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Why We Love Lamorinda - On Film

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Jason Alexander, Grant Stubblefield, Derek Zemrak, Police Chief Robert Priebe, Beau Behan, Dorian MacNeil, Fire Chief Darrell Lee, Christian Knox, Edy Schwartz. In front, Orinda winner Will Knox. Not pictured, Lafayette winners Ted Fuller and Norma Lent. Photo Doug Kohen

remix with images of Lafayette. "I took a class on videotaping at De La Salle," explained Fuller, "The movie was a class project to be taken to the City Council for presentation or for taking action." His wife rewrote the lyrics of the famous show tune, which they sang together. The result was light, charming and humorous, a good representation of the beauty of Lafayette, including a close look at pot holes - all in good taste, of course. Another notable submission was "The Sound of Lafayette," a crafty short movie that showed a young boy drumming on different surfaces, all over favorite places in Lafayette, ending with an excellent shot where the young musician appears to be drumming on the tower at the center of the Lafayette reservoir.

The Moraga Police Department surprised everyone with its irreverent humor. Officer Pacheco decided to film the fun of working in Moraga. The winning movie staged fake police interventions, including a poisoned cat that turned out to be a stuffed animal dramatically flattened out and sporting a tire track on its back. Pacheco was not afraid to add self-derision to his piece, documenting the 'painful' training Moraga police officers have to endure. Moraga had other entries, including Grant Stubblefield's vision of why residents love their town - "It's the people," was the young businessman's answer. The first production company in Moraga, Dirt Road Studio, submitted a creative and funny clip narrating why the author, Dorian MacNeil, had such a good time in Moraga restaurants. "I graduated from Saint Mary's very recently, wanting to go into early childhood education," said MacNeil. He currently works privately with children and launched the production company to create documentaries that interest him, such as the current piece he is creating with the intent to give a voice to homelessness in the Bay Area.

The Orinda movie was the creation of a young boy. "My son Will was working on a Boy Scout project for a film and saw the contest announcement in the Lamorinda Weekly. He decided to enter the contest," said Joe Knox. Will is not a beginner where media is concerned. "I contribute stories to Orinda News," says the young reporter, "I started by helping with filing, then proposed an article about the Orinda Baseball Association." Will says that he enjoys writing and expressing feelings, on a blank page or with a movie. His movie was first written in the form of a rap song about Orinda. "It took me two days to write the song," said the 6th grader, who enjoyed it so much that he is continuing to write this type of poetry - telling stories about his young life's experience, such as "life without a cell phone." He shot his movie in all of his favorite places, including the schools and the hills, restaurants, sports fields and in the fog. He partnered with older brother and Acalanes senior Christian for the editing and production of the movie. "My brother is so good with computers," says Will.

"Will and Christian are planning other videos together," said Knox, "it's a good opportunity for brothers to work together, and they can continue as Chris goes to college."

The Chambers of Commerce may post the movies on their websites -- stay tuned.

Once a year, Lamorinda's three Chambers of Commerce meet to share perspectives and mingle. Recently it was Moraga's turn to host the meeting; the location was the New Rheem Theatre - in such a venue, the screening of first-run cinematic masterpieces seemed only natural.

So a contest was launched, with precise parameters: Residents were asked to submit a three-minute video exploring why they love to live, work, and play in their town or city. A diverse set of about a dozen entries was received, from a simple slide show to an elaborate movie with a script and sound track; from a goofy inspiration to a conventional community presentation. There was one winner per community.

Ted Fuller and Norma Lent took the prize for Lafayette with a charming interpretation of a song from *My Fair Lady*, "On the Street Where You Live." The Moraga Police Department's winning entry disproved the notion that cops don't have a sense of humor. Orinda had only one entry but Will Knox, a 6th grader at Orinda Intermediate School, truly deserved the reward that came with first place.

Jay Lifson, the Executive Director of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, surely had a hard time choosing the winning film for Lafayette. Fuller and Lent, two senior Lafayette residents, created a piece that was attentively produced, matching every word of their

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