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More than a Fan

By Mikaela Cowles



Dr. and Mrs. Howard Rose of Moraga "It's more than being a fan. It's family." Photo Andy Scheck

Saint Mary's games a perfect family outing. The Higgins' were the first women's season ticket holders, and as John puts it, "I didn't even know women played basketball. What better thing is there for a father and daughter to do together?"

Many fans have become integral parts of player's lives. The Higgins went so far as to house one of the women's basketball players when she had finished playing and was in grad school.

Both the Higgins and Roses stress profusely the quality of people who are part of the Saint Mary's family, both fans and players alike.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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As Saint Mary's basketball programs have taken off, there are few in Lamorinda who are unaware of the teams. The men's program has received ample coverage with 29 ESPN televised games during last season alone. With name-worthy players like Olympian Patty Mills and the women's Louella Tomlinson, first in the nation in single season blocks, McKeon Pavilion has become the place to be. The increased success has not ruined what makes this small school's games so unique. Men and women's season ticket holders, John and Linda Higgins, say "It's the same quality basketball without the big time atmosphere." With easy access and competitively low prices, Saint Mary's basketball offers locals the chance to become part of the college community. Dr. and Mrs. Howard Rose, season ticket holders of 35 years say, "It's more than being a fan. It's family."

Before the game, fans greet their neighbors with chit-chat and smiles. During the game their hearts rise and fall with the team and after the court is littered with fans and players talking over the game and catching up. The Roses' say, "our closest friends have been through Saint Mary's." Raising their kids by the sweaty court, they firmly believe in the basketball community and its impact on the youth and the surrounding area. The positive influence of quality role models, who are easily accessible to children, makes