Two Lafayette men pulled into the Green Rings circle

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By Sophie Braccini



Former Vice President Al Gore presents Steve Richard (left) and Wei-Tai Kwok with their Green Rings from the Climate Reality Project. Photo provided

Kwok call themselves ordinary citizens, but the volunteer actions they took over the last six years have pulled them from making a difference behind the scenes to the front stage with former Vice President Al Gore. At the recent Los Angeles these two Lamorinda citizens were honored with a Green Ring Award for "outstanding work towards solving the climate crisis."

movie we had been watching, and the sessions they were mentoring able energy industry. and heard they would be the honor-

two men for inspiring others and leading to actions in support of fighting climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

they were acknowledged because, following their common inspiration, they started developing local groups – meet-ups at first, that were commitment; over 10 years ago he emulated by the organization and morphed into chapters. The two of tainable Lafayette, which continues them, whom Gore affectionately to be very active locally. This time called "Batman and Robin," are in Los Angeles, Richard says that join the chapter at https://www.clinow managing the Bay Area chap- about 250 people came from the materealityproject.org/chapters. ter of the Climate Reality Project, Bay Area and are now back, ener-

teven Richard and Wei-Tai engaging and organizing people to support legislation, engage companies and organizations to affect change, and create climate challenges all over the Bay Area. There are now 80 chapters in the U.S., 40 of them in universities.

It was Gore's 2006 movie, "An Climate Reality Project training in Inconvenient Truth," that started the adventure for the Lafayette residents. Kwok remembers how, after seeing the movie, he wondered if it was all true, and if it was, what "It was like stepping into the should be done about it. After a few months of research to confirm the being part of the action," recalls science behind Gore's claim that Richard, adding that it came as a climate change was upon us and complete surprise to him and his human-driven, he decided to leave Lafayette and Moraga. Residents friend Kwok when an hour before his marketing company in San can opt for a "Deep Green" level the award they were pulled from Francisco to work for the renew-

In the meantime, Gore started the Climate Reality Project, invit-On stage, Gore recognized the ing any interested people to be trained to become an ambassador for fighting climate change in their community. The program offers trainings to 800-900 people at Richard and Kwok believe that a time all around the world three times a year. Kwok went in 2013 and Richard was trained in 2016.

Richard was not new to a green and Bart Carr started the group Susgized and ready to make change

happen.

Richard says that each time he goes back to a Climate Reality Project meeting he learns something different as new facts emerge, new science is analyzed, and positive changes happen that can be

Richard and Kwok may be preaching to the choir in the Bay Area, but they see that in everyday life many things are left to be done that could make a difference. Richard talks about MCE, for example, the green energy company that now provides electricity to most of for their electricity supply, meaning that 100 percent of their electricity is sourced from renewable production. Right now only a small fraction of the population does so, when it costs just a few dollars more a month. "Our objective is to have at least 1,000 household choosing deep green locally," says

Richard says that he devotes about 80 percent of his time to the organization and that this group is working alongside other very impactful organizations such as 350. org or Citizens' Climate Lobby. People interested in the project can

Richard.



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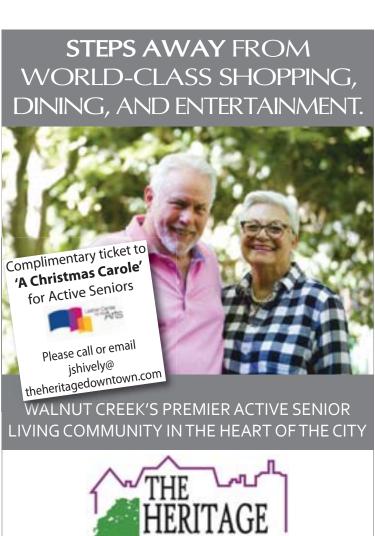
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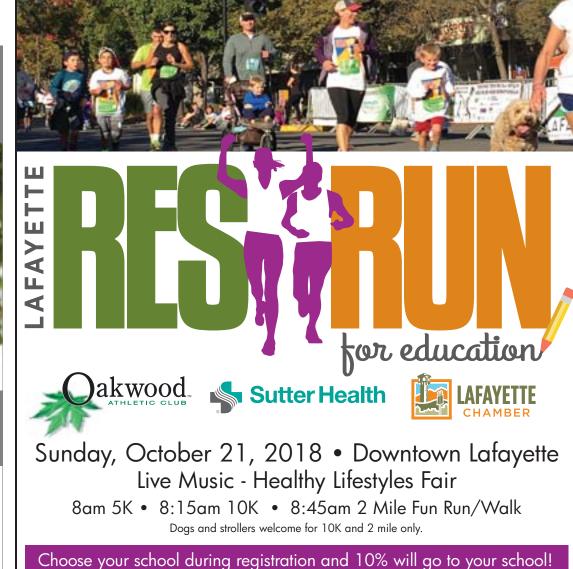
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