

Life in LAMORINDA

No Snow, but still a *White Christmas* at Orinda Theater

By Andrea A. Firth



Miramonte High School's Chamber Choir performed at the Orinda Theater before the *White Christmas* screenings Photo Ohlen Alexander

Although the snow and sunshine from earlier in the week had turned to rain and overcast skies, locals were able to vicariously experience a "white Christmas" at the Orinda Theater on Saturday, December 12th. Over 300 people attended two packed screenings of the classic movie musical *White Christmas*, which was sponsored by the California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF). Santa Claus made an appearance in the theater lobby so younger moviegoers could get their requests in early for what they hoped to find under the tree Christmas morning, and the Miramonte Chamber Choir added to the festive atmosphere with their performance of several holiday tunes. "We were thrilled with the response we received for this event," said Beau Behan, Program and Promotions

Director for CAIFF. The *White Christmas* screening was the second in a series of monthly classic movie events the CAIFF plans to host leading up to the four-day indie film festival in April. "We are very excited about having the film festival in Orinda," stated Behan. "The reception that we have received from the community has been fantastic." Next month, the CAIFF will screen the Academy-award winning 1975 film *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Oscar-winner Louise Fletcher, who played the tyrannical Nurse Ratched in the film, will attend the screening and participate in a question and answer session and VIP reception. Tickets for the January 16th show are available at the Orinda and Rheem Theaters and the film festival website, www.caiff.org or call 925-277-1355.

Creekside Toddlers Take a Fieldtrip

Submitted by Nelita Inzerillo



Photos provided

On Wednesday December 9, 2009, Creekside Toddlers ventured out into the wilderness of Moraga. Crossing the street to the Las Trampas parking lot, nine preschoolers along with owner/teacher Nelita Inzerillo and staff member Helen Holobetz visited Sue Renno's tree lot

to bring in a little Christmas cheer. Renno added to the learning experience by teaching the preschoolers how to tell the age of a tree by looking at a piece of the cut trunk, and gave the children a tour while encouraging them to smell and touch the beautiful Douglas furs.

Holiday Sing Along at the French Bakery



Left to right: Christine Vota, Mark Shaw and Jen Carne Photo Cathy Tyson

You can't go wrong with "Jingle Bells," a cozy night, warm cider, cookies and the trio "All Strung Out" performing the first annual Holiday Sing Along at the French Bakery on Lafayette Circle. With front man, realtor and violinist, Mark Shaw along with

bandmates Jen Carne, also on violin, and Christine Vota on cello, the lively string trio - which is usually a quartet but one member was unable to attend - provided rousing accompaniment to the full house that really was singing along. C. Tyson

Moraga's Holiday Home Decorating Contest Winner

By Sophie Braccini



The Ginley Family holiday decorations on Hetfield Place in Moraga Photo Rick Ginley

On the night of December 17th, four members of the Moraga Women's Society set out to judge the homes that participated in the first Moraga Holiday Home Decorating Contest. "We had such a great time seeing so many beautiful homes driving

around Moraga," said Judge Nancy Comprelli, "but the one at 10 Hetfield Place was magical and won first place."

The judges thought that this particular set of decorations had a theme that appealed to all ages; it also had music and included a na-

tivity scene, reminding visitors of the original meaning of Christmas. Second place went to the house at 83 Lynnwood Place, which featured a magnificently decorated tree. The third place went to 1320 Larch Ave. for the elegance and simplicity of its dec-

oration. An honorable mention was given to the residents at 54 Merrill Circle North for their unique inside decoration.

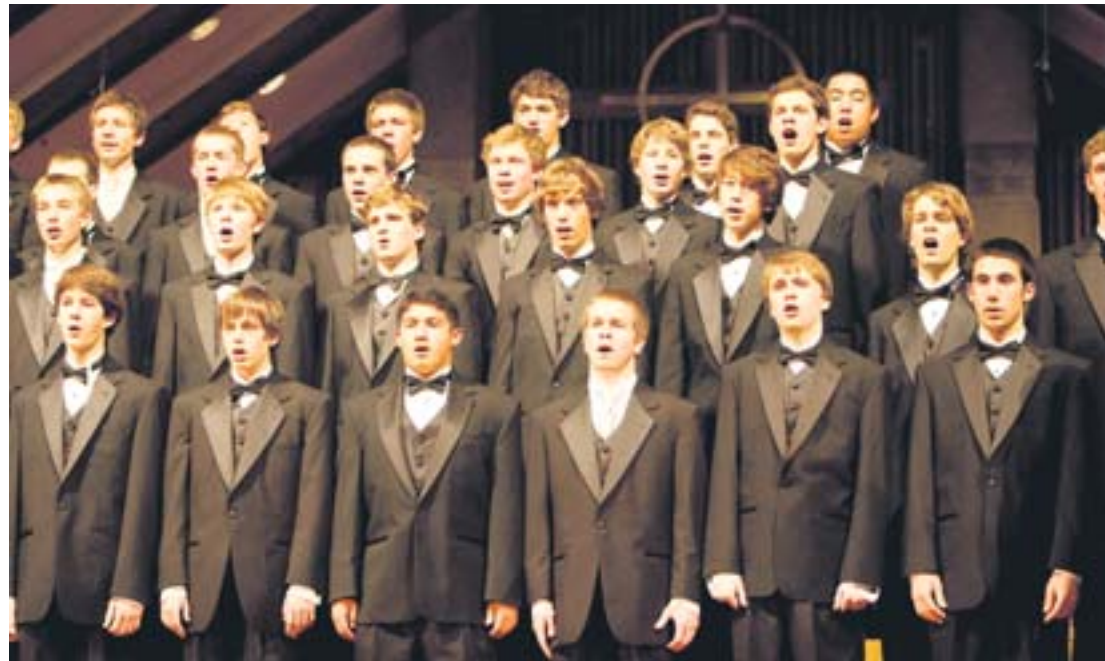
"We hope that more homes will enter the contest next year," said Comprelli, "and maybe we could add a neighborhood or street category."

"I want to say thank you to all the Moraga homes that participated in our first Holiday Home Decorating Contest, sponsored by Moraga Parks and Recreation and Moraga Hardware and Lumber," said Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram. The Director, who organized this first contest to encourage the Holiday spirit, promises to make the contest an annual tradition. The winners will be recognized at the Town Council meeting on January 13th. The first, second and third place homeowners won gift certificates to Moraga Hardware and Lumber.

Holiday Concert

The Campolindo Concert Choir and Chamber Singers performed a holiday concert at the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church on December 16th. A. Firth

Photos Doug Kohen



Erika Henningsen, grade 12



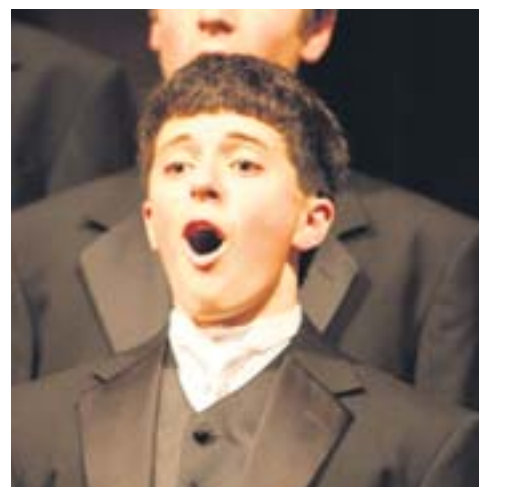
Forrest Bagley, grade 12



Laura Diestler and Ben Rudolph, both grade 12



Josephine Tseng, grade 11



Robby Bisel, grade 12