for parents that will help them establish a mindset of problem-solving, empathy, and limitless potential in their children. Jim has nailed it."
—Tony Robbins

HOW TO RAISE A FOUNDER WITH HEART

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS TO DEVELOP YOUR CHILD'S PROBLEM-SOLVING ABILITIES



Yoga

The restful but surprisingly difficult pose has people lie on their backs, legs spread roughly 18-inches apart, arms open and palms facing upward. "It was nice to rest in school and not be stressed," he says. The primary benefits to his football performance, he says, were increased flexibility in his hips and – due to challenging one-foot poses – improved balance and footing on the field.

Of course, with holiday gift-giving season, there's definitely yoga bling to consider. Flashy or functional athletic leisurewear is available everywhere, from large department and sporting goods stores to specialty dancewear boutiques to online.

But which accessories are helpful? Watson says she's "enthralled"

with a yoga wheel from Clever Yoga that has increased the flexibility of her spine. Therabands strengthen the feet, an area of the body not always emphasized by yoga. "I also find bolsters helpful when teaching – to find comfort amidst uncomfortable, long-held postures."

Other ideas with safety in mind include yoga blocks for stretching during challenging poses (Yoga Outlet offers a Hugger Mugger cork version for the eco-minded) and foam rollers, lacrosse balls or acupressure balls (bodyback.com has a spiky version for \$6.45) for self-massaging sore muscles. Yoga straps used for some poses can be purchased or fashioned using a scarf or fabric belt.

Footwear is yoga's final fron-

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tier and for that, this former professional dancer offers a sure-to-please suggestion tested directly. Apolla Performance Wear is a company founded by three dancers who sought to prevent injuries in the feet of dance artists and sports athletes. The Apolla Shocks line includes socks with no-slip traction that allows a person to feel the floor and provides ergonomic, targeted compression that supports and controls inflammation in ankles and metatarsal arches. They are comfortable and safe to use on typical dance flooring. Having tried a number of "no-slip" socks, I found the Apolla Shocks worth consideration. Now, to decide the what, when and where. ... I wonder, does anyone offer tree yoga?



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10 Irwin Way, Orinda

- **Sacred Music**
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- **"Come As You Are" Pageant**
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- **Carols**
Sing your favorite and classic Christmas songs
- **A Christmas Message**
- **Candlelight Closing**
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