



# Follow the Sun

## Drew Harrison of the Sun Kings Gets Behind Alameda Education

BY **KIMBERLY CHUN**  
PHOTOGRAPHY **CHRIS DUFFEY**

Everyone can use a little help from his friends – and the kids of Alameda are no different, considering the 2010-2011 budget cuts of \$7 million the Alameda Unified School District is suffering through.

That's why Drew Harrison of beloved Alameda-based Beatles tribute band, the Sun Kings, is pitching in – along with real estate agent Peter Fletcher and the Alameda Education Foundation – to raise money for music, art, drama and other programs in Alameda public schools by organizing All Together Now. At the Nov. 12 gala of music, dancing, food and wine, the Sun Kings will play Fab Four faves, while DJ Pete Fletcher spins the music of the '50s and '60s.

The idea for the fund-raiser came to Harrison, 49, who doesn't have a child in the school system but impresses with a

passion for education, and Fletcher, who does have kids in school, as they were kicking back at Peet's over cups of joe. "We were talking about the parcel tax and about doing something in the community together, musically, and this kind of gelled as an idea," Harrison remembers.

Even students who don't become professional players, artists or dramatists benefit from arts education, Harrison stresses. "A lot of us in Alameda think it's a valid part of school curriculum," he explains. "It's scientifically proven to assist in learning, creativity and thinking. It helps you come up with creative solutions – that's part of the package – and it's mathematical. And it makes you feel good!"

Harrison is on a roll, clearly driven by the urgency of the cause. "I don't want to get into politics and the economy," he continues, "but this benefit and others in the community are trying to plug the hole like the little Dutch boy and the dike."

Harrison is devoted to proving it's all possible, mentioning the Sun Kings recently raised \$1,000 in 15 minutes after a recent Art & Wine Faire performance. To that end, he makes the issue of arts education visible, literally. "A lot of events don't raise the money because they're not talking to folks who give five or 10 bucks," Harrison says. "I have a goal of getting 10,000 five-dollar donations between now and November. And they'll see me, right in front of Peet's"

**All Together Now is 6 p.m. Nov. 12 at Auctions by the Bay Theater, Alameda Point; tickets are \$40 advance, \$50 at the door. For tickets and details, go to [www.the-sun-kings.com](http://www.the-sun-kings.com) or [www.alamedaeducation.org](http://www.alamedaeducation.org).**

CHRIS DUFFEY