

Print Page

Real News • Really Local

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

Real News • Really Local

THE CALIFORNIAN

Last modified Sunday, June 8, 2008 9:20 PM PDT



*From left, Darcy Jones, Lisa Vinton and Scott Vinton share a laugh during the reading of the news while Production Manager JP Raineri uses a laptop to record and edit the audio of the Temecula based online radio show 'Only 2 Degrees.' (Photo by Andrew Foulk - Staff Photographer)*

REGION: Making waves locally and on the World Wide Web

By NICOLE SACK - Staff Writer

The name of the radio show is "Only 2 Degrees," but listening to the webcast radio show, you might think that hosts Lisa Vinton and Darcy Jones are having too much fun.

Already accomplished professionals in the fields of business finance and publishing, Vinton and Jones have been behind the microphone since January. And since then, they have found a niche and a need to fill within Southwest County. Each week, they have offered up an hour of local commentary that has been gaining popularity.

"Our whole goal is to connect people in the Valley and Southern California together, and promote business, which is particularly important in this economy," Jones said.

The name of the show is derived from the concept that everyone in the world is separated by six people. However, in Temecula Valley, things are a little closer-knit and through their experiences they decided that people are only two "degrees" apart in the region.

"This community is so tight-knit. You can't keep a secret in town," Jones said. "Hey, do you know so-and-so? After a while it was only two degrees."

"Every week, I have a two-degrees story," Vinton added. "It's kind of a phenomenon."

The show format features their signature "Two Degrees" stories, when Vinton and Jones share their sometimes bizarre instances of networking connections plus news, lessons for success, business tips and spotlights on businesses.

The duo also bring on special guests including government officials and representatives from

nonprofit groups and businesses.

There is also the on-air wine tasting, where the two filter through different varieties of vino.

Ray Faulkner, owner of the namesake winery and president of the Temecula Valley Wine Growers Association, took part in one of the wine-tasting segments on show No. 15.

"I thought it is a great show," Faulkner said. "They were very knowledgeable about wine, but they also made wine fun."

Faulkner said the recording of the show was different from what he expected for a broadcast show. "Only 2 Degrees" is recorded in either Jones' or Vinton's business offices on Thursday evenings.

"I showed up at an office building that was pretty much empty, and I wondered if I was in the right place. It was a little unusual," he said. "But I was pleased with how everything turned out. The show sounded great. I was really pleased with what we were able to discuss about wine and Temecula Valley in general."

Because Vinton and Jones aren't relegated to a traditional studio, they have taken their show to where the action is. Their mobile microphone allows them to take their show, literally, on the road. Among the larger events where they have provided community coverage are Temecula's State of the City address and the opening night for the Lake Elsinore Storm.

Talking up local businesses and their sponsors is a large part of the program.

"The goal is also to drive business into Temecula," Vinton said.

Temecula City Councilman Chuck Washington has been a guest on the show and said he enjoys the "community evolution" portion of the show.

"I know Lisa and Darcy's perspective of community," Washington said. "They are not doing the show to get rich, they are doing this as a community service. They want to have a forum to create dialogue (and) improve understanding."

Washington said that while the show is a worthwhile effort, and there is a need for more local talk radio, he thinks it will be hard work for the duo to break into the mainstream.

"It could be difficult for it to catch on, but as long as they surround themselves with quality people, they will keep building their base," Washington said.

Faulkner also shared concerns about the medium.

"Their exposure in some respects is very wide ---- as someone in Hong Kong could be listening to the show on a weekly basis ---- and in other respects very narrow. I don't think a vast number of people on the Internet listen to webcasts," he said.

Though they are smart, energetic and have a social calendar to make anyone envious, much of the allure of the show is purely how Vinton and Jones interact.

## **On the air**

Initially, the idea for a radio broadcast was to have a show featuring Vinton. However, the initial taping fell flat, Vinton said, and was lacking the edge she thought was needed to be marketable, let alone interesting.

That's not to say the 42-year-old Murrieta resident doesn't have the community and professional credentials to carry a solo endeavor.

Vinton is the president and founder of Services for Success, a business management consulting firm in Murrieta, as well as being the founder of Southwest Pregnancy Counseling Center.

She's married to Scott Vinton, who adds his sports knowledge to the show, and they have five children. She also has been a surrogate mother ---- twice. She is an author and two of her books are slated to be published this summer. In addition, Vinton is a frequent keynote speaker in the region.

But when it came to delivering entertaining banter and striking a balance for the show, Vinton knew just where to turn: Darcy Jones. The two met nearly 2 1/2 years ago.

Jones, 38, lives in Wildomar and is a financial adviser and planning specialist with Smith Barney in Temecula. She also is an author and is co-owner of The Wino Club, a wine-tasting game for those who don't know anything about wine. Jones is part of the Professional Women's Network and a frequent keynote speaker at seminars and area chambers.

Just as fast as Vinton could dial Jones, the show was created. No boardroom was needed ---- the ladies outlined the concept of the show over a breakfast at Mimi's Cafe with a newspaper and a Palm Pilot.

Their first show was produced on Jan. 12. Since then, they have produced 21 shows, which can be accessed at [www.only2degrees.com](http://www.only2degrees.com).

## **Talk the walk**

The talk comes naturally. In fact, the off-the-cuff banter is no act.

"We don't do any retakes, ever. We just talk. It's actually harder to have to re-record something," Jones said. "It's a one-shot deal."

The most difficult part was the technical side.

"Neither of us are very tech-savvy," Vinton said. "There are so many elements that go into webcasts. You don't need an IT guy. You need IT guys."

Since launching their show, the venture has cost them about \$7,000. They say one of their "best investments" was a wireless microphone, which accompanies them to civic and social events in the region, and even into a Hollywood bar.

Even with some hiccups ---- which they seem to have under control ---- their work and efforts

are paying off.

Their Web site received 20,000 hits in April. And it's not just local residents who are signing on to the site. They have received hits from Brazil, Italy, Japan, Australia, Mexico, China, Canada, Kenya, Great Britain, France, Ecuador, Columbia, Iceland and Ireland. The tag line of the show is "connecting people through world news and personal views."

"It started off as a fun thing to do. Now, it's a business venture," Vinton said.

The two hope to break onto the radio airwaves and take their show to an AM or FM station.

"The most fun is the feedback," Vinton said. "I'd do this everyday."

Contact staff writer Nicole Sack at (951) 676-4315, Ext. 2616, or [nsack@californian.com](mailto:nsack@californian.com).