

RSF Foundation responds to challenging times

By Christy Wilson, executive director, RSF Foundation

There is no easy answer to the question of how any one or any organization can lead effectively during challenging times, but one thing is for sure: we must take the time to assess our mission, our ability to sustain our work, how we can work with others of like mind and mission and how we communicate the outcomes of the work we do.

The Rancho Santa Fe Foundation understands the core value of its mission – to promote effective philanthropy. For 27 years we have worked in our community and throughout the region to define our unique value to our donors and the nonprofit organizations that we support. Through unrestricted funds and funds established by donors to support the philanthropic goals of their families, we have striven to support the work of effective mission-driven organizations in our county. And now more than ever, we are working to provide



the charitable dollars that are so desperately required to meet the basic needs of our communities.

The 2008 Matching Grants Program will provide a minimum of 60,000 additional dollars to the organizations that are providing these services. Please go to the Web site – www.rsffoundation.org – for more information.

The Armed Forces Interest Group (AFIG) is actively seeking to increase the awareness of the needs of the military in San Diego throughout our county. With a focus on the Junior Enlisted personnel, funds are being accepted to provide essentials like commissary gift cards, gas cards, warm clothing and some “extras” for the holidays. These men and women have served our country with distinction. Please keep them in mind as you prepare for the holidays – small or large, 100 percent of your donations will enable us to support them. More information can be found on the Web site above.

Our work will best be accomplished by working with others – individual donors, family and private foundations, other nonprofits – collaborations and partnerships that involve those who share the same commitment and engagement to solving the issues of our times.

Christy Wilson is the executive director of the RSF Foundation.



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| <p>We...
•Sort
•Stack
•Pack</p> | <p>We...
•Unpack
•Organize
•Put Away</p> |
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TIP OF THE MONTH
Moving soon - lighten the load. This is a good time of year to look at children's toys, books and clothes. Hardly used toys, books in good condition and gently used outgrown clothes are welcome by all charities involved with underprivileged children, especially this year.

Remember, if it's precious to you, it's VERY precious to us.
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Maestro's Podium

Not just music

By Jung-Ho Pak, artistic director and conductor, San Diego Chamber Orchestra

An annual tradition that has become a phenomenon around the world is the performance of George Frederick Handel's most beloved oratorio, Messiah. Originally conceived as a work for Easter, it is now much better known as a Christmas favorite.

But why has this piece of classical music risen above all others, especially for this time of the season?

On first blush, there's so much that's relatively unremarkable about the work. First, it's form as an oratorio (a sacred unstaged opera) has all of the necessary ingredients of an overture, arias (songs) and choruses. Secondly, its epic subject matter is not completely unique as other composers have written their own biblical retelling of Christ's life.

The answer lies in both the craft and imagination of the composer. Handel's marriage of the text and music is as inspired as any Rodgers and Hammerstein song: the way the words' subtext is captured in the notes and the way the orchestration helps the singers communicate this moving story honestly.

Take, for example, the famous chorus, Hallelujah! Listening to how precisely he uses that joyous word over and over again, one can hear how it retains its freshness and urgency throughout the chorus. In the first aria, E'vry Valley, Handel paints the "crooked roads" with a jagged and wandering melody. There are many, many more examples.

Finally, the music is unquestionably beautiful. Although it is a Baroque period work, it foreshadows the Romantic era with a hyper-dramatic style of writing. The music is so much more personal and immediate than his contemporaries', and even his own, previous compositions.

In a time where sincerity and honest emotion is so rare these days, this work seems to connect with the soul in a unique way. Over the centuries and the various cultural evolutions and revolutions, this work has fulfilled a deep need of its listeners.

For me, as a conductor, each year I recommit myself to be faithful to its basic message of hope and renewal. This process involves stripping away the predictable varnish that many standard performances have burdened upon it. Next, we get back to the meaning of the words, and try to feel them, not just sing them. If we succeed, it is a remarkable spiritual experience for us as well as for our audience.

So if it has been several years since you've heard this important masterwork of Western civilization, or if you have never heard it before, I invite you to give your soul an opportunity to be revived this holiday season.



Jung-Ho Pak

Woodward Center Pet of the Week

"Snow" is a 5-month-old, neutered, male, domestic pristine crystalline feline. White as a cloud with a little smudge on the top of his head! "Snow" will fill the air like soap flakes in a snow globe and purr very loud when you snuggle. A scattered flurry of fun; let it "Snow" year round at your house! Fresh "Snow" available now at Helen Woodward Animal Center!



You can adopt "Snow" just \$125. All pets adopted from Helen Woodward Animal Center have been spayed or neutered, have Up-to-date vaccinations and microchip identification.

Helen Woodward Animal Center kennels are open every day from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. (applications accepted till 5:45 p.m.) at 6461 El Apajo Road in Rancho Santa Fe.

For more information call 858-756-4117, option #1 or log on to www.animalcenter.org.

Del Mar Plaza will come alive with the jazz and rock beats of Rhythm and the Method on Dec. 20

The Plaza Deck at Del Mar Plaza will come alive with the jazz and rock beats of Rhythm Turner and Papa Shawn from Rhythm and the Method. on Dec. 20, from 3 p.m. - 5 p.m. Take in the breeze and the European-style ambiance of Del Mar Plaza's ocean view deck and relax with the rhythm of one of San Diego's top 10 best local bands. Learn more about Rhythm and the Method at <http://www.rhythm-and-the-method.com>. The performance is free of charge.

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SENIOR SCENE

Vial of Life Program

By Terrie Litwin, executive director, RSF Senior Center

The Vial of Life program provides a simple, easy and effective method of communicating with Emergency Medical Services personnel during an emergency. This life-saving program conveys vital



Terrie Litwin

information about allergies, medications, and medical conditions. The Vial of Life is easy to use and provides an added layer of protection for you and your family in the event of an

emergency.

The vial is a small plastic container that holds a form with easy to read medical information such as your name, medical history, any known allergies, present medications, blood type and an emergency contact person. In addition, the form has a place for alerting medical personnel about DNR orders or living wills and where those documents are located. The kit includes a magnet to be placed on the refrigerator where the vial is kept. When emergency responders see the magnet, they will know where to find your life-saving medical information.

Every person should have a Vial of Life form filled out. Seniors need this because, in a time of emergency, it is often difficult to provide accurate information to medical personnel called to assist you. Please join us at the Senior Center on Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 10 a.m. for a presentation describing this life-saving program. All attendees will receive a free Vial of Life.

The Senior Center is a collection point for the "Wives of the Miramar Marines Holiday Food Drive"

Please place items in the bin by the Senior Center's Garage by Sunday, Dec. 21 16780 La Gracia

Celebrate holidays at Quail Botanical Gardens' 'Garden of Lights'

Quail Botanical Gardens lights up the holiday season during the month of December with the spectacular "Garden of Lights" celebration (Dec. 13-23, 26-30, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.). The annual event is an extravaganza of more than 100,000 sparkling lights, which illuminate the Gardens and turn them into a dazzling winter wonderland. The "Garden of Lights" festivities include family-friendly activities, including horse-drawn-wagon rides, crafts for children, marshmallow roasting, visits with Santa, live music, hot mulled wine and refreshments.

Members, Seniors, Military & Students \$6, Nonmembers \$10, Children 3-12 \$3 and children under 3 are free. There are additional fees for some activities. Contact Quail Botanical Gardens (230 Quail Gardens Drive), (760) 436-3036 or visit www.qbgardens.org