## A Feel-Good Lafayette **Chicken Story**

**By Sophie Braccini** 



Shelly Digiovanna with the Apartments' chickens Photo Sophie Braccini

he code in Lafayette regard- Boulevardd. Not aware of city commercial districts and on properties of less than an acre, there shall be no chickens. If you live in an area not allowing farm animals, the City can, and does, ask you to get rid of your feathered when she got a note from Code friends within four days.

That's what happened to the bins to remove them.

ing chickens is clear: in regulations, and with the support of (most of) the tenants and their children, Shelly Digiovanna installed a chicken coop with 13 chickens and was sharing upkeep and eggs among the tenants, Enforcement Officer Mark Rob-

olation," Robbins said, "then I have to act to enforce the City municipal code."

In desperation, Digiovanna contacted Lafayette resident Papa John who teaches chicken upkeep classes and knows the municipal code inside and out. He suggested contacting next-door property owner Temple Isaiah, which has enough land to accommodate livestock. After a few emotional days during which Digiovanna discussed options with the City and tried to find a solution, Temple Isaiah, which is zoned to accommodate chickens, was happy to provide a piece of land and work out a mutually-beneficial arrangement.

"We have a piece of property adjacent to the apartments' vegetable garden that we do not use," said Michael Liepman, Executive Director at the Temple. "It was not a difficult decision for us to make." He added that the new coop will not be a long-distance field trip for the children of the Temple's pre-school. "We are happy we saved Acalanes Apartments' chickens and the coop will also benefit the children."

"We at the Apartments will continue to tend to the chickens and we will be able to double their number," said Digiovanna. "There will be plenty of eggs to share."

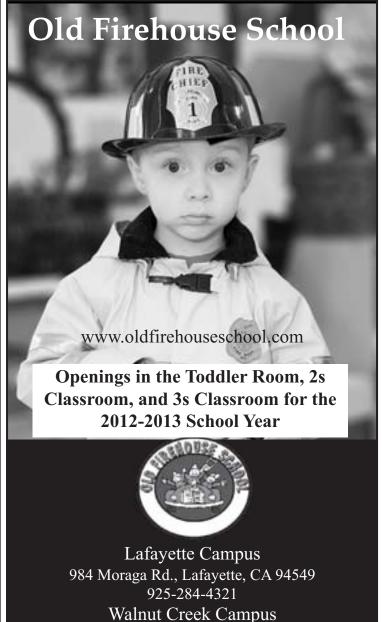
"I'm happy that a good solution was found," said Robbins. "When residents started working with us toward a solution we could apply some discretion in the implementation of the code, as long as there was no immediate hazard." Robbins added that he has noticed an increase in chicken activity in Lafayette. This year alone he's received about 20 chicken complaints in Lafayette and in some cases people had to remove the fowl. "People are free to try to petition to change the rules, but as long as the code is the way it is, we will enforce it," he said.

Residents can find more infor-





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resident manager of the Acalanes

"I typically act when a com- mation about the City's municipal Apartments off Mt. Diablo plaint is filed or if I observe a vi- code online at ci.lafayette.ca.us.

## Spunk: A Powerful Cal Shakes' Production

**By Lou Fancher** 



Aldo Billingslea as Sweet Back, Omoze Idehenre as Girl, and Tyee Tilghman as Jelly in Cal Shakes' SPUNK, directed by Patricia McGregor Photo by Kevin Berne

mettle.

The 16th century term, de- sional theater. rived from "metal" and suggesting a steely determination Orinda's Bruns Amphitheater, recharacterized by fearlessness and freshingly comfortable on a day formance and why eight of the Director Patricia McGregor has

7 ith *Spunk*, an adaptation finest actors working in live theby George C. Wolfe of ater today formed the cast. Seathree tales by writer Zora Neale son after season, Artistic Director Hurston, Cal Shakes proves its Jonathan Moscone's company raises the bar of local, profes-

substantial grit, explains why with soaring temperatures apmost of the seats were filled at a proaching the century mark, wasrecent 7:30 p.m. weeknight per- n't the sole cause for celebration.

assembled a terrific ensemble: actors whose stellar individual performances are only eclipsed by their ability to surrender their lead for the good of the whole.

The stories, cloaked in The outdoor setting of Hurston's savory dialogue and sharpened with the writer's uncanny, opaque transitions, are spicy. Jubilant clapping in one moment becomes harsh, abusive slapping in the next.

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