

Town Hall Theatre presents film in honor of International Women's Day

By Sharon K. Sobotta

International Women's Day is on March 8 and Town Hall Theatre is honoring the day with a 7 p.m. screening of '100 Years from Mississippi' with Director Tarabu Betserei Kirkland and Nobuko Miyamoto, who appears in the film. Miyamoto will be signing copies of her book "Not Yo' Butterfly" ahead of the show between 6-7 p.m.

Kirkland's film centers around the life of his mother, Mamie, who, at the age of 108, travels back in time and space to Mississippi, the place she fled at the age of 8 due to the threat of lynchings. Kirkland weaves together the threads of Mamie's life as a woman who, after being widowed at a young age, provided for her children as an Avon lady, and the lived history that seeps back into the ugliest part of America's

past.

Kirkland says this is an important film to watch while celebrating International Women's Day.

"There are countless 'sheros' in towns and villages around the world whose lives and everyday legacies form the backbone of powerful movements through their extraordinary commitment and vision of how the world should exist and walk that reality every single day. It is an honor to celebrate the life of one of those sheros (my mother)."

Town Hall Theatre Managing Director Dennis Markam says that it's important to honor ordinary yet extraordinary women like Mamie Lang Kirkland, the star of Kirkland's film and others within our own community. "It is important to remember that

women's lives intersect with all the other elements of who they are. Their life and identity is also affected by their race, their nationality, their religion, their gender expression, and countless other things. I think as we recognize International Women's Day in our own ways, we also have to recognize the complexity and diversity of the lives of women."

Miyamoto will read an excerpt from her book "Not Yo' Butterfly" dedicated to Mamie Lang Kirkland to start the film and Tarabu Betserei Kirkland will engage in a Q&A following the film. There will be a no-host bar and time to mingle with the guests as well as a chance to buy signed copies of Miyamoto's book.

To reserve your seat, visit www.townhalltheatre.com/100-years

Poll workers prepare

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"Our primary focus for poll worker training in the Presidential Primary Election is to ensure poll workers understand and know how to issue the correct ballot to the voter," she said, as well as returning the ballots received and casted at the polls securely back to Martinez.

County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar Kristen Connelly, appearing at the Feb. 12 Lafayette City Council meeting, further affirmed the significance of the upcoming election.

"In my first year in office, there was one message that I got over and over again from my counterparts around the state: that the March 2024 presidential Primary in California is going to be the most complex in the history of the state because it is the first we are mailing a ballot to all registered voters in a partisan presidential primary," she said.

Connelly has undertaken a significant outreach effort to enlist council members in 18 cities and jurisdictions throughout the county, like the visit to Lafayette, to raise awareness about the upcoming election.

The youth voter, notably the 16- and 17-year-olds, is one category she hopes to make inroads. This includes an exten-

sive effort to pre-register them, which is allowed under California law, which her staff undertakes when visiting schools during High School Voter Education Week each September.

"Research shows that if you can get a person to vote three elections in a row, they are more likely to become a lifetime voter," Connelly said.

Early voting and drop box info

Now that ballots have arrived in the post to registered voters, there are options to cast them before March 5.

There are 704,567 registered voters in the county, and 90-95% of ballots are cast as Vote-By-Mail (VBM) ballots. Return of these is split evenly between secure drop boxes and United States Postal Service.

Early voting options include putting them in 24/7 drop boxes located in Moraga (1500 Saint Mary's Rd.), Orinda (22 Orinda Way), and Lafayette (3477 School St.), or sending ballots through traditional mail.

An early voting polling station will be open at Walnut Creek City Hall on March 1, 2 and 4.

On Election Day, all area polling places are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Where your polling place is located can be found at www.contracostavote.gov and clicking on My Voter Information under the Services tab.

John A. Coleman is 73rd Lafayette Citizen of the Year

John A. Coleman marked 50 years of service to Lafayette this year, since in 1974 he earned the rank of Eagle Scout from Scouts BSA Troop 243, launching him into a life of community service.

The Lafayette Chamber's volunteer selection committee chose Coleman as Lafayette's 73rd Citizen of the Year for his decades of service to our community.

The 2024 Citizen of the Year Dinner honoring Coleman will be held on Thursday, March 28 at the Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa. Reception with no host bar from 6 to 7 p.m.; dinner at 7 p.m.; evening ends by 9 p.m. Seating is limited. Dinner ticket link and more information can be found online at <https://lafayettechamber.org/coy>. - provided by Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

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The Lafayette City Council is soliciting applicants to fill several volunteer positions.

- Citizens Advisory Committee to CCTA
- Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District
- Crime Prevention Commission
- Emergency Preparedness Commission
- General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)
- Planning Commission
- Public Art Committee
- Senior Services Commission
- Transportation & Circulation Commission

For additional information on these volunteer positions visit the city's website lovelafayette.org/volunteers or e-mail cityhall@lovelafayette.org

Positions open until filled.