#### LAMORINDA WEEKLY

## Life in LAMORINDA **Grassroots Efforts Key to Political Success**

### **By Jennifer Wake**



Precinct Coordinator Carol MacNulty and Precinct Outreach Worker Dick Immel turn in "Turn Moraga Blue" door hangers to Lamorinda Democratic Club Town Co-coordinator Karen Couric. Photo Jennifer Wake

ormer Governor Massachusetts Michael Dukakis spoke to more than 200 attendees on Feb. 25 at Saint Mary's College, describing presidential elections on a whole as "becoming like a movie - a bad one."

"We sit on our cans and only half of us go out to vote," Dukakis said. He believes the answer to who will win the democratic nomination and ultimately who wins the presidency will depend upon grassroots efforts. "My party has forgotten how to do precinctbased grassroots organizing."

But he likely had not met the members of the Lamorinda Democratic Club.

Since last fall, The Lamorinda Democratic Club's precinct outreach program, the first of its

istered voters showed 60 more Democrats than Republicans in the former Republican bastion, with 4,019 Democrats (39.24%) and 3,959 Republicans (38.65%) among Moraga's mately10,200 registered voters, according to the club. "We went about it to build

community: To have one-on-one talks about politics on the doorstep," Kahn said.

approxi-

volunteers who spend nights and

weekends knocking on doors of

registered Democratic voters in

Moraga to discuss issues like Inter-

national relations and healthcare.

And their outreach is working. Just

prior to Super Tuesday, on Feb. 5, the Contra Costa County list of reg-

In addition to the precinct volunteers in Moraga, the program has expanded to 64 volunteers in Lafayette (with a goal to have 300 by the fall), and 15 volunteers in Orinda (with a goal to expand their circle to 250).

So far, Kahn said the response from residents has been one of polite interest. "We've been surprised at how pleased people are to talk openly about political issues," she said. "They know they are talking to kindred spirits.

Governor Dukakis said that if we go out ringing doorbells, once we get involved in the process, we stay involved. "If anybody does this kind of work, they win elections," he said.

When a Saint Mary's stu-

### "Moonlight" Delivers Laughs

Moonlight and Magnolias Plays at the Lafayette Town Hall Theatre By Cathy Tyson

kind in Lamorinda, has spent count-

less hours reaching out to Moraga

Democrats and Independents with

Kahn and Karen Couric, along

with John Hall and Laura

Winslow of Lafayette began a

steering committee in early 2007

to get outreach workers in every

precinct in Moraga, and recently

began outreach efforts in

cause it was more of a Republican

town and we wanted to get over

the stigma in Moraga that it was al-

most impolite to talk about poli-

tics," Kahn said. "A lot of

progressive voters in the area had

the mistaken impression that they

the membership has built to 131

Since the program started,

were the only ones."

"We started in Moraga be-

Lafayette and Orinda as well.

Moraga residents Marie

a goal to "turn Moraga blue."



Michael Patrick Gaffney playing legendary producer David O. Selznick in n Hall's Moonlight and Magnolias Photo provided

wrap The Wizard of Oz and Screenplay Writer Ben Hecht, are locked-in for five long days to save the movie. In real life, they were allowed to leave, and didn't have only bananas and peanuts for sustenance.

Highlights include the characters portraying GWTW scenes in order to hash out the hopefully new and improved script. Victor Fleming, played by Patrick Edwards, had the audience in stitches as he portrayed Melanie giving birth on the sofa. Gaffney as Selznick, alternating

dent asked why more campaigns don't do more grassroots organizing, he explained, "Most campaign consultants have never rung a doorbell in their lives. Obama lost New Hampshire because he had a lousy grassroots organization, and [Senator Clinton] out-organized him. If the Democratic party doesn't get involved, it's going to lose again." Kahn is happy with the

precinct program's success. "We've shown people that they can become involved in the political process, and what we do at the grassroots level does matter," she said. "The stakes are so high we need to make our voices heard in as many ways as we can."

The Lamorinda Democratic Club plans to expand its outreach program through November to further increase registration. Volunteers can join the effort on the Club website: www.lamorindademoclub.org.



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•• Moonlight and trace lias" is a hilarious look at the backstage story of Gone With the Wind (GWTW). As the curtain rises, the audience sees the interior of David O. Selzick's office circa 1939. Michael Patrick Gaffney, who plays Mr. Sleznick in all of his agitated glory, reveals a complex character, part megalomaniac, part persuasive charmer. Having recently fired George Cukor as director and unhappy with the latest of many versions of the

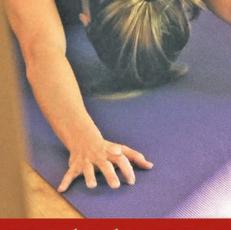
complex script, Selznick is desperate to get the picture back on

track, or risk financial ruin. That's where the fun begins. Although the play by Ron Hutchinson borrows heavily from real life, GWTW actually was put on hold for two weeks; he took some dramatic liberties to pump up the story. The play takes place entirely in the movie mogul's inner sanctum where our three main characters, Selznick. Director Victor Flem-

ing - pulled off of the soon to

between Scarlett O'Hara, Ashley Wilkes and Prissy, brought the house down. Elias Escobedo as Ben Hecht notes that he hasn't read the book, and keeps reminding us that no Civil War movie ever made money. The trio gave new meaning to slapstick as they "practiced" Scarlett slapping Prissy from a number of angles, while wrestling with the dilemma of a white woman abusing her African American underage maid.

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