



Greg Boudreau

Greg says...

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Arts, from page 14

Mt. Diablo Unified School District, they need to raise about \$10 million.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to bring the arts to our community," Wills says. "This theater could be a gathering place, used for community events, competitions – even (school) board meetings."

Lori Brook, chair of the Action Committee, said the plan has received "lots of vocal support."

A November "awareness" event played to a standing-room-only house. In February, the CVHS Site Council donated \$25,000 seed money, allowing the group to begin architectural design and cost estimates. They have since chosen the firm of Akol and Yoshi, which is responsible for new, state-of-the-art auditoriums at Dougherty Valley and Castro Valley high schools.

The next steps are to choose an on-campus location and draw up preliminary plans. In the meantime, the committee raises money.

"We're willing to do anything," says Wills. "If we can get venue support, we'll put together faculty concerts, alumni events – whatever it takes. We'd like to integrate the events into the Clayton Valley 50th anniversary events next September."

The process was jumpstarted on April 26 with the first event at the Willows Theatre in Concord. "We are very excited to offer our outstanding students a chance to perform at a proper theater and give the public a chance to see what it could be like to have a performing arts center in our neighborhood,"

says Brook.

"Got Theatre?" featured students and alumni performing improvisational comedy, slam poetry, skits, monologues, dance, choral works, instrumental works, vocal groups and award-winning videos. Despite



Jeanna Ross/The Concordian
Brenden Brown does his best "Hamlet" statue impersonation.

a prestigious line-up in a well-known venue, the event only sold 75 percent of the available tickets.

"We expected the event to sell out," says Brook. "The students have been very active promoting this and KVHS (the campus radio station) has announced it, but it's been difficult to get the word out."

There are many things the public can do to help this cause. Tax-deductible donations can be made directly to the group; matching-gift programs can double the fun. T-shirts and buttons are available for purchase. Local businesses can buy advertising space in event programs.

For more information, visit www.claytontheatrerequest.com

Dedicated volunteer helps Crisis Nursery garner attention

By André Gensburger
The Concordian

After five years of retirement following a long career in public relations and marketing, Nancy Scott found "meaning in my day" through volunteering with the Bay Area Crisis Nursery.

"You are always giving back. That matters," says Scott, who lives in Clayton.

The non-profit nursery acts as a proactive support structure for families in crisis by providing shelter and a safe environment for children while their parents are seeking agency assistance. The focus is to prevent child abuse and neglect that often occurs when a family is in crisis.

BACN offers 24-hour residential care for children through age five and a secondary program for older children through the age of 11. Children receive shelter, food, clothing and toys.

Solely funded by donations from individuals, businesses, clubs, churches and other fundraising, the nursery provides services at no cost to the client.

"The children are admitted after being referred through other agencies," Scott explained. "My role is to work with the community relations director to help raise awareness, as well as getting a defined representation."

Despite its 27-year history, BACN remains a relatively obscure agency with the public. It would be advantageous to have a "branding" process for public identification to aid in fundraising.

"Part of the reason for being privately funded is that using governmental monies, BACN would be required to document and prove that abuse had occurred," Scott noted.

Since BACN acts as a proactive barrier against abuse, creating an environment where the potential for abuse is defused, it is vital that the group not be limited by governmental regulations.

Some of the stories include mothers abandoning their children – leaving the father about to lose his job, yet without child-care options. In cases like that, the child is admitted to BACN and the father



André Gensburger/The Concordian
NANCY SCOTT, volunteer with the Bay Area Crisis Nursery, at work raising community awareness about how the Nursery helps prevent child abuse.

is referred to child-care resources. The child would be returned a short time later, once solutions were developed.

Likewise, single mothers facing eviction and under financial duress rely on BACN while they seek employment or alternative housing arrangements.

"I had nowhere to go with the baby," a BACN client wrote. "Usually when a crisis hits, it is unforeseen and the people at BACN are there in that instant."

"In 2007 alone, BACN had 1,075 admissions," Scott said.

Scott spends two days a week working to get the word out about BACN and its operations, while actively attempting to define the non-profit in an easy to understand format.

After five years of retirement, Scott finds the hardest part of the job is "getting my work discipline back."

While most of her work deals with the "branding" of BACN, she works in a building next door to the children. "Getting involved with that aspect may be in the future," she said, explaining that it would require an even greater time commitment.

"Being a volunteer is a good thing," she added. "I am surprised at how many volunteers are in their young 20s. It is hopeful."

For more information, visit www.bacn.jkmas.com or call 685-6633.