

Submitted to The Union

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Brains of Nevada County: Another riotous evening for a great cause



Janet Cohen was the quiz master at the 13th annual Brains of Nevada County Quiz Night, presented by The South Yuba River Citizens League in Ponderosa Hall at the Nevada County Fairgrounds Saturday. The purpose of the event was to raise money for the Laura Wilcox Scholarship Fund.

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Where in your house would you find a magnetron? What is the only sport to have been played on the moon? Which is the second largest U.S. state?

If you can answer these questions, you should have been playing on a team at the 13th annual Brains of Nevada County contest, held by the South Yuba River Citizens League on March 15 to raise money for the Laura Wilcox Scholarship Fund.

The scholarship is administered by the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) in honor of Laura Wilcox, the Nevada County teenager killed in the Jan. 10, 2001, shooting at the Nevada County Behavioral Health facility. The scholarship is offered annually to high school seniors living in the Yuba and Bear River watersheds who have a commitment to the environment.

In 1999, Laura won a scholarship from the Sierra Club with an essay she wrote about restoring salmon to the Yuba River. After her death, the Sierra Club donated the remaining \$4,000 of her scholarship to SYRCL to endow a scholarship in her name. So far, 12 \$4,000 scholarships have been awarded to local students.

“All the recipients have been outstanding people academically and personally,” said Amanda Wilcox, Laura’s mother. “The Brains of Nevada County event shows how much we’re supported by SYRCL and the community at large.”

This year, 22 local teams of eight people each competed for the prestigious title and trophy. Teams from all over the county played, including the Nevada City Winery, AJA Video, BriarPatch Coop, the Bear Yuba Land Trust, Telestream, The Union, KVMR, Yubanet and many more. This year’s questions ranged from sports to dance music. One round, “Gold Rush History,” was based entirely on questions about our local area.

The winning team was The Multiple Scorgasms led by Lorraine Webb, a team that has played for all 13 years of the quiz but has never won before.

“As the perennial also-ran team captain of the juicy smarty-pants that comprise Team: Multiple Scorgasms (second or third place for 13 years), I finally get to say why I love Brains of Nevada County Quiz Night now that we finally won,” Webb said. “Let me count the ways. The depth: The annual posthumous honoring of beloved Nevada County environmentalist, Laura Wilcox, and her wonderful parents. The breadth: The hilarious realization of just how much extraneous and downright trivial information lodges in our collective consciousness. The height my soul can reach: Just so much community-making conviviality and lots of laughing.”

“Usually mild-mannered people showed another side of themselves on Saturday night,” said Janet Cohen, SYRCL’s former executive director and quiz mistress for the evening. “Some teams get quite rambunctious — especially when they disagree with the answers. The whole evening was a great combination of fun and competitiveness.”

Caleb Dardick, executive director of SYRCL, added, “We’re pleased to be able to honor such an extraordinary young woman with a lasting gift to our community’s youth. We encourage more people to contribute to the Laura Wilcox Scholarship Fund to preserve her memory for many years to come.”

To contribute to the Laura Wilcox Scholarship Fund or to play next year, contact Miriam Limov at 530-265-5961, ext. 201, or email miriam@syrcl.org.

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