

How to Help in the Giving Season

The economy's downward spiral has come with a significant human cost due to job losses, home foreclosures, and reductions in State and County public support services leaving many individuals and families in need throughout Contra Costa County. As a start to the "giving season" the Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center is co-sponsoring a get-together on Saturday, December 4th to let people know about

ways they can reach out and help their neighbors in need through local organizations. Representatives from Shelter, Inc., the Food Bank of Contra Costa County and Solano, and Monument Crisis Center will be on-hand to let people how they can volunteer and donate. Details for the event are outlined below along with contact information for each of the provider groups.

Community Sharing Event

Saturday, December 4th, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Bortin Hall, Mt Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church
55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek

*The event is free. Donations of nonperishable food items and/or large size children's disposable diapers and all sizes of warm socks are requested.

Shelter, Inc.

The mission of SHELTER, Inc. is to prevent homelessness and promote self-sufficiency among Contra Costa residents. SHELTER, Inc's main office is located at 1815 Arnold Drive in Martinez.
(925) 335-0698, www.shelterincofcc.org

Food Bank of Contra Costa County and Solano

The Food Bank works to end hunger and increase access to affordable, nutritious food for low-income individuals and families through a comprehensive group of programs that combat hunger and its causes.
(800) 870-FOOD www.foodbankccs.org

Monument Crisis Center

The Monument Crisis Center is open for food distribution five times a week and relies on monetary and food donations from the community. The Center is located at 2350 Monument Blvd. in Concord.
(925) 825-7751 www.monumentcrisiscenter.org
Since 2003 the Center has also sponsored the Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program for families who utilize the services of the Center throughout the year. To get more information on the program and how you can get involved, call (925) 825-7751 x 102 or email holidayprogrammcc@yahoo.com.
A.Firth

Clothing Drive



Troop 31143 conducted a successful towel and blanket drive for the Oakland Animal Shelter in 2009. Pictured from left to right are Claudia Evans, Lizzy Maroney, Olivia Sanchez, Iris Wu, Madison Alvarado, Jemma Baus, Charlotte Wu, Megan Lewis, Katie Whalen, Loryn Nieto and (rear) Martha Castro, (front) Jenna Englund.

On Saturday, December 11, 2010, Orinda Girl Scout troop 31143 will be collecting gently used winter clothing from 4-6pm near the fountain at Theater Square in Orinda. The girls will sort and distribute the clothing to Shelter, Inc, an organization that provides transitional housing and other services to homeless families in Contra Costa County.

Photo provided

Twisted Turkey Traditions

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Most Frightening Turkey Substitute

This is a full category, with Tofurky Roast and Quorn, a substance made from mycoprotein and entirely free of meat or soy, both earning blue ribbons on the "that's just gross" scale.

Most Ridiculous Idea on Which to Build Your Thanksgiving Traditions

Plan the menu according to your guests' astrological sign. Apparently, Gemini's must have Orange-Pomegranate Relish, Virgos must have Corn Bread Stuffing, and forget even inviting a Taurus if you're not serving candied yams.

New Trends in Stuffing

Quinoa, brandy, pineapple, pitted Kalamata olives, cage-free eggs, and chopped chicken livers. (Not all in the same recipe, please.)

Silliest Turkey Trivia to Share at Dinner

Turkeys have excellent hearing, but no ears, and, older male turkeys are the best: young turkeys are "stringy," and females are "tough." (We women always knew that was the case.)

The Highs and Lows of Leftovers

Turkey pot pies, Cranberry-Turkey Enchiladas, Turkey-Noodle Casserole with Potato Chip Crust, Turkey Cobb Salad, and the all-time classic, Turkey Sandwich.

Sign Indicating You Have No Life and Can Hardly Claim to be an American

You visit Martha Stewart's Turkey Trivia page, take the 9 question quiz, and fail. So, after all, I do fit in. I know that turkeys can fly, I know that if Benjamin Franklin had had his way, we'd all be eating bald eagles come November, and most importantly, I know where celery does, and does not, belong.

*Frying a turkey this holiday season? The Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group would like to remind residents not to pour leftover grease and cooking oil down sinks and drains. Doing so causes sewer system backups. Check out BayWise.org for a list of free fat, oil and grease drop-off locations around the Bay Area. Now there's a Turkey tradition we've yet to explore: working the oil drop-off desk on Black Friday.

Holiday Message

To our neighbors in Lamorinda,

We know you have thousands of choices when you shop in the Bay Area. During this holiday shopping season, we hope you will remember to support your favorite local merchants and recommend them to your friends. The economy may be showing signs of improvement, but it will take all of us working together to help our local businesses survive.

We offer some of the most unique stores and specialty shops in the East Bay. Shopping in your home town can make a significant impact on the vitality of your city. Lamorinda counts on sales tax to provide you with this great quality of life through the essential services you have come to expect.

Here are some reasons why shopping local matters:

- Sustaining the cultural value of a vibrant downtown filled with a wide variety of unique businesses, boutiques and special events
- Saving on gas and parking by shopping in town
- Creating a strong tax-base by circulating money in town versus sending it elsewhere
- Supporting the businesses that generously donate to local schools and non-profits throughout the year

Quality of life is considered to be the most important element of decision making when considering where one wishes to live. Let's work together to keep our community pleasant, vibrant, and successful.

Happy Holidays!

Caesar Perales
President, Lafayette
Chamber of Commerce



Edy Schwartz
President, Moraga
Chamber of Commerce



Sue Breedlove
President, Orinda
Chamber of Commerce



Please support SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY on Saturday, November 27th

DAY TREE LIGHTINGS

On Saturday, Dec. 4, join the Youth Involvement Committee for the annual Holiday Tree Lighting at the Moraga Commons. Cookies and cocoa will be served at 6:30 pm and the tree will be lighted at 7pm.

Hospice of the East Bay Tree Lighting:

Hospice Foundation of the East Bay's annual Tree of Lights is a series of community events held to honor or remember beloved friends or family members. Each light on every tree is symbolic of the life, hopes and dreams of a loved one. Tree of Lights are attended by anyone touched by hospice, local dignitaries, and members of the hospice team.

Moraga: The lighting took place on Nov 21.

Lafayette: Sunday, Dec. 5, 5:30pm, corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd and Lafayette Circle.

Orinda: Saturday, Dec. 4 at 4:30pm, Orinda Village by Bank of America.



For Lamorinda merchants and holiday specials please visit:

www.lafayettechamber.org | www.trylafayettefirst.com | Facebook.com/trylafayettefirst
www.moragachamber.org | www.shopmoragafirst.com | www.orindachamber.org