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## Luna Perpetuates the Legacy of Lamoreem Gymnastics and Expands

By Sophie Braccini



Lisa Bond-Nelson teaching young gymnasts in the new facility Photo Sophie Braccini

The large gymnastics floor opens out into a brightly lit room with panoramic windows on two sides. The feel of Luna Gymnastic is very cheerful, especially compared to the austere setting of its predecessor Lamoreem Gymnastics. The faces remain the same; Wayne Clark and Lisa Bond-Nelson are still there. But there's been a role reversal: Bond-Nelson bought the business from Clark and now he works for her.

Lamoreem Gymnastics was a pillar of kids' fitness in Lamorinda for 28 years. The waiting lists were always long, even at the five-year old level. Former owner Wayne Clark is a respected local figure and parents appreciate that he is continuing to be part of the new company. "I was just getting tired of the management part of the business," he said, "I still love teaching gymnastics and this new structure just allows me to do that."

"Wayne was not going to continue (the business)," said Bond-Nelson, "I had been teaching alongside him for six years and could not let go of something that is truly part of the community. We now have second generation kids coming, and I just enjoy working with Wayne so much." So the young woman, who has been living in Moraga since 1994, decided to become a business owner.

Bond-Nelson is a dancer and a gymnast. She received her Bachelor's degree from UC Davis and is passionate about teaching life skills and healthy living. She is working on a graduate degree at San Francisco State. "I love teaching young children," she said, "gymnastics has so much potential for teaching kids positive values, I just had to step up."

"My first managerial task was to find a new place for the gym," explained Bond-Nelson. She said that the lease was expiring at the old location behind the Rheem Shopping Center and the owner wanted to increase the rate in a proportion that



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didn't make any business sense to the new owner. Luckily the owners of the large stand-alone facility along Moraga Road in the same shopping center were ready to negotiate; the new facility is larger and more practical for the installation of the material and teaching of classes.

Luna is continuing the format offered by Lamoreem. There are recreational gymnastics classes, starting at kindergarten-age, from beginner to advanced levels. The more motivated students enter the intensive team program that trains its members for competitive levels. "We can have more students in this new location and easily conduct two classes at the same time," says

Bond-Nelson.

"The good thing is that this year they didn't have a waiting list and I was able to enroll my daughter," says Jessica Zur whose youngest daughter, Elise, has joined the team.

As for Clark, he continues to teach with the same rigor and pas-

sion, "I've loved doing it for twenty-eight years," he said, "and I'm ready for the next twenty-eight."

Luna Gymnastics, 594 Moraga Road, Moraga, 376-2363, www.lunagymnastics.com.

*Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.*

## Steve Benjamins Gives Pianos a New Life

By Sophie Braccini



Steve Benjamins playing the restored piano Photo Sophie Braccini

On the morning of October 10 Steve Benjamins was waiting for the piano movers who were going to take the Lescure's piano back to its Orinda home. The 1908 Hoffmann didn't look anything like it did when it was brought to Ben-

jamin's shop almost a year ago, and it didn't sound the same either.

"When I got that 1908 piano it looked like an old instrument that sits in a garage waiting to be given away," said Benjamins. But it was, in fact, a very high quality instru-

ment that had been in the Lescure's family since 1908. Benjamins restored everything, from the inside out, including some resurfacing of the original ivory keyboard. The result is stunning. "I have been tuning it and playing it every day for

the past week," says Benjamins, "it is visceral to hear it." The upright piano delivers a very rich and powerful sound.

Benjamins' next piano restoration is a Steinway from Berkeley, and there are many very fine instruments in his shop waiting for his attention. "Since we moved to this new location on Golden Gate Way a year ago, business is taking off," says Benjamins. "I've done my best work here." Benjamins tunes pianos and performs in public as well. Pictures of the restoration can be seen on the business' web site, along with a sound recording of the instrument.

Find Benjamins at 3434 Golden Gate Way, Lafayette, 284-3077, restorationpiano.com.

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## business briefs

**Lafayette Mercantile's Architecture Receives Recognition**  
3599 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette  
Sudhish Mohindroo and Eric Maltman announced at the beginning of the month that their SZFM Design Studio had received the Grand Award for Outstanding Retail Project from the Pacific Coast Builders Conference 2009 Gold Nugget Awards Program for the Lafayette Mercantile building. The Conference invites projects from the 14 western United States and foreign countries, this year, some 375 projects competed. The Mercantile won in the Outstanding Retail Project category. The judges said: "With a focus on street retail, this project presents an inviting public space for people to stop, shop, and enjoy the pedestrian scale." They also appreciated the artistic details, convenient parking and the pleasant mix of retail and offices. The 43 foot high project was developed by Cortese Properties.

**Main Street Property Recruits New Associates**  
985 Moraga Road, Suite 202, Lafayette. 299-8170, www.mspsinc.com.  
Main Street Property Services, Inc. is pleased to announce the arrival of two new members on its leasing team. David Fishbein will act as Retail Consultant for the Lafayette-based real estate company. Mr. Fishbein specializes in high-end retail and destination restaurants. Michael Semmelmeier will act as Retail Consultant. Semmelmeier joins Main Street after serving in the United States Navy for six years. Focusing exclusively on retail, Main Street Property Services provides clients with first-hand knowledge of activities and transactions throughout the retail real estate industry.

**News from the Three Chambers of Commerce: Lafayette**

- Lafayette Reservoir Run on Sunday October 25, starting downtown Lafayette at 8:30 a.m. The 17th Run is sponsored by Oakwood Athletic Club and supported by the whole community, including the Chamber of Commerce. Over 2,500 participants of all ages and abilities compete in the 10K, 5K or 2 mile race. It's a family affair that gets together serious runners along with walkers, the stroller brigade and dog owners. Stanley Middle School will provide music and the Lafayette Rotary Club will supply pancakes for breakfast. Pre-registration can be done by visiting the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce website, www.lafayettechamber.org or www.active.com
- Green Committee Meeting on Wednesday, October 21 at 11:45 a.m. in the Chamber Conference Room.
- Business Issues Meeting on Friday, October 23 at 8:00 a.m. in the Chamber Conference Room.

**Moraga**

- Chamber meeting on October 27 at 6 p.m. at the Hacienda de las Flores. Light refreshments will be served for members and guests. Andy Scheck will talk about the Lamorinda Weekly, its business model, use of the web site, and the paper's support of small and middle size businesses.

**Orinda**

- October 23, Orinda Chamber October Luncheon, noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Orinda Country Club, 315 Camino Sobrante. This month's topic is, "An architect's personal vision of downtown Orinda for the next generation; opportunities for sustainable growth," by Peter Hasselman, architect, urban designer, and illustrator based in Orinda. Cost \$30.00 per person. RSVP: 925-254-3909.

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If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com)