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Food, wine, art, and music were enjoyed by throngs of festival goers Sept. 17 and 18. Peter Pan Foundation singers Jordyn Foley, Leticia Bennett and William Foon (pictured middle left) performed Sept. 17 at the Festival.

Photos Jeff Heyman

25th Art & Wine Festival brings Lafayette to life

For the past 25 years, give or take a few years off for a pandemic, the Lafayette Art & Wine Festival has drawn up to 85,000 people to the downtown core for two days of music, food, art booths and fun. This year was no different and seemed exceptionally striking following the years of small crowd sizes amid COVID restrictions.

Folks arrived pushing kids in strollers, walking dogs on leashes, gathering in large groups at the

four large music stages, or meandering through the sea of artisan tents, and food and beverage stations along Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Lafayette Circle. Music and laughter filled the air – a wonderful respite from the quiet of the streets just two years ago. Some sprinkles and a couple of downpours Sept. 18 didn't douse the enthusiasm of festival goers.

Planning for the festival, which is produced by

the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the City of Lafayette and Eckerstrom Productions, begins a year in advance, with an army of volunteers involved in the event's execution. One Lafayette resident, Marilyn Finn, who lives on Lafayette Circle put it best: "It was great to see Lafayette come to life." – J. Wake

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Election forums offer opportunity to question candidates

By Jennifer Wake

None of the three organizations endorse or oppose any candidates.

At press time only three of the six candidates for the Lafayette School District governing board – Rob Sturm, Katy Foreman and Dave Smith – had confirmed their participation in the Lamorinda Homeowners Council and League of Women Voter forums, and only five of the seven Acalanes Union High School District governing board candidates had replied to outreach from forum organizers regarding their involvement.

Lafayette School District board candidate Neils Larsen in a Sept. 23 social media post announced that he was stopping his campaign, citing politically charged attacks on social media and an ugly and destructive process. "I'm just a Dad who wanted to help my community and provide another perspective on how to improve our public schools," Larsen wrote.

Ballots have been printed and so it is too late to formally withdraw from the election, but anyone elected who doesn't wish to serve, doesn't have to take the seat. Any open seats following the Nov. 8

election would be filled by appointment. "We appreciate everybody who runs for these positions, and all the time these folks put into these positions, without pay," said Lafayette Homeowners Council president Bill Bucher. "That's how Lafayette runs ... with volunteers."

- The following forums are scheduled to begin Oct. 3 with several others scheduled through Oct. 20:
- League of Women Voters Diablo Valley forums**
- Oct. 3 – Lafayette School Board**, 7 p.m., Stanley Middle School Multi-purpose Room, 3455 School St., Lafayette
- Oct. 6 – Orinda City Council**, 6 p.m., Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda
- Oct. 12 – Acalanes Union High School Board**, 7 p.m., Del Valle Education Center, Room 401, 1963 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek
- Oct. 13 – Moraga-Orinda Fire District**, Districts 3 and 4, 6 to 7 p.m., Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda
- Oct. 13 – Orinda Unified School District Board**, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m., Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda.

The format will include brief candidate state-

ments followed by questions. Questions may be submitted in advance by email to voter.services@lwvsv.org.

Lamorinda Homeowners Council Candidates Nights on Zoom

Oct. 13 at 6:30 p.m. - Brief presentation by recently reappointed City Council members Teresa Gerringer, Susan Candell and Wei-Tai Kwok, followed by questions and answers.

Oct. 13 at 7 p.m. - Candidates for the Lafayette School District School Board will have introductions, comments and then a Q&A session open to all participants.

Oct. 20 at 7 p.m. - Candidates for the Acalanes Union High School District will have introductions, comments and then a Q&A session open to all participants.

Participants can log onto Zoom via Lamorinda Homeowners Council website: lafayettehomeownerscouncil.org. A Zoom link will be added on the website approximately one week before events. On the evening of the event, double click on the link to join the online forum.

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